

Ian Bigwood

From: Phil Hobson [ph2011@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk]
Sent: 23 February 2012 23:49
To: Electoral Registration
Subject: Community Governance Review
Attachments: wh-pc-v2.pdf; Draft gov review report.doc

Dear Mr Bigwood,

In connection with the Community Governance Review I would strongly suggest that the Well Hill Hundreds Ward of Shoreham Parish Council should be removed from Shoreham Parish and turned into a standalone parish. Residents in the Well Hill Hundreds Ward are not as well served by local government as it would be if it had its own parish council. Well Hill has its own sense of identity and issues that are not found anywhere else in the parish. For the first time in many years, children are being born in Well Hill. In order to create an environment where families with young children can feel confident to stay in Well Hill, the community needs to take control of its destiny. It can no longer be swept along with solutions that are designed for other parts of the parish. It needs its own solutions to its unique challenges. The Well Hill Residents' Association and the Well Hill Lane Road Association go some way to take on those challenges. But they lack the funds to employ an administrator, such as a clerk, to be truly effective. If the Well Hill Hundreds Ward became a parish council, the local community would have the funds to deliver solutions tailored to Well Hill.

A few years ago the Well Hill Residents' Association produced a document - which I have attached - which highlighted the reasons that a parish council for Well Hill would be desirable as such a parish should reflect a small, distinctive and recognisable community of interest, with its own sense of identity.

Very little has changed and the document is still valid today. What I can add is that my time on Shoreham Parish Council (continuously for more than 11 years) has highlighted even more differences that separate Well Hill from the rest of the Shoreham Parish. Three recent examples are emergency evacuation, policing and broadband.

In 2009 a fire, late at night, in Well Hill required residents to evacuate their homes. Some residents were taken to Chelsfield School - in the London Borough of Bromley, for shelter and sustenance. Well Hill is the only part of Shoreham Parish where an evacuation would need to be done outside of the Sevenoaks District Council Area. This illustrates that Well Hill needs to build relationships with Bromley whereas the rest of the parish does not.

Policing operational areas have, for several years become coterminous with District Council Ward boundaries. This has resulted in Shoreham Parish being covered by three policing areas. This makes it difficult to have a cohesive meeting between the Parish Council and Kent Police. The meeting is either very long with a large police contingent (to cover the three areas) or else aspects of policing in the parish do not get the attention they deserve. It would be far better from an administrative and practical view for a Parish Council to only have to liaise with a single policing area.

Earlier this year, the Well Hill Ward had access to fast broadband. This was a project that Well Hill liaised with Crockenhill Parish Council to achieve as it would not have any impact on any other part of Shoreham Parish. This is typical of many of the services Shoreham Parish Council provides in that they are usually unique to one part of the parish. In fact, I would go as far as to say that it is almost impossible for any parish wide scheme to be implemented due to the very different needs and aspirations of each ward in Shoreham Parish.

I have also attached a document produced by Shoreham Parish Council which contains information about the differences of the three wards. It contains a wealth of information including the estimated costs of splitting the parish council. It also mentions that "Independence for each ward would mean that for each council: All meetings would take place within that ward and all matters discussed relevant. Any expenses would solely be made for the benefit of that ward. There could be more volunteers to serve on the council that was so locally focussed, although this cannot be assumed."

Well Hill does not form a cohesive community with any other part of Shoreham Parish. Well Hill does not have facilities or services that are used by other parts of Shoreham Parish and Well Hill residents usually use services outside Shoreham Parish rather than within the parish.

Well Hill has its own identity which is very different to other parts of Shoreham Parish. It is a very independent and resilient community. For Well Hill to flourish, it needs to harness that sense of independence and resilience. Well Hill has a sense of place – a place with a 'positive' feeling for people and local distinctiveness. Making the Well Hill Hundreds a parish would be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and it would be effective and convenient.

There would not be any negative impact on community cohesion for the rest of the parish as there is no cohesion between the wards of Shoreham Parish.

A Well Hill Parish would create a cohesive, attractive and economically vibrant local community. It would be a representative, accountable governance systems which both facilitate strategic, visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations; and have effective engagement with the community at neighbourhood level including capacity building to develop the community's skills, knowledge and confidence. It would also enable Well Hill to have community representation to other bodies such as Transport for London and Kent County Council where the views would reflect a distinctive and recognisable community of place, with its own sense of identity.

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report, Our Shared Future, is clear that communities have expert knowledge about their own circumstances and that actions at the local level contribute to achieving integration and cohesion, with local authorities well placed to identify any pressures. For Shoreham Parish, the local expert knowledge is usually limited to the ward a person lives in. If the Well Hill Hundreds Ward remains part of Shoreham Parish, I believe that Well Hill residents will continue to hide their knowledge and expertise.

Community cohesion is about local communities where people should feel they have a stake in the society, and in the local area where they live by having the opportunity to influence decisions affecting their lives. For residents of the Well Hill Hundreds Ward their local area is where they live and to better influence their lives would require local administration that is only concerned with their local area. Having the Well Hill Hundreds as part of Shoreham Parish diminishes that sense of individual identity.

In rural areas, the Government wants to encourage the involvement of local people in developing their community and having a part to play in shaping the decisions that affect them. A parish can be a useful and democratic means of achieving this.

It is for all the above reasons that I urge you to create a parish for the Well Hill Hundreds so that the community can capitalise on its unique identity and strengths in order to create a more vibrant and cohesive community.

Cllr Phil Hobson

Any of the statements or comments made above should be regarded as personal and not necessarily those of Shoreham Parish Council, any constituent part or connected body.

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Summary

Well Hill is located in the northern part of the Parish of Shoreham. Crockenhill Parish is to the north, Eynsford to the east, London Borough of Bromley to the west. It is in Sevenoaks District Council's Crockenhill and Well Hill Ward.

Well Hill has a separate and distinct identity to the main villages (Shoreham and Badgers Mount) in Shoreham Parish.

It does not have a strong community connection with either Shoreham or Badgers Mount. Its strongest connection with another community is to Chelsfield Village which, unlike both Shoreham and Badger Mount, is within easy walking distance.

It is, therefore, proposed that there is the constitution of a new parish by the separation of the Well Hill Hundreds Ward of Shoreham Parish. This is desirable having regard to the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government.

Introduction

Parish Councils have two main roles: community representation and local administration. For both purposes it is desirable that a parish should reflect a small, distinctive and recognisable community of interest, with its own sense of identity. The feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are the primary considerations.

Well Hill is a small, distinctive and recognisable community of interest, with its own sense of identity.

Well Hill has its own Mission Church. When it was built more than 100 years ago, it was part of Shoreham Ecclesiastical Parish. In 1936 the Lord Bishop of Rochester reviewed the parochial circumstances of the various parishes in this Diocese from the spiritual, administrative, and geographical standpoints. It was felt that "Well Hill, three miles from Shoreham Parish Church, could be much more effectively administered by being transferred to Chelsfield, one mile distant."

The M25 is a psychological barrier that lassoes Well Hill into London. It was not so long ago that the properties on the west side of Pump Lane were in the Greater London area. Several residents who moved into their houses in the Greater London area now find themselves in Sevenoaks District.

Less than four years ago the boundary commission created a new Well Hill Hundreds Ward and split it away from Shoreham and moved it to Crockenhill for District Council elections.

Local Support

In the last two years, three surveys of residents views have been obtained. In all cases there has NOT been a majority support for the status quo - that is, Well Hill staying as part of Shoreham Parish Council. Each survey took a slightly different approach and the results are summarised below. The basic question was “would your community be better served by staying as part of Shoreham Parish Council, being part of a different parish council or becoming a separate parish council?” The survey by Shoreham Parish Council did not give the option of being part of a different parish council.

The Well Hill Residents’ Association survey allowed each adult in a household to respond. Therefore, these results reflect the views of adults in the Well Hill Hundreds Ward. In addition, other results from the same survey were compared to the 2001 Census and, using standard statistical methods, it was found that the respondents were a representative sample of the whole population.

The Shoreham Parish Plan Group survey only permitted a single response per household so it is not obvious if the results can be directly compared to Well Hill Residents’ Association results. Other results from the Shoreham Parish Plan Group survey were compared to the 2001 Census and it was found that the households were a representative sample of the whole population but not as good a sample as the Well Hill Residents’ Associations sample.

The Shoreham Parish Council survey was sent to registered electors and could be compared to neither the Well Hill Residents’ Association results nor the Shoreham Parish Plan Group’s results. As this was the only question asked, it was not possible to use other questions that were similar to 2001 Census questions to compare Shoreham Parish Council’s sample to the 2001 Census to ascertain if it was a representative sample of the whole population.

Organisation	Date	Respondents	Stay with Shoreham Parish Council	Become Part of Another Parish Council	A New Well Hill Parish Council
Well Hill Residents’ Association	Late 2003	Adult	34%	14%	51%
Shoreham Parish Plan Group	Early 2004	Household	40%	28%	33%
Shoreham Parish Council	Late 2004	Registered Elector	50%	(not an option)	50%

Local Facilities

Almost all local facilities to Well Hill are NOT located within Shoreham Parish. Without exception, the nearest facilities to Well Hill are not the nearest facilities to Shoreham Village. For example, the closest library to Well Hill is Orpington, whereas the closest library to Shoreham is Otford. In most cases there are several facilities of the same type that are closer to Well Hill than the same facility in Shoreham. For example, there are three Post Offices that are closer to Well Hill than the one in Shoreham Village.

There are few reasons for Well Hill residents to venture to Shoreham Village and mingle with Shoreham residents as the facilities that are local to Well Hill are not as local to Shoreham Village and vice versa. It is unlikely that Well Hill residents will use the same local facilities as Shoreham residents. For this reason Well Hill cannot be seen to be part of the Shoreham community.

A comprehensive list of useful facilities is given in Appendix A and the distance from Well Hill. The distance figures were obtained from <http://www.upmystreet.com/> or by direct measurement. The table shows the location of facilities that are closest to Well Hill and the distance to them. It also shows the location of the facility closest to Shoreham Village and the distance of the facility from Well Hill.

Looking at the example of post offices, the Shoreham Post Office is 2.4 miles from Well Hill. Yet, there are three Post Offices (Pratts Bottom, Chelsfield and Ramsden) that are closer to Well Hill than the one in Shoreham.

With Well Hill being about two and a half miles from Shoreham, and less than three miles from Orpington, it is not surprising that most facilities used by Well Hill are in the Orpington area.

To put the distance between Well Hill and Shoreham into perspective, the distance between Well Hill¹ and Shoreham Village Hall is about 50 metres longer than the distance from the car park at the front of Sevenoaks District Council offices in Argyle Road to the Dunbrick Recycling Centre.

Whereas Shoreham will tend to use facilities in Shoreham, Otford and Sevenoaks, Well Hill residents use facilities in Chelsfield, Orpington and Swanley.

¹measured from the fork in the road known as Well Hill and where the Parish noticeboard is located

Local Survey

In late 2003 the Well Hill Residents' Association (WHRA) organised a questionnaire to find out the views of residents on many issues. The results are available on the web at <http://www.whra.org.uk/cgi-bin/whra/qresults.cgi> and some of these specific results lead to the conclusion that an independent Well Hill Parish Council would be in the best interests of residents.

What is the Local School?

The question asked was "How many children do you send to the following Primary schools? "

Only half the primary age children in Well Hill attend the Shoreham Parish school. A third attend the closest school to Well Hill which is just inside the London Borough of Bromley. We feel that if more residents were aware that they do not have to have their children educated in a KCC-funded school, most of the children from Well Hill would, in fact, attend Chelsfield Primary School. Chelsfield Primary School is within walking distance of Well Hill, whereas Shoreham Primary School is not.

Place of Work

The question asked was "Where is your main place of work, school or college?"

40% of residents spend the day time to the north (Dartford), the west (London) or in Well Hill whereas Shoreham Village is to the south east of Well Hill. This gives Well Hill residents more of a London/Dartford affinity than a Shoreham affinity.

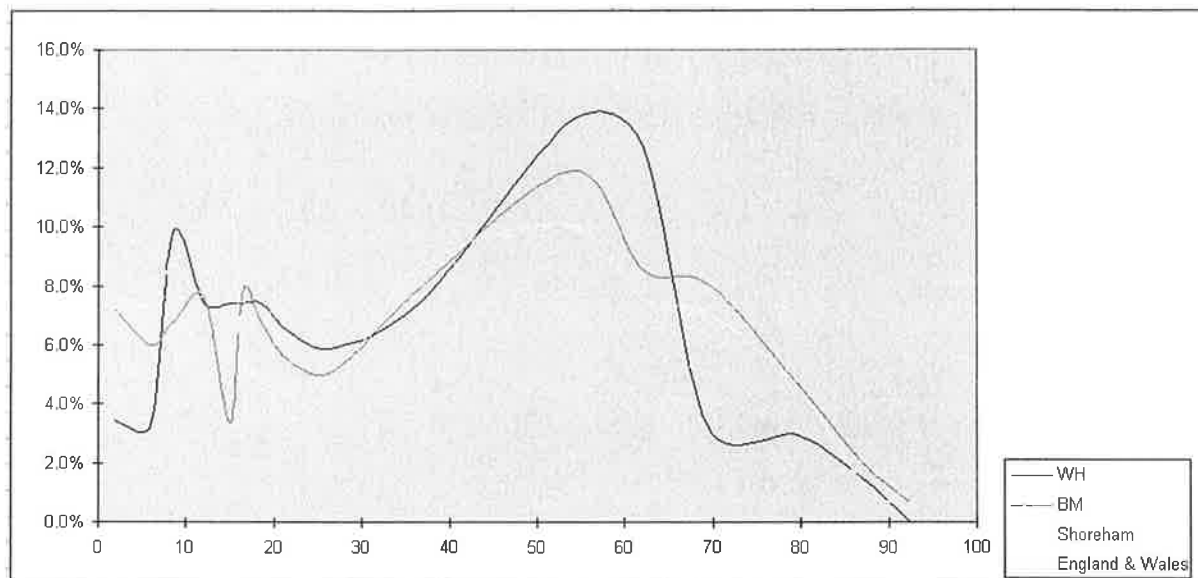
Place of Worship

The question asked was "How often do you use the following?"

Of the churches, the local Well Hill church is the most popular, closely followed by Chelsfield Church. Other churches are more popular than either Shoreham or Crockenhill churches. Well Hill is not within Shoreham Ecclesiastical Parish. Chelsfield church is the local church used by Well Hill residents for christenings, marriages and, sadly, burials.

Age Distribution from 2001 Census

There is a clear difference in the age make-up of Well Hill when compared to Shoreham and Badgers Mount. The following graph has been constructed from data publicly available from the 2001 Census.



The dark blue line representing Well Hill shows a marked deviation from the yellow line representing Shoreham. Well Hill has lesser proportion of school age and pre school aged children and a significantly lower proportion of those in the 65-75 age group (3.2% for Well Hill, 7.1% for Shoreham and 8.1% for Badger Mount). Having a significant difference in the demographic makeup of the wards of Shoreham Parish can indicate distinctive and separate recognisable communities.

Finances

In the financial year 2004/2005 the Well Hill Hundreds Ward's contribution of Shoreham Parish Council Precept was £5,800². If the same level of precept was levied for a separate Well Hill Parish Council (£5,800) there would be sufficient funds to provide for the administration costs and service costs of the new parish council.

Administration costs would be low. A clerk would only be required for a few hours per week. In a recent advert for a parish clerk, the workload was specified as "18 hours month with 12 evening meetings a year"³ - it is unlikely that a Well Hill Parish would require as much time as that as, apart from meetings, consultation documents, etc. there would not be much for the clerk to do. Obviously, if residents required more services, the administration load and cost could rise but this would be in line with the wishes of the community.

²This figure was supplied by Shoreham Parish Council in November 2004

³KAPC Parish News dated 2nd May 2006 for Selling Parish Council

Conclusion

The Well Hill Residents' Association believe that there are compelling reasons why a new Parish Council would be in the best interests of the residents of the Well Hill area.

The Church recognised that Well Hill should not be part of Shoreham Ecclesiastical Parish 70 years ago. Four years ago the boundary commission moved Well Hill out of Shoreham for District Council elections.

We believe that the time is now right for Well Hill to become independent. Making the split from Shoreham Civil Parish would complete the split started 70 years earlier when Well Hill became part of Chelsfield Ecclesiastical Parish and continued in 2003 with the District Council elections.

Appendix A

Comparison of Well Hill and Shoreham Village

This table compares the distance of many facilities from Well Hill.

The first column names the facility.

The next two columns list one or more locations of that facility in order of its distance from Well Hill and the distance of the facility from Well Hill by the quickest route.

The next column lists a single location of the facility that is closest to Shoreham Village. The last column shows the distance of that facility from Well Hill (not Shoreham). For example Shoreham Village Hall is no distance at all from Shoreham Village but is 2.5 miles from Well Hill. The nearest bank to Shoreham Village is in Otford and that bank is 3.4 miles from Well Hill.

	Well Hill		Shoreham	
Post Code	BR		TN	
Telephone Exchange	Knockholt		Otford	

A Proposal for a New Well Hill Parish Council/Meeting

Facility	Nearest to Well Hill	Distance From Well Hill (miles)	Nearest to Shoreham	Distance From Well Hill (miles)
Library	Chelsfield Village (mobile)	1.0	Otford	3.1
	Orpington	2.7		
Village Hall	Chelsfield Village	1.0	Shoreham	2.5
Church	Well Hill	0.0	Shoreham	2.8
Post Office	Pratts Bottom	1.8	Shoreham	2.4
	Chelsfield	1.9		
	Ramsden	2.0		
Bank	Orpington	2.7	Otford	3.4
	Swanley	3.3		
Pharmacy	Chelsfield	1.9	Otford	3.2
	Ramsden	2.0		
	Green Street Green	2.5		
	Orpington	2.7		
Doctor	Chelsfield	1.9	Otford	3.2
	Green Street Green	2.5		
Hospital (NHS)	Farnborough	4.0		
	Sidcup	5.0		
Dentist	Chelsfield	1.9	Otford	3.4
	Green Street Green	2.5		
	Orpington	2.7		
	Swanley	3.3		
Optician	Orpington	2.7	Sevenoaks	5.9
	Sidcup	5.5		
	Chislehurst	5.7		
	Hayes	5.8		
Primary School	Chelsfield Village	1.0	Shoreham	2.6
	Halstead	1.6		
	Goddington	1.7		
Local Shop	Goddington	1.7	Shoreham	2.5
Railway Station	Knockholt	0.8	Shoreham	3.1
	Chelsfield	1.9		
	Orpington	2.7		
Bus Stop	Chelsfield Village	0.8	Shoreham	2.4
Town served by nearest bus stop	Orpington	2.7	Sevenoaks	5.9
Petrol Station	Goddington	1.8	Otford/Bat and Ball	4.2

A Proposal for a New Well Hill Parish Council/Meeting

	Pratts Bottom	1.8		
	Green Street Green	2.5		
	Knockholt	2.6		
	Swanley	3.3		
Supermarket	Green Street Green	2.5	Otford/Bat and Ball	4.2
	Orpington	2.7		
	Swanley	3.3		

Community Governance

The parish council is asked to consider making recommendations to Sevenoaks District Council for any changes in the parish boundary. The purpose of this document is to make it easier for councillors to assess the implications and form an opinion. The time frame is as follows:

we have 3 weeks to make a response to Sevenoaks District Council

Sevenoaks District Council considers responses and makes its recommendation

A period of Consultation follows during which time the parish council may need to talk to residents

Implementation in 2015

The present parish, formed in 1894 consists of three separate communities, each with a clear sense of their own independent identities each having established its own Residents Association/Society. However the three communities are actually neighbours and do share concerns from time to time. It is only Shoreham that has a community/recreation space and has allotments, which is the first duty of a parish council to provide if there is a need and it is possible to do so. Below is information which identifies differences and common interests/concerns:

District Councillors	Emergency Services and Policing	Local services/facilities	Concerns
Badgers Mount, Shoreham and Well Hill served by different District Councillors	Well Hill get 1 st response from London Fire and Rescue not Kent as do B.Mount and Sh'm. 3 separate policing areas	Each of the three areas accesses services provided by different post offices, shops and libraries. Few pupils from Badgers Mount or Well Hill attend or have attended Shoreham Village School. Well Hill receives Bromley 'phone book, Sh'm and B. Mount receive T.Wells. Limited participation in Sh'm based societies by B.Mount and Well Hill residents. Some interest in acquiring allotments from B.Mount.	Currently both B.Mount and Sh'm over mineral and gravel extraction.

The Committee met to review the pros and cons of the options available and present them in a form that the Parish Council could consider and thereby make a recommendation

Options:

Status Quo remains: Badgers Mount, Shoreham and Well Hill make up one parish council

Each of the three wards forms its own parish council

Shoreham Parish comprises Badgers Mount and Shoreham wards

Shoreham Parish comprises Shoreham and Well Hill wards

Badgers Mount and Well Hill form a separate parish council and Shoreham is independent

Badgers Mount ward becomes a ward of Halstead Parish Council* thereby adding 545 electors to the existing 1208

Well Hill ward becomes a ward of Crockenhill Parish Council* thereby adding 216 electors to the existing 1269

*These two options require that the other parish councils would not be opposed to admitting them.

Status Quo: There would be some difficulty in developing a Parish Plan that adequately met the needs of these three different communities. Details of some of the pros and cons below:

Pros	Cons
There are established structures that work	Well Hill and Badgers Mount contribute to a larger precept that does not necessarily benefit those communities
Everybody benefits from economy of scales	Wards do not share same District Councillors
Level of income established	Little social contact between residents of the 3 areas, so no established link
Size of parish may carry more weight	Served by 3 policing areas, so consistent approach difficult to achieve
Diversity of wards could be seen as strength and inhibiting a myopic view of issues	Councillors have to consider issues that have little relevance for their ward

Each ward forms its own Parish Council: Is this viable?

A District Council must establish a parish council if the population consists of 200 or more local government electors. The numbers of electors in each ward is above 200:

Badgers Mount – 545, Shoreham – 892, Well Hill – 216: thus even Well Hill is just viable as an independent parish. However 2004 figures show the smallest parish in Sevenoaks District had 428 electors (represented by 5 councillors) and the next smallest Cowden had 609 (represented by 7 councillors)

Consideration needs to be given as to whether potential benefits are greater than increased costs.

Ward within current parish and percentage of electorate	No. of Councillors required	Change in income from precept at present level	Cost of Parish Clerk	Cost of insurance	Section 137 of Local Gov Act 1972* expenditure permitted: (£10,168 currently for whole parish)
Badgers Mount 33%	5		Est. £4,000 p.a. 5 hrs. per week plus expenses	Est. £1,000 p.a. plus expenses	£3,352
Shoreham 54%	7	Reduced by 45 %: residents would need to pay more	Unchanged: £12,000 plus expenses	Unchanged: £1,500	£5,486
Well Hill 13%	5		£2,000 p.a. plus expenses	Est. £500	£1,328
* This enables local councils to spend limited money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory expenditure. It is capped. Most of this expenditure is grants that are awarded					

Independence for each ward would mean that for each council:

All meetings would take place within that ward and all matters discussed relevant.

Any expenses would solely be made for the benefit of that ward.

There could be more volunteers to serve on the council that was so locally focussed, although this cannot be assumed.

Each new Parish could form links with neighbouring parishes on joint issues of threat or benefit, e.g. mineral and gravel extraction, achieving faster broadband

Shoreham Parish comprises Badgers Mount and Shoreham Wards

Pros	Cons
Some status quo maintained	Loss of precept contribution from Well Hill, est up to 13%
Some economy of scale in covering running costs	Wards not served by same District Councillors
Share some common concerns	Badgers Mount still contribute discussion time and support cost of amenities in Shoreham B.Mount residents may feel they do not benefit from

Shoreham Parish comprises Shoreham and Well Hill Wards

Pros	Cons
Shoreham benefits from Well Hill contribution to precept	Well Hill would still contribute to amenities within Shoreham
Some social links already established as well as council structure	The precept would need to increase by about 30%
Well Hill remains part of bigger parish council without being overwhelmed as it could be by linking with Crockenhill	Well Hill Councillor would still be outnumbered by Shoreham Councillors

New Parish comprising Badgers Mount and Well Hill Wards

Pros	Cons
Economy of scale: a beneficial option to being two separate parishes	Need to establish new structures
More overlap in services accessed, transport links	Focus of Well Hill in some areas more towards Bromley/London than Sevenoaks district
Badgers Mount benefits from Well Hill Contribution	Some increase in running costs over maintaining status quo

Badgers Mount joins Halstead Parish

Well Hill joins Crockenhill Parish

Although grouped together, one option does not depend on the other. However pros and cons are similar. Both the wards of the current Shoreham Parish would (if admitted) join existing established structures and could possibly more easily access amenities they would contribute to. However in either case the councillors joining to represent these wards would be outnumbered by those of the existing parish councillors.

Ian Bigwood

From: Diane Wisdom [dianew1616@hotmail.com]
Sent: 24 February 2012 16:33
To: Electoral Registration
Subject: Community Governance Review

Dear Mr Bigwood,

With reference to the possibility of making Well Hill a parish in it's own right, I should like to add the following comments:

Well Hill is currently served by Shoreham Parish Council but I do not feel that Shoreham is close enough in proximity to Well Hill to fully understand our needs and circumstances.

I believe that we should be given the opportunity to form a totally independant Parish Council, which would have the ability to dedicate it's efforts and funds, to directly improve the lives of Well Hill residents.

Most residents of Well Hill use the facilities of Chelsfield and Orpington, as opposed to those of Shoreham, hence there is not a great deal of interaction between the two villages.

The Annual Produce Show in Chelsfield Village is always supported by residents of Well Hill. This is one small example of our tendency to be more involved with areas we feel more connected with and which we generally travel to, and through, in our day to day lives.

I also believe that residents would be more likely to take an interest in, and get involved with, a dedicated Well Hill Parish Council than they currently do under the umbrella of Shoreham Parish Council.

Notwithstanding the above comments I believe that Shoreham currently has a thriving Parish Council. I do not believe that it will suffer in any way by Well Hill forming it's own Parish Council.

In fact I believe that, in the case of major issues for the whole area, there could actually be a benefit in having the co-operation, and opinions, of two separate councils as opposed to just one.

I trust that you will take these comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wisdom
Resident of Well Hill Lane.

Ian Bigwood

From: Tom Eldridge [tetservices@gmail.com]
Sent: 23 February 2012 12:06
To: Electoral Registration
Subject: Community governance review

Dear Sirs

I live in Well Hill, BR6 and understand registered voters have the opportunity to express their views on the review. Well Hill is currently part of Shoreham Parish Council together with the Badgers Mount area, and as I understand, we can put our thoughts forward now with a final review being undertaken in April.

The question seems to be should Well Hill and Badgers Mount remain as part of Shoreham Parish Council, form their own Parish Councils or combine in any combination.

As I understand, the benefits of becoming our own Parish Council would give Well Hill

- financial independence
- the ability to set its own Parish levy as part of the KCC council tax
- freedom to use this funding as Councillors see fit for the Well Hill area.

The drawbacks are

- 5 councillors would need to stand to form a Parish Council. In such a small area, (216 voters), I think it would be difficult to achieve that level of interest from residents.
- If only a couple of residents stand, they could 'co-opt' up to 2 others each to form the quorum required. This could lead to a number of likeminded councillors making decisions for the local population without opposition.
- In such a small community there is always the possibility that pressure could be put on a councillor to achieve something that otherwise might not have been agreed, or be in the best interests of the whole community.
- When issues need to be discussed that would affect the wider community, or issues that are outside our small area, we would need form links with neighbouring Parish Council to make our voice heard and have any impact.
- A large portion of the funding raised would need to be allocated to the costs of a Parish Clerk, reducing available spending in the area.

Surveys were carried out in 2003 by Well Hill Residents Association and 2004 by Shoreham Parish Council on this matter and the results were roughly a 50/50 split from those that responded.

Well Hill Residents Association has only been advised of this current review this month which has not given enough time to conduct a co-ordinated survey of all residents opinions. It would be in the best interest of all residents to have a proper opportunity to be surveyed before any final decisions are made.

The benefits of remaining with Shoreham Parish Council give the Well Hill community; security with established links, economy of scale financially, the larger Parish Council view carrying more weight in local issues.

On balance, I feel the interests of the residents of Well Hill would be best served by remaining as part of Shoreham Parish Council.

Regards
Jill Eldridge

Ian Bigwood

From: Jessica Reid [jessnut79@googlemail.com]
Sent: 24 February 2012 14:36
To: Electoral Registration
Subject: Well Hill as a standalone council
Attachments: wellhillparishcouncilfeb2012.doc

I have attached a copy of my letter with my thoughts on Well Hill Parish Council becoming a stand alone parish. I have also copied and pasted it below.

Many thanks

Dear Mr Bigwood,

In connection with the Community Governance Review I have some reservations that the Well Hill Hundreds Ward of Shoreham Parish Council should be removed from Shoreham Parish and turned into a standalone parish. Whilst I agree that it would be a great idea with regard to a lot of matters, I disagree with it on other matters. I have outlined my pros and cons below.

Residents in the Well Hill Hundreds Ward are not as well served by local government as it would be if it had its own parish council. Well Hill has its own sense of identity and issues that are not found anywhere else in the parish. If the Well Hill Hundreds Ward became a parish council, the local community would have the funds to deliver solutions tailored to Well Hill.

I understand that the policing of the area is currently covered by 3 policing areas. This makes it difficult to have a cohesive meeting between the Parish Council and Kent Police. The meeting is either very long with a large police contingent (to cover the three areas) or else aspects of policing in the parish do not get the attention they deserve. It would be far better from an administrative and practical view for a Parish Council to only have to liaise with a single policing area.

I do not believe that a Well Hill Parish would have any negative impact on community cohesion for the rest of the parish. A Well Hill Parish would also enable Well Hill to have community representation to other bodies such as Transport for London and Kent County Council where the views would reflect a distinctive and recognisable community of place, with its own sense of identity.

My main reservation would be in regards to planning. Having a parish with such a small population, 214, I feel that some of the planning applications would be viewed unfairly as some people aim to prosper within the community and others aim to hinder any developments or forward thinking by residents and business's. I feel that the Shoreham Parish Council would give a more unbiased opinion on such planning applications.

Another reservation that I have is that within such a small community will there be enough diversity within the councilors'. Yes, there are more and more families on Well Hill now but unfortunately due to family ties with young children I very much doubt that any younger mums or dads would have time to sit on the council therefore would there needs and views within the community be over looked or missed anyway.

It is for all the above reasons that I urge you to consider the proposal of a stand-alone parish for Well Hill very carefully.

Jessica Reid (Well Hill resident).