

George Dyson
Town Clerk

☎ (01273) 585493
✉ TownClerk@peacehaventowncouncil.gov.uk



Community House,
Meridian Way,
Peacehaven,
East Sussex,
BN10 8BB.

To Whom it may concern,

Peacehaven Town Council opposes any plans to change the current boundary of Lewes District as part of Local Government Reorganisation.

When the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to Council leaders on 5th February 2025, the Minister laid out criteria for unitary local government in a schedule. We believe that Peacehaven's needs will be overwhelmingly better met by being in the East Sussex Unitary rather than any variant of Brighton & Hove City Council. We believe the following points should be considered as per the Minister's letter.

Peacehaven is currently in sensible economic area with an appropriate tax base which does not create an undue advantage or disadvantage for one part of the area. Peacehaven's businesses are currently Ouse Valley and Seaford/ Lewes Town oriented, often with branches in several of the local towns, there is a risk that we could lose business to Brighton.

Geography and topography is better as we are in the East Sussex area. The watershed is at Telscombe Tye and our South Downs dry valley in the North of town flows and sometimes floods into the Ouse. There is no evidence to show that extra housing supply would not go to meet local needs if we were to become part of Brighton Unitary.

There is no evidence or analysis to suggest that there are any benefits for Peacehaven to being part of a Brighton Unitary Authority. Local engagement suggests a strong local opposition to this change.

Single tier arrangements in an East Sussex Unitary Authority are clear within the East Sussex proposal about improvements for Peacehaven: Peacehaven would remain in the Lewes district administrative area, with no transition costs. There would be substantial administrative upheaval if district were to be divided and all Peacehaven's service provision moved to Brighton & Hove. The only way in and out of Brighton is the A259, and the long stretch of the A259 to Brighton is already jammed in rush hours: employment, social, and educational needs for Peacehaven residents should be concentrated locally, or on the short Eastbound route to Lewes Town, not Westward.

The optimal numbers as set are met in the East Sussex Unitary Authority proposal.

There is a concern that consumer spending, employment, and businesses could be shifted Westward for the benefit of Brighton residents and to the detriment of Peacehaven.

If Lewes District is divided and East Sussex loses services to the Brighton Unitary Authority, including Social Services, Education, transition costs will likely be higher than any potential savings for any of the parties involved. There would also be significant impacts on the NGOs and charities such as Lewes District Citizens Advice, Sussex Community Development Association, SEN services in Schools, and Alcohol & Drugs related advice services.

Peacehaven residents could suffer financially as they become liable for Brighton & Hove City Council Debts.

There will be severe fragmentation of Social Services such as Social Care and Children's Services.

Peacehaven will likely lose its leadership role with Family Hub & youth services, currently shared with other towns in Lewes District, all social services would be disrupted for many years if Peacehaven services were shifted into the Brighton & Hove Unitary Authority.

Brighton & Hove City Council chose not to work co-operative with Lewes District, especially in their late decision to propose that areas to the East should be incorporated into the Brighton & Hove Unitary area.

Additionally, the Government guidance on boundary changes specifies that the existing District areas should be considered the building blocks for proposals unless there is a strong justification for more complex boundary changes. No such justification exists in this instance.

Yours sincerely, and on behalf of Peacehaven Town Council,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Dyson".

George Dyson
Town Clerk