

# Surrey

## Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Oxshott

I object to the proposed changes to the boundaries in Elmbridge that are being recommended by the Boundary Commission (BC) to Surrey County Council (SCC) and would like to see the retention of the existing boundaries, which combine Oxshott with Claygate and Hinchley Wood. For Oxshott, the recommendations have very important implications:

1. The BC proposes to split Oxshott in two along the A244 with the area to the west being combined with Cobham and the area to the east being combined with Esher & Claygate.

There can be no justification for arbitrarily dividing the community of Oxshott, by drawing a line down the A244. This would lead to the loss of community identity and result in poorly defined and unclear representation within SCC. In turn, this could have serious implications for the ability to get funding for improvements, for example to the A244.

Oxshott is an established, separate community with a population of about 5,000+ people with its own distinctive character dating back to the eleventh century and is a settlement that is largely defined by the surrounding Green Belt. Today it has, amongst other distinctive elements of community, its' own church, a number of schools, a Village Club, a thriving Village Sports Club providing a broad range of sports for all ages, a re-invigorated high street, its own medical centre, its own railway station, and a well-supported community organization (FEDORA – the Voice for Oxshott CIC) that seeks to ensure the views of the community are heard by our local councillors and public servants at Elmbridge BC, Surrey CC and Parliament.

2. It is proposed that the name of Oxshott is removed from the names of the new wards. There can be no justification for the obliteration of the name of Oxshott and a complete loss of its identity within Surrey.

Both these proposals are in direct conflict with the stated objective of ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity. The present ward boundaries were set on well-argued grounds in 2005. These provide that a major part of Oxshott sits within the division of Hinchley Wood, Claygate & Oxshott with a small more geographically remote part sitting within the Cobham division. It is important to note that Oxshott, Hinchley Wood and Claygate are distinct communities based on defined villages. They are therefore very different in character from towns such as Cobham and Esher. The three settlements are linked not only by footpaths but also by the only railway line in the vicinity. The present arrangements work well. Oxshott has a clear identity, and, with a conscientious local SCC councillor, residents are satisfied that their interests are well represented. Finally, the BC's recommendations have been discussed with our local SCC councillors as well as our Elmbridge BC councillors, who all share the significant concerns of the local community with these proposals.

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*