

SUTTON VALENCE PARISH COUNCIL

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From the Clerk:

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Mr Robert Mellor BSC, DIPTRP, DIPDBE, DMS, MRICS, MRTPI
C/O The Programme Officer
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14/9/16

REPRESENTATION FROM SUTTON VALENCE PARISH COUNCIL ON LARGER VILLAGES - SP15

Dear Mr Mellor

Sutton Valence Parish Council (R19170) seeks the deletion of Sutton Valence as a Larger Village from the draft Local Plan. The Audit that was completed by MBC was flawed. At a meeting with the Officers on 10/12/13 they stated that 'the criteria that was used to designate Sutton Valence as a Larger Village was subjective and therefore difficult to explain'. A lot of weight was given by MBC to the 'good playing pitches' The Parish Council has seen the map and the 'good playing pitches' belong to the Independent School and are not accessible to our residents.

The reasons for our objection are:

1. **Petition** - The Parish Council consulted with its Parishioners on MBC's reasoning behind the designation. As a result over 700 Parishioners signed a petition objecting. This was presented to the Full Council and referred to the Cabinet where it was 'noted'. Despite follow up letters to the Chief Executive the Parishioner's petition has been ignored.
2. **Lack of services** – Sutton Valence has 3 pubs, 2 hairdressers and an estate agent in the middle of the Village. Outside of the Village centre there is a post office in a farm shop, 2 plant nurseries and 3 garages. There are 2 doctor's surgeries, a primary, a pre-school, and a fee paying Independent School.

To compare with Coxheath (Larger Village), Coxheath has:

Restaurant
Pub
Primary School
Pre-School
Secondary School within walking distance
2 x Supermarket
Bank
Library
Health Centre
Children Centre

Dentist
2 x Doctors
Post Office
Butchers
2 x bakers
Café
Chemist
4 x take away restaurants
Florist
Funeral Director

These two Parishes are not comparable.

3. **Transport** – The only public transport - the number 12 bus service runs to Maidstone and Tenterden. This is hourly with a much reduced service in the evenings and at the weekend. On a Sunday this service stops at 17.59. The return fare of £7.00 is prohibitive.

To compare with Coxheath (Larger Village), Coxheath has:

Regular bus services numbers: 89 (3 times an hour), 5, 29 and T12 and a free bus to Tesco's.

4. Development

In the Local Plan Sutton Valence was given a single housing allocation of 40 dwellings, which are currently being built (**Coxheath over 400**)

Because Sutton Valence has been designated as a Larger Village and MBC were openly directing developers towards us, the Parish Council has had speculative applications in for another 84 dwellings.

Sutton Valence is historically a soft fruit growing area. The majority of these sites have come forward on agricultural land. In our emerging Neighbourhood Plan the evidence gathered confirms that the Parishioners do not want development on our green fields. The rural character of our Parish is being eroded.

The Parish Council respectfully requests that the status of Larger Village be removed from Sutton Valence.

Yours Sincerely

Janet Burnett
Clerk to the Parish Council