

Lizzie Tovey
Electoral Services Manager

27th January 2015

Dear Lizzie

Community Governance Review

I am replying to your letter 3 November seeking the views of the community regarding the proposed transfer of a parish boundary between Clent and Hagley Parish Councils

Clent Parish Council is a reluctant participant in this review as we have not asked for it to take place and believe the residents who live within the area concerned, Area A / Clent West from May 2015 will receive a level of service which cannot be bettered through a transfer to Hagley Parish Council. This Parish Council is not therefore seeking any change in the boundary.

There have been Boundary reviews in the past, the last one occurring in 2002. On each occasion there has been a significant majority voting in favour of remaining within the Parish of Clent. In the view of the Parish Council nothing has changed to warrant another review. It is argued by some that by transferring to Hagley Parish Council (HPC) the extra parish precept paid to HPC can be spent on community facilities in Hagley. Clent Parish Council counter this by arguing that the precept should be spent on looking after our environment and keeping the parish tidy through maintenance, and safe with good street lighting. The precept that is paid to Clent Parish Council currently funds:

- Hedge cutting and maintenance
- Grass cutting of verges and open spaces
- Keeping footpaths clear
- Street lighting maintenance and renewal
- Grants to local groups or facilities where appropriate.

We ask that you also take into consideration that from the next Parish Council elections in May 2015, Clent Parish Council will have 9 Councillors as now but they will be split into two Wards as follows:

- 5 Councillors to represent Clent West – this is area A on the map.
- 4 Councillors to represent Clent East – this is Clent Village.

Parishioners of Clent Parish who live in Hagley, Area A will therefore be able to elect 5 people to represent their interests on the new Council and this should dispel any sense of disenfranchisement that some may currently feel.

We are aware that not all of our parishioners will agree with the views of their Parish Council expressed in this letter but equally there are many who do and for this reason we understand the requirement to seek views from as many people as possible and especially those people most affected by the change.

We also believe that it is those parishioners who live in Area A whose views are the most important as it is they who will be most affected by any change of boundary. Their collective view should therefore have precedence over the views of other residents in Hagley and Clent and both Parish Councils.

Kind regards

Nick Sugden
Chairman Clent Parish Council