

Parliamentary Boundary Review 2018 – Initial Proposals

Results of Members Survey

Ward	No. of responses	Agreement with BCE proposal		Comments
Ash and New Ash Green	3	Yes	1	i. Given the geographical proximity to Gravesham and the fact that most leisure activities are undertaken in the Gravesham area, it would make sense.
		No	2	<p>ii. Ash and New Ash Green is a 'frontier' ward which has from time to time been switched from one Parliamentary constituency to another, and also between local authorities. However there has never been any formal link to the Gravesend area. Because of its situation in a rural area, roughly equidistant between Sevenoaks, Swanley, Borough Green and West Malling, Gravesend, Bluewater and Dartford, residents naturally gravitate to all of these places for schools, employment, leisure and shopping and one activity often determines the preferred destination for others. Nevertheless the fact that the ward is part of Sevenoaks for both Parliamentary and local government purposes is important in ensuring that there is a sense of local identity and belonging. There is certainly a concern that if Parliamentary constituency boundaries are changed, local government might follow and in that context Sevenoaks District Council is much more attuned to the needs of its rural parishes than Gravesham is likely to be, purely because of the fundamental differences from the majority of that Council's area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued on next page</i></p>

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				<p>Ash and New Ash Green ward, indeed the whole parish of Ash-cum-Ridley, has essentially a rural North Downs character and is sparsely populated with the exception of New Ash Green which was designed 50 years ago as a model community, demonstrating how a new village could be built in the countryside without having an adverse impact on the rural area whilst allowing its inhabitants to enjoy the benefits of the surrounding countryside. It has been very successful in achieving this objective and as a result the issues that face its elected representatives are much more akin to those of the rest of Sevenoaks rather than the fast-growing urban areas of Dartford and Gravesham to the north. The inclusion of the ward into Gravesham Parliamentary constituency would be likely to mean that the issues which are important to local people would be diluted to the point of invisibility amongst the very different concerns of the majority of residents that will inevitably arise from the major development proposals in Kent Thameside and Ebbsfleet Garden City. The proposal to add the ward to Gravesham also seems short-sighted given the on-going residential development in that constituency which is likely to take the population of the area above the ideal limit for a constituency quite soon and thus lead to a further review of boundaries. That, on past experience, would then mean Ash and New Ash Green might once again have to be moved into another constituency. Residents value stability and the relatively frequent changes of boundaries do not help to build a local identity or provide the reassurance that our elected representatives are concerned about the interests of our locality.</p>

Ward	No. of responses	Agreement with BCE proposal		Comments
Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge	2	Yes	2	i. Broadly sensible as electorates should be equalised
Cowden and Hever	0	No response	-	None
Crockenhill and Well Hill	0	No response	-	None
Dunton Green and Riverhead	0	No response	-	None
Edenbridge North and East	1	No response	1	All changes cause problems and loss of continuity of service, but provided that the whole of Edenbridge is maintained as an entity, I do not have strong views on whether it should be part of Tonbridge & Malling or Tunbridge Wells.
Edenbridge South and West	0	No response	-	None
Eynsford	1	Undecided	1	Eynsford is unaffected by the proposals; however I feel that Hartley Ward on Sevenoaks District Council should remain as part of the Dartford constituency, not as part of Gravesham. People from Hartley and New Ash Green naturally look towards Dartford as their urban centre and for their retail needs. I would suggest keeping Hartley (and New Ash Green) in Dartford and possibly moving an area like Swanscombe into the Gravesham Parliamentary Seat

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Farningham, Horton Kirby and South Darenth	1	Yes	1	Keeping Parliamentary and District Council boundaries co-terminus is always preferential
Fawkham and West Kingsdown	1	No response	1	None
Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount	1	Yes	1	None
Hartley and Hodsoll Street	0	No response	-	None
Hextable	1	Yes	1	None
Kemsing	1	Yes	1	No change so no view
Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway	1	No	1	<p>i. This proposal is based on a numbers game and takes no account of the infrastructure on the ground. All the main Roads run East to West. The B2027 links Edenbridge to Tonbridge, through Leigh, with feeder roads running in from Four Elms, Chiddingstone and Bough Beech. The main railway line runs from Edenbridge to Ton bridge, with links to Redhill in the West and to Victoria in the North and Uckfield in the South. The main rivers including the Eden and the Medway and feeder streams run West to East to Tonbridge.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued on next page</i></p>

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				<p>The County Council wards are changing with the member for Sevenoaks South taking in part of Sevenoaks Weald next May. This new area of Sevenoaks Weald is designated to remain in The Parliamentary constituency of Sevenoaks while the rest of the constituency moves to Tunbridge Wells. We have District Councillors representing Edenbridge, Cowden, Penshurst and Leigh, and our services are provided by Sevenoaks District Council. This works well. Are we to be subsumed by the Borough of Tunbridge Wells? We have Tonbridge Post Codes and our addresses all indicate that we are near Tonbridge. The schools in Tonbridge are much nearer and easier to get to than Schools in Tunbridge Wells. We relate to Tonbridge and to our Member of Parliament, Tom Tugendhat MP, and he has come to know our area well as he lives in Mark Beech part of the constituency which is proposed to come under Tunbridge Wells I believe these proposals to be fundamentally flawed and must be reconsidered.</p>
Otford and Shoreham	1	Yes	1	<p>Assuming that the Member has the same Community Support allowance, then it will be spread thinner because the Ward has increased in size. Of course their funding might be removed altogether as a cost saving.</p>
Penshurst, Fordcombe and Chiddingstone	0	No response	-	None
Seal and Weald	0	No response	-	None

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Sevenoaks Eastern	1	Yes	1	Consider transferring Swanley and Hextable to Dartford as they are closer to Dartford than Sevenoaks. Borough Green, Wrotham and Mereworth are in Tonbridge and Malling local authority district, but proposed to be in Sevenoaks Parliamentary district. The increasing divergence between local government and parliamentary boundaries makes it harder for voters to understand what is going on.
Sevenoaks Kippington	1	Yes	1	None
Sevenoaks Northern	0	No response	-	None
Sevenoaks Town and St. John's	1	Yes	1	None
Swanley Christchurch and Swanley Village	0	No response	-	None
Swanley St. Mary's	1	Yes	1	None
Swanley White Oak	0	No response	-	None

Ward	No. of responses	Agreement with BCE proposal		Comments
Westerham and Crockham Hill	1	Yes	1	<p>I feel it is important for the ward to have the same boundaries for District, County and constituency so that it has an identity. Very pleased to see that we stay in the same electoral area as before and that we have not been moved out to be with Edenbridge. Therefore no comments.</p> <p>Regarding Sevenoaks District I feel it will be a challenge to have Borough Green within our constituency and will be sad to lose Hartley and Hodsol & New Ash Green. But realise with all re alignment of boundaries there are necessary sacrifices to maintain the correct electorate. All in all I think Sevenoaks should be very relieved at the small impact these proposed changes will make.</p>