

ANDREW TURNER MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

S. Hartley Esq
Review Manager
Isle of Wight Review
The Boundary Committee for England
Treyelan House
Great Peter Street
London
SW1P 2HW

10 January 2008

Please quote on all correspondence
Our ref: AJT/AJT/LG/BoundaryChanges

Dear Mr Hartley,

BOUNDARY CHANGES

I am writing to you regarding the Further Electoral Review on the Isle of Wight to ask that my comments be included in the consultation process.

I am suggesting the following changes which I believe should be adopted;

BOUNDARY COMMITTEE
PROPOSED NAME

MY SUGGESTED NAMES

Gurnard
Lake South
Newport North
Northwood
Ryde South

Gurnard and Cowes West
Shanklin North and Lake South
Fairlee *OR* Newport North East
Northwood and Cowes South West
Ashey, Havenstreet and Haylands *OR*
Ashey, Havenstreet and Ryde South

Cowes Area

I propose that 'Gurnard' be renamed 'Gurnard and Cowes West'. I believe it is necessary to reflect the fact that many residents who live near to the centre of Cowes should not be included in an electoral division merely entitled 'Gurnard'. The geographical nature of the division demonstrates the need to ensure it is appropriately named to reflect that many of the residents live in Cowes.

I have been informed that Cowes Town Council is in support of the electoral division title 'Cowes West and Gurnard' which is in keeping with my proposal.

The Boundary Committee's suggested name for 'Northwood' would in my opinion be better named as 'Northwood and Cowes South West'. I enclose a letter from Cllr Roger Mazillius to this effect on behalf of the Northwood Village Management Committee who support my proposal. Again, the title represents all the areas which would fall within its boundaries.

Andrew Turner: Member of Parliament for the Isle of Wight

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Newport Area

I am also of the opinion that 'Newport North' should be more suitably titled either 'Fairlee' or 'Newport North East'. My preference is to keep the current title of 'Fairlee' and Cllr Dawn Cousins to whom I have spoken has also sited this as her preference.

If 'Fairlee' cannot be considered then I believe 'Newport North East' should be considered as a substitute given that the electoral division lies to the north east of Newport. I really do feel it is vitally important that the new electoral division titles accurately reflect the geographic nature of their boundaries. In addition, the division name 'Newport North' already exists which could lead to confusion if a largely different area were to be named with an identical title.

Lake and Shanklin Area

I propose this electoral division should be named 'Shanklin North and Lake South' in place of 'Lake South', in order to fully reflect the spread of the electorate. It is vital to ensure the division names include the areas in which the voters reside.

The number of voters living in Lake South Parish ward is 1310 and the number of voters living in Shanklin North Parish ward is 1632. This demonstrates the need for the title to bear the name of all voters concerned and I therefore propose the title of 'Shanklin North and Lake South' as 55% of the electorate reside in Shanklin North.

Ryde Area

I propose 'Ryde South' should be renamed as 'Ashey, Havenstreet and Haylands' (or Ashey, Havenstreet and Ryde South). This reflects the mostly rural composition of the division as opposed to the more urban formation of Ryde. The electoral division is currently named 'Ashey' and I feel it would be appropriate to keep this element in the new title. In addition, the proposed division would predominantly include the three areas of Ashey, Havenstreet and Haylands (or Ashey, Havenstreet and Ryde South).

All three have their own identity and community and I therefore feel it is logical to name the division in such a way which represents them. Ashey and Havenstreet are both villages in their own right and to leave them unrepresented in the division title seems inappropriate.

Bembridge, Brading and St Helen's

I understand the proposal for the above area is to join 'Bembridge North', 'Bembridge South' and 'Brading and St Helen's' into one electoral division This would then give rise to two elected councillors representing the combined area. I do not believe this would be a practical or workable solution given the size and nature of the areas to be covered.

I believe it would be difficult for two councillors in this area alone to speak with one voice about issues affecting the electorate. It would be confusing for voters who instead of having a named councillor would need to choose whether to contact one of the other. This could lead



to confusion for both the electorate and Council, if others were all single member electoral divisions.

I would propose two alternative choices for this area. Firstly and my preferred choice would be two electoral divisions, one entitled 'Bembridge' and the other 'Brading and St Helen's' with one councillor appointed to each division. In my opinion this would be the most achievable split but it may not be a solution on which the Boundary Committee could agree.

Alternatively Bembridge could be split in two in order to create two new electoral divisions 'Bembridge North and St Helen's' and 'Bembridge South and Brading' each with their own councillor. This could be easily achieved given that Bembridge is already divided into two divisions. Whilst I would prefer to see the first option adopted I would be happy to accept the latter proposal in its place. I believe my proposal offers the more practical solution. If further information on this propose place let me know.

Conclusion

It is vital that voters feel integrated into the division in which they are located. If the names of the divisions do not fully reflect the nature of the boundaries there is a danger of incurring voter apathy. For example, a voter residing in the Shanklin North area may feel detached from a division which is entitled 'Lake South'. Voters need to feel their voice counts in their area and with many of the proposed names this does not promote a sense of involvement or integration.

Thank you for taking these suggestions into consideration and I look forward to hearing the final recommendations of the Committee.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew Turner
Member of Parliament for the Isle of Wight