

## Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

### Personal Details:

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Organisation Name:

### Comment text:

It seems that the new arrangement of 39 and not 48 councillors suggests one councillor per 2350 people, based on your projections. It is not clear if these projections take into account the planned new housing developments. It is hard to see how 4000 new homes in Capel will result in only 97 more people on the electoral roll. The first task then, is to accurately predict the electorate based on the actual housing you have got planned. Until that is done, there is no way to decide if 39 is indeed the correct number of councillors, nor how to make the representation fair in terms of number of people per councillor. Given that there may need to be some changes made, rather than make wholesale changes in boundaries, the simplest thing would be to be to modify the distribution of councillors, to make the representation more fair, so that Pembury, for example, has 2 and not 3 councillors. This is based on the 2350 electors per councillor. Following this logic, Benenden/Cranbrook, Goudhurst/Lamberhurst and Hawkhurst/Sandhurst all need to lose a councillor, as they seem to have one per 1800 to 1900 people, which is a higher representation than most wards. Paddock Wood West and Paddock Wood East seem rather arbitrarily marked on the map. Perhaps the area to the west of Paddock Wood up the the A228 could become part of Paddock Wood West, as this is going to be covered in new houses that will look to Paddock Wood as the primary centre. Paddock Wood East could be the part of Paddock Wood to the east of the Maidstone Road, which makes more sense of the title. There is a huge housing development here too. So Paddock Wood needs to retain 4 councillors in total, as the numbers of people is going to increase enormously in the near future, and even more so further down the line. Capel appears to have one councillor for 1800 people, but as explained above, this does not seem to be very likely in the future, given the huge amount of housing that is being built in Capel. The area to the west of the A228 up to the current ward boundary, which will contain Capel Garden Village, would then deserve a councillor (possibly two, given the size of the proposed housing development). Looking at the numbers in more detail, it seems that several wards in Tunbridge Wells have too few councillors for the population. Here it may be necessary to move the boundaries to make the representation fairer. Some have too many - Southborough North perhaps. Moving boundaries within the town is less of an issue than in the country - for example, Paddock Wood is a town and Capel is currently much more rural, so these are distinct areas and should be represented separately. The Boundary Commission needs to look very carefully at the housing development plans before any changes are made. There is no point spending a lot of money redrawing boundaries and then finding out that the population of particular area has increased so much that representation is no longer equitable. See the website referenced here, and the quote below:  
[https://consult.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/portal/planning\\_information/spp/local\\_plan/pslp/pslp?pointId=ID-5751046-455](https://consult.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/portal/planning_information/spp/local_plan/pslp/pslp?pointId=ID-5751046-455) "Significant growth around Paddock Wood and east Capel is proposed to deliver approximately 3,490-3,590 houses, as defined on the Policies Map." Equitable and fair representatin is paramount.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded