

Saltdean Residents' Association

*Founded in 1934 Embracing East and West Saltdean
(Currently over 700 members)*

**Ms Janet Preece
1 Rye Close
Saltdean
East Sussex
BN2 8PP**

Mr Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorgis
Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Brighton & Hove City Council
King's House
Grand Avenue
Hove BN3 2LS



31 May 2009

Dear Mr Ghebre-Ghiorgis

Re: Administrative Boundary Review – Saltdean, Sussex

The Saltdean Residents Association (over 700 members) is campaigning for the unification of Saltdean within one local authority. As you may know at present it is split between Brighton and Lewes District. The division is right down the main shopping street and this causes tremendous confusion and unnecessary bureaucracy. This matter has been outstanding ever since Saltdean was created over 80 years ago and it is about time the town stopped being ignored in its requests for unification. The last request made after a full survey in 2001 undertaken by this organisation was ignored by all the councils and the Boundary Commission.

We have written to the current Boundary Committee asking that a review be undertaken but we know that such requests can also be made by the local authority. We would therefore ask that Brighton and Hove undertake a coordinated survey of all areas within Saltdean to see what the will of the community is. This would mean that Brighton & Hove would need to deal with Lewes District Council to ensure that a common approach is adopted. Although the residents may want to be unified within one authority there is also the question of which one they would prefer. Thus any survey would need to cover both aspects.

As background can I say that this Association has asked that the Boundary Committee undertakes an administrative boundary review and takes account of the legitimate desire by this community to be treated as one town rather than having an arbitrary boundary which historically was in place as a parish boundary before the town was built in the 1920's and 1930's. We now need the town to be unified within one authorities area . It is appreciated that this creates other issues in adjoining towns in respect of electoral wards and sizes of those wards but why should Saltdean not have a right to be treated as a community in its own right. The adjoining towns of

Telscombe Cliffs and Rottingean are able to enjoy a sense of completeness whilst Saltdean is not. This is simply not acceptable.

This Association held a meeting on the 28th March 2009 to discuss how we progress the desire for unification. It was very well attended with over 140 people present. A presentation by ex SRA Chair Duncan Ward provided the history and background to the division of Saltdean into East and West. He detailed the results from the referendum that he organized in 2001 which had a high and significant response. This showed at that time that 80% of respondents wanted Saltdean to be united and of those in favour 75% wanted to join with Brighton and Hove. Full details are on an old SRA website at:

<http://www.saltdean.info/sraref.htm>

Contributions from residents at the meeting included the fact that East Sussex County Council had a higher council tax and there were more tiers of local government for East Saltdean. It has 10 councillors on 3 councils whereas West Saltdean which is a larger area has just 3 councillors on Brighton and Hove City Council. Other issues raised were the difficulty in getting things changed as we have to deal with so many different officials especially if it is anything to do with Longridge Avenue as it spans the boundary. Of course having Saltdean under one council might encourage more investment in the area, give the town more of a say in influencing issues of concern and create savings in costs.

At the meeting there were concerns that unification within Brighton and Hove would create no real benefits for East Saltdean. In addition there are difficulties in rearranging electoral wards, ensuring that their size is consistent across the various councils. Any change would impact upon Brighton and Hove wards as well as call into question the viability of Telscombe Town Council if it lost East Saltdean. A suggested approach might be to discuss with Telscombe and Peacehaven the possibility of their unifying under one council. To do this they would need a referendum and similarly Saltdean should have another referendum.

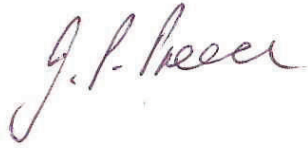
For your interest

- There were 120 people that signed into the meeting of which were 62 East Saltdean residents, 41 West Saltdean residents, 17 did not note their address, plus 5 others including Dr Des Turner MP, Cllr Gill Mitchell, Cllr Carly Butler, Cllr John Livings, Cllr Philip Howson. Cllr Brian Page and Cllr David Smith.
- It is difficult to draw any conclusions but the fact that there were 50% more East Saltdean residents present when in fact West Saltdean is a larger area indicates to me that unification as a subject is of more interest to East Saltdean residents than West Saltdean residents.
- A show of hands indicated that a majority were in favour of unification. Another show of hands showed a slight majority in favour of unification within Brighton and Hove.

Since then we have raised this matter with the press and The Argus printed a full centre page article on the 30 May 2009 with a supportive comments article demanding that the pros and cons be drawn up and presented to all its residents so that they can decide once and for all in a vote.

I would now ask that this whole matter be looked into by all the councils concerned and that they request an administrative boundary review by the Boundary Committee as soon as possible as well as organize a survey or referendum of all residents in Saltdean.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Preece'.

Janet Preece
Secretary Saltdean Residents Association

Cc: Heads of Democratic Services, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Lewes District.
Councillors for Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Lewes District, Telscombe Town
Dr Des Turner, MP

