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Mr. John Watling
Head of Electoral Services,
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Trowbridge
Wilts. BA14 8JN

05 October 2014

Dear Mr. Watling

Proposal by Corsham Council to change the boundary of Box parish

Posted to the Royal Naval Store Depot Copenacre in 1970, I resided in Corsham, with the exception of a period of service in Gibraltar until 1980, and I have been resident in Box since returning from a three year posting to Hongkong in 1983.

Box is a large village which possesses a strong sense of belonging, especially by "Boxonians" whose families have been resident for generations. This oneness, affects all, including relative newcomers such as my own family, and it would, in my opinion, be unforgivable should the viability of Box be destroyed by the proposals put forward by Corsham. This would occur should the bulk of the dwellings in Rudloe be lost. If there is any logic in local politics, the rump of Rudloe should be incorporated into Box, as has been pointed out by the Parish Council.

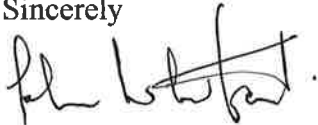
The item "Strengthen relationships with MOD Corsham and businesses to the west of West Wells road" typifies to me the weakness of Corsham Council's rationale and perplexes me as to what they really want. When I took up duty in 1970 as head of personnel and internal security, Copenacre had recently been upgraded by the Admiralty to a comprehensive Headquarters and Depot, in a fast growing electronic field, employing around 1200 personnel at Hartham, Monks Park and Spring Quarry, with a small factory unit a Leaffield. The staff were drawn fairly equally from Corsham and Box, Melksham and Chippenham.

All of my professional dealings were with the District Council, and other major employers in North Wilts. Westinghouse, Avon Rubber to name but two were represented on adult and youth employment committees chaired by District Council representatives. The Depot medical facilities, new entry medicals, assessment of long term sickness etc, were dealt with through Box Surgery. Other military establishments were also self supporting. HMS Royal Arthur, RAF Rudloe and the RAF Police HQ at the Manor, together with the Army school of Primary Education at what is now a different unit at Basil Hill Barracks, have virtually disappeared as has Copenacre. All that is left is the new build in Westwells road, a large office block with staff drawn from wherever. Corsham had little to do with the MOD (created 1966) when there was a significant presence in the area, what can they do now.

Corsham has grown significantly over the past 40 years, has lost a lot of Naval and Military activity and with the large housing estates culminating in Katherine Park, the town has become prima facie, more of a Dormitory for Bristol, Bath and even London. Box, however, has not significantly changed, there has been minor infill, but nothing to alter the tranquillity of village life, (other than the daily rush of commuters from Corsham and Chippenham on the A4)

I do apologise Sir, for this late submission, I am not politically minded, and belatedly put pen to paper after reading Box Parish Council's submission which I was able to download from the website. I was unable to find anything on the Corsham website, and trust that the foregoing may be of some use.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Whitford', written in a cursive style.

John Whitford