



Thanington Without (Civil) Parish Council

30 New House Lane, Thanington Without, Canterbury, Kent. CT4 7BH
Meetings on second Monday of the Month - Web Site www.thanington-pc.gov.uk

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Review Officer (Canterbury)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1 5LG

Monday, 12 May 2014

Dear Review Officer

We have to protest most strongly against your proposals for re-warding in Canterbury in so far as they affect us. They seem to be both in breach of your own guidelines and destructive of what the Parish Council has achieved over recent years. They also ignore the arguments advanced by local residents. So we would urge you to amend them.

The proposal to take part of the Parish - wrongly described as Thanington Without - out of Wincheap Ward and to include it in the proposed Chartham and Stone Street ward, contradicts your principles, notably of not dividing parishes which you have applied to Sturry. This ignores the fact that the present South Ward of Thanington Without, as was pointed out to you, is intimately connected to the North ward and Wincheap. Access from the South to the North is only possible by using Wincheap. Moreover, the Parish Council has worked tirelessly to unite the two parts of the parish and believes it has been successful in this. And no evidence is adduced to suggest that any benefit will accrue to the Parish as a result of the change. Indeed, the Council firmly believes that the re-organisation recommended can do nothing but cause untold harm and disruption to the existing and future residents and unique >community spirit= of the Parish of Thanington Without that the Council and its residents are justly proud of. For many Councillors, the amputation you suggest ignores the many years of hard and dedicated work by both the current/past Councillors and equally the residents of the Parish to reach the current status of harmony and cohesion. We have become a well-known and respected team who are truly a part of the local community/Parish.

The recommendations assume, as wrongly suggested to you by the dominant party on the Council, that the South Ward is rural. It is not. It is very much attached to the city and its problems. Thus residents never attend the Rural Area Members panel only the Canterbury Area equivalent. So the switch is anything but conducive to good administration and effective representation. Your case might have been stronger before 1989 but the loss of much of the farmland then in the south of the parish to Chartham has removed most of its rural nature. The Parish Council, being essentially urban, would find it hard to deal with District Councillors from two very different communities: Wincheap and the villages. This would be very unsettling.

Given this, we also object to the decision, following on the splitting of the Parish, to reduce the representation of the South ward by one. The Council believes that its commitment to treating all parts of the Parish equally requires a slight degree of over representation. It fears that, were there to be a single councillor for the South Ward, illness or other obligations, would deprive the South Ward of the voice which the Council very much wants it to have. It rather suggests that the LGBCE wants to divide the parish much more radically than it has admitted.

So we believe that the South ward should be attached to Wincheap. We do not think that the addition of 267 voters to the latter will significantly alter the deviation from the norm of equal representation. It would make for a ward which would continue to represent realities on the ground and the community feeling which has been constructed over the years. We accept that this would mean re-jigging Chartham & Stone Street. However, given that you can adduce no justification for this strange creation, which lacks all unity, this would be a positive step.

Kind Regards

Roger Cheeseworth
Clerk
Thanington Without (Civil) Parish Council