

Community Governance Review – Parish of Shere

Written responses (Emails and Letters) to initial consultation

SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Residents x 3	SW	<p>We wish to confirm our support for establishing a new independent civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake parish council.</p> <p>We feel that decisions about Peaslake should be made in Peaslake so building on our strong sense of community and support for our village groups and organisations, also to consult, listen and act in the residents best interests. We believe we would get faster decision making and local accountability as well as lower administration costs and therefor more to spend on services.</p> <p>The depth of feeling in Peaslake concerning the formation of our own Civil and Parish Council was demonstrated in the recent local house survey which showed that out of approximately 450 houses in Peaslake approximately 350 houses voted in favour of the application.</p>
Residents x 3	SW	<p>In our view Shere Parish Council (SPC) has become a remote body in recent years and is always reluctant to engage in consultation with Peaslake residents on important matters concerning the village. An example of this was when SPC devised a scheme to install picnic tables on the green in order to prevent residents, whose properties are accessed over the green, from parking outside their own homes. The scheme was only abandoned after it was made clear to SPC that the properties had legal easements over the green and that there would be serious repercussions if any attempt was made to interfere with this.</p> <p>The high-handed behaviour has come to typify SPC's attitude in its dealings with the village and the issue of Peaslake Farm is a particular case in point. When SPC applied to the Land Registry to convert the limited title it held on Peaslake Farm to title absolute it was suspected by many in the village that it would attempt to build on the farm fields despite the fact that the farm was situated in an AONB. The complete absence of consultation with the residents about such an important matter affecting the village created considerable suspicion and ill feeling towards SPC. Villagers demanded that a public meeting be held to discuss the issue which SPC begrudgingly agreed to and the subsequent meeting was attended by over 150 residents. SPC was however very defensive and opaque about its plans for Peaslake Farm and refused to give villagers any assurances concerning the protection of the Farm fields.</p>

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		<p>Shortly after the meeting a group of villagers got together and formed the Peaslake Protection Group (PPG) to oppose SPC's application. Members of the group paid a visit to the Surrey History Centre in Woking to research the history of Peaslake Farm where they quickly discovered a copy of a deed and later found evidence of the existence of the deed in the parish records which showed that Peaslake Farm was gifted to the parish many years ago by the Lord of the Manor and was held in trust. The deed contained a 'no build' covenant and the records revealed that an earlier approach to the Lord of the Manor to waive the covenant was rejected. SPC nevertheless asserted that the covenant was ineffective and the matter had to be referred to the Land Tribunal for determination. It was however clear that SPC had in truth recognised the continuing effectiveness of the covenant because virtually on the eve of the hearing before the tribunal it made frantic efforts to prevail on the current Lord of the Manor to waive the covenant which she regrettably agreed to do. SPC was therefore directly responsible for the completely unnecessary and considerable wasted legal costs to members of the PPG and also we might add to the larger community because it had used parish funds to oppose PPG's objection. As anticipated, SPC applied for planning permission to develop the farm site immediately on obtaining title absolute.</p> <p>Four new Peaslake councillors were later elected to the parish council, and it was hoped that they would redress the imbalance of representation of the village on the council but the councillors representing the other wards were not altogether welcoming. In addition when a Peaslake councillor retired some years later SPC managed to appoint its own nominee without a public election and disregarded the application of a highly respected long-term resident of Peaslake. SPC then even tried to exclude two of the Peaslake councillors from meetings held to discuss Peaslake farm and went so far as to lodge a formal complaint against them with Guildford borough council alleging that they had a pecuniary interest in Peaslake Farm thus accusing them of being engaged in criminal activity. The complaint was summarily dismissed by the monitoring officer.</p> <p>A continuing cause of concern for Peaslake residents has been that the development of the farmyard site would increase the problem of flooding in the centre of Peaslake that has been experienced in recent years. SPC is however seemingly indifferent to this prospect and despite the known history of flooding at the site has asserted without any technical knowledge or professional qualifications for doing so that the development would have no effect on the flooding risk. Surrey County Council flood resilience team were invited to attend the site on 3rd April 2025 to advise on the matter and although they were not empowered to issue any mandatory directions were baffled that anyone would even consider building on the site because of the obvious flood risk. The team did however recommend that any building on the site should include the construction of a curved ditch and pond to collect and slow down the flow of water to reduce the</p>

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		<p>flooding in the centre of the village. Peaslake councillor Gerry Reffo therefore requested SPC's approval to take forward this recommendation by identifying costs and potential funding sources but this was flatly refused.</p> <p>In conclusion we believe that the interests of Peaslake would be best served if the village had its own parish council. The basic structure for governance is already in place in the form of the Peaslake Community Council and the transition to self-governance should therefore not be too onerous.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>As a Peaslake resident for the last 15 plus years I have attend a number of Shere Parish Council (SPC) meetings. During this time I have noted a number of instances where Peaslake councillors have been shouted down by non Peaslake Councillors on Peaslake matters.</p> <p>To this I would give my full support for Peaslake to have its own Parish Council so that this would not re occur. If Peaslake were to be granted the chance of being independent it would give Peaslake residents greater confidence that its own council would be looking out for Peaslake as a whole.</p> <p>Further to this I'm sure it would attract a younger generation of the Peaslake community to be involved in Peaslake matters and knowing they are being involved in Peaslake matters directly and not waiting on other non Peaslake councillors to make decisions on Peaslake matters.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>As a resident of Peaslake for some twenty six years I am writing to give my views on establishing an independent Parish Council for Peaslake.</p> <p>I believe that creating a dedicated Parish Council for our village would significantly enhance local democracy and address issues more effectively for Peaslake residents.</p> <p>There are several key reasons why I feel an independent Peaslake Parish Council would be highly beneficial:</p> <p>An independent Peaslake Parish Council would significantly improve democratic representation for our village. It would allow counsellors to focus exclusively on issues that matter most to Peaslake residences rather than needing to address a long list of matters from Gomshall, Shere, and Holmbury St Mary, making meetings far more efficient.</p> <p>Currently tensions from North and South East councillors can unfortunately often arise in joint council meetings, sometimes leading to an almost toxic atmosphere where Peaslake counsellors have been treated disrespectfully.</p>

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		<p>At times there have been attempts to blocked Peaslake councillors from voting on Peaslake issues. This atmosphere strongly discourages other residents from putting themselves forward as councillors and therefore leads to new Peaslake councillors being co-opted. Independence would mean Councillors could extend the characteristics of honesty and openness which are already exist in our community Council, ensuring legitimate concerns, such as those regarding flooding are not overlooked or held back. Flooding in Peaslake is of such vital concern and seriously needs to be addressed. The Council as it stands at the moment is not in agreement with the severity of our flooding issue. We feel we are a small voice and we are not being heard nor listened to.</p> <p>An independent council would allow Peaslake to maintain good neighbourly relations with the North and South East Wards by easing these present tensions.</p> <p>Furthermore, a smaller independent Parish Council with increased efficiency, hence reduced time commitments, where matters were addressed more promptly and thoroughly, would make the role of councillor more appealing to residents, including residents with young families. Peaslake has a strong and dynamic community and I believe many would be keen to help shape the future of our village under this smaller council.</p> <p>The village has a remarkably strong sense of community, evident in the widespread support for local institutions including, Peaslake School, Peaslake Players, Peaslake Fair, as well as numerous other local clubs and groups. Our community successfully raised extensive funds to extend our Village Hall.</p> <p>I believe that the establishment of an independent Peaslake Parish Council is a vital step towards a more democratic, efficient, and community focus future for our village. It would mean Peaslake councillors, making decisions for Peaslake village. A village they feel passionate about.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I write in support of establishing a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p><u>A smaller council will be able to concentrate on Peaslake matters.</u> At Shere Parish Council (SPC) meetings most items are Shere related and some those affecting the whole parish; very few directly dealing with Peaslake matters. If Peaslake had its own council, it would mean councillors' time would be spent directly on Peaslake issues. I believe this would <u>encourage more people to come forward to serve on the Council.</u> The demographic of Peaslake has much changed over the years and now it is mainly those like myself who have lived here for many years; nearly all the new people moving in are younger couples often with a young family or intention of - but both working full-time. Time is limited. However there is a <u>strong sense of community</u> and many support and engage in local activities - school, sports, our annual fair,</p>

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		<p>and attend Peaslake Community Council meetings, especially when there is something that concerns them. I'm sure that with our own Parish Council, <u>local democracy would be better served by encouraging all age groups and interests to take part</u> either as councillors or attending Council meetings - which they would be much more likely as their time and efforts would be concentrated on the area in which they live. There will be <u>more local accountability</u> and very hopefully <u>faster decision making</u>.</p> <p><u>A smaller council will mean the Peaslake precept will be spent within the village and on what are residents' priorities.</u> I appreciate that there will be extra costs involved at the start but ongoing costs of a part-time parish clerk and a few hours office rental will be far less than Peaslake's contribution to SPC staff (three I think) and the costs of Tanyard Hall. Being part of Shere Parish Council, Peaslake residents are contributing to the cost (1) of the toilets in Shere - for the use of tourists, which benefit only the businesses in Shere, and (2) of Tanyard Hall (Parish office and the twice-weekly Drop-in Centre). In fact Tanyard Hall is a very expensive asset to maintain. I understand that there are plans to reconfigure the upstairs & downstairs main rooms, and install a lift - mainly for the drop-in centre. I heard that the cost is likely to be £15,000. With a small council administration costs will be lower and the precept would be directed to the issues that are of most concern to residents.</p> <p>I've lived in the village since 1978 and on the whole thought SPC were doing a pretty good job - until the matter of the development of Peaslake Farm came along about ten years ago. Like many I was very much in favour of the proposed affordable housing on the brownfield site, plus keeping the fields as they were in perpetuity. Unfortunately the take-over of the housing association, delays by GBC planning and Covid meant that that new Housing Associations had to be contacted. One particular issue that was disturbing was <u>SPC withholding information from prospective new Housing Associations about likely flooding</u> of the area, which has greatly increased in recent years and likely to do so. I understand that recently there was a site visit by a SCC flood expert who was surprised that housing would now be considered bearing in mind the land was in the valley between two hills and all that was now known about climate change, etc. Also of concern was <u>SPC making a misconduct report to GBC about two Peaslake councillors. This was quickly dismissed</u>. In addition, SPC sent a leaflet out to all residents on the electoral roll of Shere Parish: I found many of the <u>statements made somewhat disingenuous</u> peppered as they were with many "could be ..." or "may have ..." comments with no actual evidence.</p> <p>With the restructuring of councils within Surrey, I think it more important than ever that Peaslake has its own council, and makes its own decisions.</p>

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Resident	SW	<p>I am writing as a resident of Peaslake to express my support for the proposal to establish an independent Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>While I am not part of the group that submitted the proposal, <u>I fully support the principle behind it and welcome the opportunity to share my views.</u></p> <p>1. Community Identity and Interests</p> <p>Peaslake is a distinct and tightly-knit village with its own character and sense of identity. As someone who lives here, I've come to appreciate the strength of community feeling and the pride residents take in their local area. In my view, this identity is somewhat diluted by the current arrangements, where decisions are made at a broader Shere Parish level.</p> <p>I believe that having a parish council focused solely on Peaslake would allow for decisions that are more in tune with local values, concerns, and priorities.</p> <p>2. Effective and Convenient Local Governance</p> <p>From my experience, local governance under the current structure often feels more focused on the needs of Shere village. While I understand that the parish must look after several areas, I do sometimes feel that Peaslake is treated as an add-on rather than as an equal part of the community.</p> <p>I think an independent council could help ensure that decisions affecting Peaslake are made with local knowledge and a clearer understanding of the village's specific context.</p> <p>3. Democratic Representation</p> <p>Although Peaslake has representation on the current parish council, the overall influence seems limited. It's easy to feel like our voice is one among many, and often not the loudest.</p> <p>A separate parish council would give Peaslake residents the opportunity to elect councillors whose sole focus is on the village, which I believe would lead to more responsive and representative decision-making.</p>

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		<p>4. Resources and Costs</p> <p>I do understand the concern that creating a new parish council could bring additional costs or administrative overhead. That's something I would not want to see spiral unnecessarily. But at the same time, I think these issues can be managed with the right approach and should not be a reason to block something that could ultimately improve how Peaslake is represented and supported.</p> <p>For me, the long-term benefit of having a more locally focused council outweighs the concern about potential duplication, particularly if it results in better outcomes for the village.</p> <p>Final Comments</p> <p>As a resident of Peaslake, I support this proposal because I believe it will give our community a stronger voice and greater control over matters that affect us day to day.</p> <p>I hope Guildford Borough Council will take these views into account and support the creation of a Peaslake Parish Council.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>We have recently attended a meeting in Peaslake Village Hall to discuss the proposal for Peaslake to have its own parish council.</p> <p>We are very much in favour of this, as we are tired of hearing about the unprofessional and biased behaviour towards Peaslake from Shere councillors. Peaslake is treated as the poor relation to Shere, and our Peaslake councillors are not listened to, and their questions ignored. All emphasis from the Shere Parish Council is centred on Shere, and our Peaslake councillors are disregarded and outvoted on many matters relating to Peaslake. We have been informed of the bullying attitude and quite often churlish and petty mindedness.</p> <p>There is the situation with Peaslake Farm. Any Peaslake villager knows of the flooding and drainage problem of the farm, and time and again it has been discussed and advised against building houses on this land. The weather is getting wetter each year with climate warming and flooding is becoming a much greater problem to the village stream, which when it floods affects many villagers' homes further downstream. Shere Parish Councillors withheld information from the community that affects Peaslake, and our very legitimate concerns about the flooding and they then signed off the</p>

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		<p>proposal to go and build houses. The land is totally unsuitable for new houses, as they will flood and affect the drainage of the land and cause even worse floods to houses and gardens downstream.</p> <p>The fact that two of our extremely hard working councillors were accused of having a pecuniary interest in the Farm land (quickly dismissed by GBC), by a Shere councillor is abhorrent, but it typifies what they have had to put up with from Shere councillors.</p> <p>We are also concerned that Shere are planning to spend an enormous amount of money from the parish budget for Tanyard Hall, Gomshall. The advisability of this is in question, as it is not in a good situation, with a total lack of adequate parking. The idea of putting a lift into this building to encourage the residents of Shere to come to a 'drop in centre' on the upper floor is not sensible and unlikely to attract many to go there. In Peaslake, we are doing substantial renovations to our own Memorial Hall, having raised some £200,000; SPC contribution amounted to £3000. It is difficult to understand or appreciate some of these decisions, especially when the village defibrillator needed updating, the response from SPC was simply that they could not afford a replacement. Instead, the money was raised by an enterprising quiz night, involving an individual to organise and run the quiz, and the village pub which hosted the event. The outcome, money raised and new defibrillator unveiled by our local MP.</p> <p>We love our village of Peaslake, and feel very privileged to live there. It would bring our community even closer together to have our own parish council, where we can approach our own councillors directly and know that they are understanding and will help with any matters that are of concern to the village, and they will give us answers straight away, rather than being ignored or having to wait for months as we do at the present. We also have a good community of young people who will be much more likely to want to be involved with the parish of Peaslake in the future. Above all, we will benefit from hugely improved democracy, openness and cohesion and local services will improve.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to express my strong support for the creation of an independent Peaslake Parish Council. Peaslake deserves decisions that are made locally, by people who understand the village and its unique needs. A separate council would enable greater accountability, faster decision-making, and a more efficient use of funds—focusing on real community priorities such as road safety, drainage, and footpath maintenance.</p> <p>Our village has a strong sense of community and history of self-organisation. An independent council would strengthen this, offering greater transparency and ensuring residents' voices are heard and acted upon. With clear financial planning already proposed, it is both affordable and practical. I urge you to support this step forward for Peaslake's future.</p>

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Residents x 2	SW	We have lived in Peaslake for over 28 years and fully support the establishment of an Independent Peaslake Parish Council. A number of local issues particularly the current 40 mph speed limit in Pursers Lane which needs to be reduced substantially and at weekends the massive influx of cyclists and related traffic issues and noise.
Residents x2	SW	<p>We are writing in support of Peaslake having its own Parish Council for the village to enable them to make their own decisions.</p> <p>The village is very supportive of our businesses, Shop, Pub and Bike Shop which benefit from visitors and residents and accept the massive overload of the village centre.</p> <p>We were disappointed that SPC were unable to afford updating the defibrillators last year, and an enterprising resident organised quiz nights at the Hurtwood Inn and raised sufficient money for a replacement.</p> <p>We had a Community Asset Order put on our Village Shop and an attempted order on The Hurtwood Inn without any consultation, which caused a considerable amount of concern and worry.</p> <p>We fully support the need for Peaslake to have its own Parish Council and supporting local issues which are solely decided by Peaslake.</p> <p>The budget featured in the leaflet, Peaslake and its Future, clearly sets out the expected and lower cost of running a council to the benefit of residents.</p> <p>There is a strong feeling that Shere gets what it wants in terms of monetary support for council projects but projects in other villages are stalled or delayed, it took 18 months to approve a much-needed hand rail for access to the Old School Room.</p> <p>If this consultation is successful, we believe that there will be a much-improved democratic process in any decisions taken.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to you in support of an independent Parish and Parish Council for Peaslake. Peaslake is already a thriving local community, containing numerous able and active people of all ages, who engage with each other to meet and make decisions on matters affecting the community. This is amply demonstrated in the meetings of the Peaslake Community Council, which meets at regular intervals in the Village Hall to discuss and make decisions on local matters, and is open to all residents.</p> <p>I favour Peaslake having its own Council and believe that this would have the following advantages to the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could focus on our own issues, without detracting from our current close relationship with other local areas; • We could build on the solid base that already exists in the community in the form of local organisations, local clubs and other interest groups; • An independent Parish Council would give us more control over local matters and the ability to react to important issues with alacrity;

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would no longer have to wait for long periods for important issues to be addressed. <p>I also deplore the recent manner in which Shere Parish Councilors behaved towards two of the Peaslake members of the Council, and the apparent local bias towards Shere matters, which exists in the current Council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to you in support of an independent Parish and Parish Council for Peaslake. Having lived here with my family for over 40 years, I have been intimately involved in local organisations in Peaslake and as a consequence I have experienced the community spirit that exists in the village. The Peaslake community is very strong and supportive to both young and old in the village and I have experience from many of our local groups. I can definitely confirm that the proposed separation from Shere will in no way diminish the atmosphere and community spirit we enjoy here.</p> <p>I was appalled to learn of the mistreatment of two of our councillors at the Shere Parish Council meetings, and the apparent lack of urgency in dealing with some serious Peaslake flooding problems.</p> <p>All in all I believe those of us in Peaslake would definitely benefit from being independent from Shere and making the best decisions for Peaslake.</p>
Resident	N	<p>I am writing to express my support for the proposal to create a new civil parish of Peaslake, along with a separate Peaslake Parish Council, as part of the Community Governance Review of the parish of Shere. I believe this change would give Peaslake residents a stronger local voice, allow for more focused decision-making, and help reflect the unique identity and needs of the Peaslake community. I fully support the petitioners' request and hope the Borough Council will approve the formation of the new parish and council.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>Thank you for your letter we are writing to let you know that we both want a separate Peaslake parish council. We can then make our own decisions and maintain the village as it is now, unspoilt with no more car parks etc.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I would like to express my full support to a new civil parish of peaslake and the area detailed.</p>
Resident	Outside of parish	<p>As a former Shere Parish councillor for nine years, elected to represent the concerns of the people of Peaslake, I have observed differing goals between the urban community of Shere and the rural community of Peaslake. Attempts to prevent South-West ward councillors from voting on Peaslake-specific issues highlight this divide.</p> <p>Peaslake's unelected Community Council with no powers, is regularly attended by more people than Shere Parish Council meetings. This shows strong local engagement and could serve as a foundation for a new Parish Council for Peaslake, better representing both communities' concerns.</p>

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		I believe that forming a new parish council for Peaslake would benefit the residents of both Shere and Peaslake and greatly improve local democracy.
Residents x 2	SW	<p>Can my husband and I sign any forthcoming petitions regarding the future of the Parish of Peaslake. We would both like to separate from the SCCC and become an independent entity.</p> <p>Please include us in any correspondence and let us know of any forthcoming AGM if its not too late.</p>
Resident	SW	I wish to register my support for an independent Parish Council for Peaslake. Having lived in the village for a very long time, I feel we have always been regarded as the 'poor relation' by Shere Parish Council, despite having representation. However having recently been to a village meeting, it sounds as if our representation has been subject to rather unpleasant behaviour by the councillors representing other areas. Peaslake is a very supportive village and I think having an independent council would work very well. I would be hopeful that more villagers would be encouraged to be on the council if their hard work was done for the village, and the outcomes of decisions were visible and beneficial to the village.
Resident	SW	<p>I would like to put forward my support for Peaslake to have its own Parish Council.</p> <p>We are a strong community of small businesses, clubs and societies that are run in the village and supported locally, as is the village school. Peaslake holds successful village events such as the summer fair, quiz nights and open garden schemes, all of which are well attended and enjoyed. As a community, we have independently organised a new village orchard and garden, re-instated an overgrown footpath (which will take walkers off of the road to a safer path), provided a disabled access to a village meeting room, and seen the enlargement and improvement of the village hall. What's more, we have recently funded and installed a new defibrillator and are currently fund raising for a new cemetery fence.</p> <p>This Community strength is demonstrated most evidently each month in our community council meetings. Last November our Peaslake councillors had to take swift action by reinstating ditches after flash floods breached the bank of the stream, flooding residents' gardens. However, to prevent a reoccurrence that is a legitimate concern for many villagers, we have to wait for further decisions to be approved by Shere Parish Council before anything further can be done.</p>

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		I would like to see decisions for Peaslake be made in Peaslake. Peaslake Parish councillors need to be spending their time concentrating on what matters in our village with residents' best interests at the heart of those decisions. We have strong foundations here in Peaslake and Peaslake's own Parish Council would support this.
Resident	SW	I have lived in Peaslake for over 30 years and I would like the decisions made for this village to be made by villagers. I have always felt a strong sense of community in Peaslake and I think being independent would only strengthen this. We are more than capable of coming to together and making the changes that we feel are necessary. Furthermore, it is important to me that the money I pay towards the council goes towards my village, something that I fear isn't happening as part Shere Parish council. For this reason, I would like to show my support for an independent Peaslake Parish council.
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing this letter to show support for an independent Peaslake Parish council. I have lived in Peaslake with my family for almost 20 years and in that time I don't feel that Shere Parish council has been doing an adequate job that is benefitting my village. It is my belief that Shere Parish council favours its own village over the other communities in their council and that they are not taking accountability for where the money is going. I would like Peaslake to have its own council in order to take ownership of the decisions made on Peaslake's behalf as I believe that at the moment my village is being forgotten about by Shere Parish council. It is important to me that villagers' best interests are being taken into account.</p> <p>Shere Parish council's inability or unwillingness to provide a breakdown of spend by parish is an indication of their lack of accountability and ownership of centralised funds. My dissatisfaction in proportionate spending by Shere Parish council was reinforced when I received a First Class letter, from Shere Parish council at a cost of £1.70 per Peaslake resident, trying to persuade me me reject Peaslake's request for an independent Peaslake Parish council.</p>
Residents x2	SW	We would like to stress how important to us it would be to have a separate Peaslake parish council. In this case the community which is very strong and well supported would be able to make decisions concerning the village of Peaslake and to spend allocated precept on ways felt to be important for the village. The residents could voice their concerns regarding local matters and would be able to see them acted upon quickly and efficiently. We therefore support the creation of a separate Peaslake parish council.
Residents x2	SW	We would like it recorded that we are wholly in favour of a Peaslake parish council being established thus enabling matters concerning Peaslake to be dealt with by the inhabitants themselves (and not kicked into the long grass by Shere Parish Council).

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Resident (x2)	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shere and Peaslake have particularly different identities and concerns. For example, the tourists visiting Shere bring different challenges to the Mountain Bikers that visit Peaslake. Having a separate Peaslake Parish will empower each village to have more nuanced control of the issues closer to them. • While I have seen economies of scale cited as a reason not to do this, I feel this could be countered by the efficiencies of the two villages being able to quickly and easily make the decisions they need without having to go through what might be a lengthy debating process. <p>- The community cohesion is not in my view as a result of the Parish and those boundaries, but the relationships between the people and the businesses that make it up. By empowering villages to make their own decisions, it might actually help cohesion due to there being less resentment brought about the perception that decisions aren't being made for them. I have been a resident of Gomshall since 2017, and have observed frictions between the surrounding villages and Shere. In my view there is a perception that Shere see itself as the "primary" village.</p>
Residents x2	SW	<p>I am writing on behalf of both my wife and I who live at Westaway, Lawbrook Lane, Peaslake, GU5 9QW and if you are counting individuals then please count this view as two of the residents of Peaslake. We have lived here for nearly twenty five years and previously in Albury for nearly twenty. We have always taken a close interest in the Community and for perhaps the first 12/15 years or our residency in Peaslake felt that the overall interest of the wider area seemed to work well and be harmonious. However this changed some ten years plus back in our experience when Shere interests seemed to become more focused on their own village to the exclusion of others resulting in a rift between the communities.</p> <p>Peaslake is very community focused and there is no doubt in our minds that it requires independence to be given the ability to take control of its own destiny without having to submit to the vested interests of Shere and its representatives. We are sure that in economic terms this division of responsibilities will yield both economies for both Shere and Peaslake as it will remove wasted time and effort in arguing about issues which no longer will become divisive as they will be outside the remit and interest of individuals with personal agendas.</p> <p>In essence allow Peaslake independence and remove vested interests from the agenda and financial economies will be generated for the good of all and particularly Guildford Borough Council.</p>
Resident	SW	I am in favour of separating Peaslake from Shere Parish Council to form a separate parish council.
Resident	SW	I would like a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council established. I believe a Peaslake Parish Council would work more quickly and efficiently to resolve local matters and better represent local interests.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Residents x 2	SW	<p>We are in favour of the petitioners' request. Please find below three points that 'inform' our view.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We understand that the present arrangement has thrown up examples of the council not working harmoniously, positively and transparently in regard to identifiably 'Peaslake' councillors and identifiably 'Peaslake' issues. 2. As parish councils are made up of local people, the smaller the parish the interests and issues of that parish are more easily known and understood by its council. Further, councillors' time is more focussed than in a more diffuse parish. 3. In a smaller parish there should be better voter involvement because of higher expectation and visibility of outcomes including the supply of local services. <p>Naturally, 2 and 3 above would apply to a less diffuse Shere parish and to a new Peaslake parish.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I write to support the setting up of a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>Peaslake has a very strong sense of community and by having our own Parish Council, this can only improv local democracy as with it being a smaller council, they could make decisions faster and could also focus on issues that matter most to our village, improving local services to the village.</p> <p>I am a local resident, have grown up in Peaslake, gone to school there, and now work in Peaslake Village Stores, so know what a great sense of community Peaslake has and it shows this supporting it's local clubs, the village hall and school, so believe we are passionate about our community and by having our own Parish Council this can only enhance our community, by supporting our local services and encouraging more of the residents to work together to improve our village and its needs.</p> <p>It was a huge disappointment last year to discover that Shere Parish Council could not afford to replace the four defibrillators strategically positioned in the four villages, for Peaslake the community came to the rescue, a resident decided to hold a quiz night hosted by the Hurtwood Inn, the resulting funds were raised and our local MO unveiled the new defibrillator just before Christmas, I see this as a prime example of the community working together.</p> <p>I hope that you will support the decision to have a new civil parish of Peaslake and its own Peaslake Parish Council, as I strongly do.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	N	I support the proposal for a separate Peaslake Council as it seems that the needs and concerns of the village often differ from those of Shere itself. Geographically Peaslake is a more rural almost isolated village and has little in common with its more commercial and well-known neighbour. Local feeling is that Peaslake is often overlooked although it has a strong identity and community of its own. This would be better served by local villagers who better understand the local issues rather than Shere residents who live in a very different environment.
Resident	SW	<p>I refer to my wife's, submission of even date addressed to you and relating to the Community Governance Review for Peaslake. I have read and considered my wife's submissions and hereby confirm that, for the reasons she has stated, I support the establishment of a new Peaslake Parish and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>It is very clear to me that Shere Parish Council has, at best, failed Peaslake and, at worst, adopted an unnecessarily hostile and adversarial attitude towards Peaslake and towards any of Peaslake's councillors who have dared to express a view that is not fully in line with Shere's own representatives.</p> <p>Shere and Peaslake have little in common. They certainly have different interests and needs and the residents of both communities would be much better served by separate Parish councils, independent of each other.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I live in Peaslake and am a Shere Parish Councillor. I write this in my personal capacity, but inevitably draw on my experience as a Councillor of Shere Parish Council ("SPC"). I support the establishment of a separate Peaslake Parish and Peaslake Parish Council. My reasons for doing so are as follows.</p> <p>1. Improved local democracy</p> <p>Peaslake and Shere are very different villages with very different characters and aspirations. Shere basks and revels in its well publicised status as one of the prettiest villages in England and a world famous Hollywood film location, with all the attendant tourist traffic and revenue. By contrast, Peaslake is a quiet rural village attempting to maintain that essential character while simultaneously and somewhat reluctantly trying to accommodate its recent and unsought standing in the mountain biking community.</p> <p>While national government must inevitably consider the benefits of the nation as a whole over and above its constituent parts, the very essence and purpose of local government is to give local communities a voice and at least an element of self-determination in relation to local matters and issues. As things stand, Peaslake has no ability, even at the most localised level of local government, to influence what happens in Peaslake for the</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>benefit and in the interests of Peaslake and Peaslakers. At best, it relies on the benevolence and empathy of Councillors whose constituents' interests are entirely different from their own and at worst it is treated with high handed contempt.</p> <p>A new Peaslake Parish and Peaslake Parish Council would lead to a significant improvement and strengthening of local democracy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions (or at least recommendations in the case of matters subject to Borough Council, County Council, Unitary Council or national governance) concerning Peaslake would be taken in Peaslake by Peaslake Councillors • It would be easier for residents (many of whom are elderly) to attend meetings, which would be held in the village • The meetings would focus on Peaslake matters so would be considerably shorter • Meetings and the business of the Council would be more open and transparent • All Peaslake residents would be listened to and their views taken into account • Councillors would be more accountable to electors • Councillors would made decisions in the best interest of Peaslake • There would be no risk of Peaslake Councillors being ignored and ultimately outvoted on matters important to Peaslake. <p>The devolution process which we are currently undergoing is intended to result in more decisions being made at a local level, taking account of local needs and priorities and giving communities a greater say. It is more important than ever therefore that Peaslake be given a proper voice and an effective channel for it.</p> <p>2. A new Peaslake Parish Council is viable and would be a great success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An illustrative budget has been prepared on a conservative basis, based on this year's precept attributable to the Peaslake ward (as calculated by Guildford Borough Council) and this year's costs (as published by SPC). A copy of it is attached. This shows that a Peaslake Parish Council would be financially viable. While there is some uncertainty surrounding the move to unitary authorities, this is universal rather than specific to Peaslake.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaslake has a long tradition of openness and cooperation. The Peaslake Community Council ("PCC") (https://www.peaslake.org/) was founded in 1945 and continues to thrive. Societies and organisations with a connection to Peaslake are represented (e.g. Friends of the Hurtwood, Peaslake School, St Mark's Church, Peaslake Players etc). Every resident is a member and is welcome to attend. Some attend regularly, others only do so when they have something to raise or when they are interested in one of the items on the agenda. Everyone is allowed to speak, is listened to respectfully and discussions are open and constructive. What the Peaslake Community Council lacks is any decision making power. Peaslake Parish Council would adopt the open and cooperative spirit of the PCC and combine it with the ability to make decisions to achieve great things for the village. • Councillors and the clerk would only have to deal with matters concerning Peaslake so our workload would be greatly reduced. This focus on Peaslake is likely to attract more candidates for Councillor. Two residents have told me they would be interested in standing for election if a Peaslake Parish Council were established; one immediately, and the other, once her youngest child is old enough to be left at home alone. I understand that others have also expressed an interest in running. • There is a huge amount of knowledge, talent and motivation among the residents of Peaslake, a great sense of community and a common love of our village. Some incredible achievements to date include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Taking over, running and funding Peaslake School when it faced closure in the late 1990s (https://www.peaslakefreeschool.com/our-history) ○ Taking over and running the Hurtwood Inn on a community basis after it closed down in late 2013 and until new owners could be found (https://camra.org.uk/pubs/hurtwood-inn-peaslake-191284) ○ More recently a group of dedicated volunteers established the Peaslake Community Garden and Orchard on the northern part of Peaslake Farm Fields, having been granted a licence from Coverwood Farm. A lot of hard work has gone into designing the Garden and Orchard, obtaining funding, putting in place the necessary infrastructure and planting more than one thousand trees and shrubs over one weekend (https://surreyhills.org/fipl-peaslake-community-orchard/)

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organising the Peaslake Fair every year. This is an important source of funding for Peaslake School (among others) ○ Raising funds to pay for a Village Hall extension – at a total cost of approximately £200k, and with a contribution of £3,000 from Shere Parish Council ○ Great progress is currently being made to raise funds for a new fence around St Mark’s church and cemetery, and every few weeks volunteers gather to clear the trees, bushes, paths etc around the cemetery <p>I hope that the establishment of a new Peaslake Parish and Peaslake Parish Council can in future be listed as one of Peaslake’s great achievements.</p> <p>3. <u>The current arrangement does not work for Peaslake</u></p> <p>There is very little openness, transparency and consultation by SPC. Views and concerns expressed by Peaslake residents and Councillors are regularly dismissed. Matters important to Peaslake are handled without the involvement (and sometimes even without the knowledge) of Peaslake Councillors. SPC has gone to great lengths to exclude Councillor Reffo and me from discussions and decisions concerning Peaslake. A prime example of this strategy of exclusion unfolded at my first ever Council meeting, described below. (There have also been other, less extreme, examples of this.)</p> <p>On 21 March 2024, at my first ever Council meeting, serious allegations were made against both Councillor Reffo and me. It was alleged that, because we both live close to Peaslake Farm, we each had a disclosable pecuniary interest (or DPI) which we had failed to disclose or that we were otherwise biased. An attempt was made on that basis to prohibit us from voting on matters relating to Peaslake Farm – notwithstanding that Councillor Reffo had fully and freely participated in deliberations and decisions relating to Peaslake Farm for the last 10 years, both in full council meetings and as a member of the Peaslake Farm Steering Committee.</p> <p>It having been agreed at the meeting that we would seek guidance from the Monitoring Officer in relation to this matter, the Parish Council proceeded, without further reference to Councillor Reffo or to me, to make a misconduct complaint (“Complaint”) against each of us to the Monitoring Officer. SPC did not provide us with a copy of the Complaint, not even after I requested that they do so.</p>

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		<p>The allegations were vehemently denied by Councillor Reffo and me, and were ultimately held to be unfounded and dismissed by the Monitoring Officer. However, had the misconduct alleged been established, it would have amounted to a criminal offence. As a solicitor, any allegation of criminal conduct against me is a very serious matter indeed and could, if upheld, very likely be career ending. In the circumstances, I had no choice but to submit the strongest possible defence to the Monitoring officer.</p> <p>Having reviewed both the complaint and my defence, the Monitoring Officer judged the complaint to be entirely unfounded and dismissed it.</p> <p>This entire episode was a blatant attempt to intimidate and silence both Councillor Reffo and me. In my case, it was plainly intended to put me in my place at my first ever meeting and to ensure that I knew who was in charge and what to expect if I stepped out of line. One of the Councillors who was involved in making the allegations recently told me: "I am impressed that you did not break after that first meeting, most people would have done". This was not said maliciously, but it was confirmation (if any were needed) of their intention.</p> <p>The events described above are recorded in the following contemporaneous documents, copies of which are attached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email from the Monitoring Office dated 5 April 2024 • Complaint against me – I saw this for the first time on 5 April 2024 when it was sent to me by the Monitoring Office, attached to the email above • My email to the Monitoring Office dated 9 April 2024 • My response to the Complaint – this was attached to my email of 9 April (above) • Email from the Monitoring Office, also dated 9 April 2024, responding to my email and its attachment • Statement which I read out at the annual council meeting on 9 May 2024 (here) • Minutes of the annual council on 9 May 2024 (here) – see item 24.6 <p>There have been subsequent attempts by Shere Councillors to intimidate and bully Councillor Reffo and me and to exclude us from discussions and meetings. We have had to fight for access to information and there is much information that has not been shared with us (or with any other Peaslake Councillor). For example, it having been agreed that I would be involved in discussions with potential new developers for the affordable housing project on Peaslake Farmyard, I was progressively excluded from discussions. Meetings were moved so I could not attend them, then they just went ahead without me and I was never updated. Important information was</p>

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		<p>not shared with the potential developers (e.g. flooding). Legitimate queries and concerns concerning various proposals were met with anger. My exchange with Councillor Keeble in November 2024, encapsulates the problem. Our exchange (his email to me dated 26 November 2024 and my reply on 28 November 2024) is attached.</p> <p>Legitimate concerns raised by residents of Peaslake and/or Peaslake Councillors are regularly dismissed, and matters which are important to Peaslake are not taken seriously or prioritised. Flooding is a good example of this.</p> <p>At times of heavy rain, residents living in the lowest parts of Peaslake are regularly flooded. This is in part due to the topography of Peaslake, and in part due to the drains in the village being too old and too narrow to cope with recent increases in both housing and rainfall. This has led to calls for SPC to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> engage early with potential developers of Peaslake Farmyard and with Surrey County Council to ensure that (1) any new development does not exacerbate flooding elsewhere in the village, and (2) residents of any new development are not themselves flooded. engage with members of the flood team at Surrey County Council who have, on several occasions, expressed doubts as to the suitability of Peaslake Farm for housing, to understand their concerns and address them, and implement the flood mitigation measures recommended by the flood team at Surrey County Council. <p>SPC has refused to do any of the above.</p> <p>Re a), please see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> my exchange with Councillor Keeble which is referred to above and attached the minutes of the full council meeting on 9 January 2025 (here) – items 24.116 (a) and (b) the minutes of the full council meeting on 11 February 2025 (here) – item 24.129 (a) first bullet the minutes of the full council meeting on 6 March 2025 (here) – item 24.140 (b) <p>Re b), please see the agreed note of our latest meeting with the flood team at Surrey County Council on 3 April 2025, a copy of which is attached.</p> <p>Re c), at the Management and Strategy Working Group meeting on 1 May 2025, a request to cost the main recommendations made by the flood team at Surrey County Council on 3 April was refused. This is not recorded in the minutes (here), which are very brief.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Finally, I note that SPC has 13 Councillors, only four of whom are elected in Peaslake. This means that we can always be outvoted, even on matters of great importance to Peaslake. This is particularly concerning given the above.</p> <p>4. A positive future Local democracy and the interests of Peaslake would be best served by the establishment of a new Peaslake Parish and Peaslake Parish Council. As to whether it is in the best of interest of Shere Parish Council as a whole for Peaslake to break away, I believe that it is. I don't believe the tensions with Peaslake will go away because I don't believe that the attitude and approach of SPC will change. The status quo is not in anybody's interest; everyone loses. If Peaslake were to become independent, it would enable all parties to move forward positively. I would hope that we could work constructively, together and with Guildford Borough Council, to agree terms for the separation that would work for all parties and pave the way for future cooperation.</p> <p>5. A final couple of notes A concern has been raised by residents of Holmbury St Mary that they would be completely outnumbered and dominated by Shere if Peaslake were to leave. One mitigating suggestion that has been made and discussed in Council meetings, and which seems to appeal to Councillors and residents (at least those present) alike, is that the Shere ward (which currently includes both Shere and Gomshall and has 6 Councillors) be split, so that Shere Parish Council would have three wards (Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St Mary), each with three Councillors. I believe this is a good idea, but I will leave it to be discussed if and when it becomes relevant. Please also note that, although this is not reflected in the draft minutes of the full council meeting on 5 June 2025, Councillor Reffo and I made it clear and requested that it be noted in the minutes that we do not support or agree with SPC's response to the Community Governance Review.</p> <p>For the reasons set out above, I invite you please to recommend that a new Peaslake Parish and a new Peaslake Parish Council be established.</p>
Resident	SW	I write in my support of Peaslake forming its own parish council, I support this as Peaslake has its own set of very important issues, that are currently not being represented by shere parish council, and I believe they as an Independent council, we would be able to better represent our community.
Residents x 2	SW	We'd like to register our total support of the above as essential for the Peaslake community.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>As a Peaslake resident of over 30 years I am very much in favour of the proposal of an independent Pealake Parish Council.</p> <p>There has always been mistrust in our relationship with Shere Parish Council and it is felt that Peaslake's interests are largely ignored and we feel that decisions regarding our village should be made by us....we live here!</p> <p>We couldn't even get SPC to update our defibrillators but Shere seems to get what it wants financially for council projects...SPC only contributed £3000 of the £200,000 required for our village hall works and wants to lavish huge amounts on a useless Tanyard Hall.</p> <p>Democratically this is the only way forward given the toxic state of play and poor conduct by SPC with regard to withholding information....about flooding risks,(Peaslake Farm fiasco), inefficiency and bullying.</p> <p>Under this proposal we would have lower administration costs and more villagers would feel it was worth their while to get involved in village management as opposed to being bulldozed and ignored.</p> <p>I feel it is important for the future of the village that democracy is better served and that young people in particular feel they are able to raise concerns and have them dealt with within a reasonable timeframe which is not the case at present.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I write in support of Peaslake having it's own Parish Council for the following reasons:</p> <p>There is a strong Community in Peaslake and being a Parish Council in its own right would enable a more efficient and more responsive way of managing local issues.</p> <p>Peaslake already has an effective Community Council - which meets on a monthly basis and where there is open discussion regarding community activities, problems affecting local Residents and issues that need to be addressed by Shere parish Council.</p> <p>These meeting attract a good following and are uniting, neighbourly, means of dealing with Peaslake issues.</p> <p><u>At the moment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems arise when the voice of Peaslake residents is not being heard and acted upon quickly by SPC in the management of affairs affecting our village. • All activities in Peaslake have to be funded by Residents donations while SPC uses precept money to pay any costs. This even extends to the SPC's printing costs for leaflets regarding this petition. • In order to get work done by SPC, an item had to be placed on an Agenda, the matter is then discussed (several weeks later) and referred for a decision. It then takes weeks for costs to be approved and the work organised. So any work to be done takes weeks, months, or even years to be completed.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p><u>Poor conduct by SPC</u></p> <p>When I was an elected Peaslake councillor, some Peaslake matters were discussed in closed sessions. As a representative of Peaslake, I protested that I should be allowed to attend, on arrival at a meeting it was evident that the agenda had been changed and issues weren't properly discussed while I was there.</p> <p>More recently other Peaslake councillors have been treated in the same 'bullying way'.</p> <p>The treatment of elected Peaslake councillors has led to a complete distrust between SPC and Peaslake residents. At an SPC meeting held, in June 2024, to discuss SPC intention to alter an agreement made regarding the use of Peaslake Farm fields, over 100 Peaslakers attended to protest about SPC's proposals.</p> <p>The meeting supported Peaslakers wishes.</p> <p>However at the next SPC meeting, held in Tanyard Hall, efforts were made to overturn this agreement.</p> <p><u>Precept</u></p> <p>Money collected from Peaslakers through their council tax is added into SPC Accounts. There is NO clear record available of how much of Peaslakers contribution is spent in Peaslake itself.</p> <p>A Peaslake parish council would enable Peaslakers contributions to be spent for the benefit of their own village rather than the money being used for projects mainly in Shere. E.g the improvement to Shere village hall which was fully funded by SPC. In Peaslake improvements to the village hall and the Old School Room have to rely contributions from local residents to raise the funds.</p> <p><u>Peaslake Farm buildings:</u></p> <p>Difficulty in getting any work done in Peaslake itself. These buildings are situated in the entrance to Peaslake village in an area of outstanding natural beauty. The state of the buildings is a disgrace, there is asbestos to be removed and the ground is contaminated. Yet SPC has made NO effort to address this problem. Instead SPC tries not to spend money in Peaslake. This is despite promises made at an SPC meeting held in Peaslake on 2 June 2016 - NON of the items presented at the meeting and agreed and recorded by all councillors have been achieved.</p>
Resident	SW	I write in support of Peaslake having its own Parish Council for the following reasons:

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>There is a strong Community in Peaslake and being a Parish Council in its own right would enable a more efficient and more responsive way of managing local issues.</p> <p>Peaslake already has an effective Community Council - which meets on a monthly basis and where there is open discussion regarding community activities, problems affecting local Residents and issues that need to be addressed by Shere parish Council. These meeting attract a good following and are a uniting and neighbourly means of dealing with Peaslake issues.</p> <p><u>The Current Position:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems arise because issues raised by Peaslake residents are either ignored or not being acted upon quickly by Shere Parish Council (SPC). • In order to get work done by SPC, an item has to be placed on the Council Agenda, the matter is then discussed (several weeks later) and referred for a decision. It then takes additional weeks for 'costs' to be approved and the work organised. So any work to be done takes months or even years to be completed (this even includes minor low cost projects). This is extremely bureaucratic and hugely inefficient. • Several capital projects in Peaslake are currently funded by Residents donations (eg Village Hall improvements) rather than by SPC mainly due to the tortuous funding mechanism forced on us by SPC. Please also note that SPC uses precept money to pay any of their costs. This even extends to SPC's printing costs for leaflets regarding their position on this petition. <p><u>Poor Conduct by SPC:</u></p> <p>The treatment of elected Peaslake Councillors has led to a complete distrust between SPC and Peaslake Residents. At an SPC meeting held, in June 2024, to discuss SPC's intention to alter an agreement made regarding the use of Peaslake Farm fields, over 100 Peaslakers attended to protest about SPC's proposals. The meeting supported Peaslakers wishes. However, at the next SPC meeting, held in Tanyards Hall, efforts were made to overturn this agreement.</p> <p><u>Precept:</u></p> <p>Money collected from Peaslakers through their Council Tax is added into SPC Accounts. There is NO clear record available of how much of Peaslakers contribution is spent in Peaslake itself. A Peaslake Parish Council would enable Peaslakers contribution to be spent for the benefit of their own village rather than the money being used for projects mainly in Shere. E.g. The improvement to Shere Village Hall which was fully funded by SPC. In Peaslake improvements to the Village Hall and the Old School Room have to rely on contributions from local Residents to raise the funds.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p><u>Peaslake farm buildings:</u></p> <p>Difficulty in getting any work done in Peaslake itself. These buildings are situated in the entrance to Peaslake Village in an area of outstanding natural beauty. The state of the buildings is a disgrace, there is asbestos to be removed and the ground is contaminated. Yet SFC has made NO effort to address this problem. Instead, SPC tries NOT to spend money in Peaslake. This is despite promises made at an SPC meeting held in Peaslake on 2nd June, 2016 - NONE of the items presented at the meeting and agreed and recorded by all Councillors have been achieved in almost 10 years!!</p> <p>All in all, SPC are a disgrace. They are dominated by Shere issues and look after themselves to the detriment of other villages and I strongly believe that we would be much better off separating and forming our own Peaslake Parish Council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to confirm that I am in favour of Peaslake having its own Independent Parish Council. Peaslake has a strong local community and having our own Parish Council would enable more focus on the local issues that matter the most. And I understand that it would also lower the administration costs involved.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Regarding the community governance review and consultation, I am a near 25 year resident in Peaslake and I have the following observations to make.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can see that splitting into two smaller decision making units is not the most obvious more today but I can understand it given the particular circumstances of the Parish. • Peaslake is a very distinct and quite active, rounded community as Surrey villages go. There is a track record of independent local action, the free school being a case in point. • This has at times clashed with the slightly feudal character of Shere as the 'dominant' village. • None of this would matter that much had there not been a long history of distrust, personal tension and controversy over issues pertaining specifically to Peaslake. • In an ideal world this could be solved amicably within a wider Parish but as it is I fear that Peaslake will struggle to retain good, active councillors in the present environment and this will make matters worse. • On a ten year view I believe an independent Peaslake Parish Council is viable and possibly the best outcome. • Whether this is the right solution over the longer term is more open to debate.
Residents x 2	SW	<p>In relation to the above we as long term residents are both very much in support of an independent Peaslake parish council. Shere with 13 councillors who don't always go with Peaslake views on Peaslake matters who only have 4 councillors. This has led to Peaslake being out voted on a number of issues and led to dismissing Peaslake concerns.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Peaslake village being a rural environment is in a very different position to Shere on many different issues which are important to Peaslake residents.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing in support of the proposal to establish a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>I firmly believe an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen local democracy by focusing on issues that are relevant to Peaslake and putting an end to the widespread feeling that the current Shere Parish Council primarily serves the interests of the village of Shere, to the detriment of the village of Peaslake. This perception of dominance by Shere is partly explained by the large block of councillors representing Shere, with much smaller numbers representing Peaslake and Holmbury St. Mary. Incidentally, a new Peaslake Parish Council would be a good opportunity to reform Shere Parish Council and to split it into three roughly equal sized wards comprising Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St. Mary. 2. Improve accountability by ensuring local councillors known to the residents are responsible for making decisions affecting the Peaslake Community. 3. Further encourage the already thriving and resourceful local community in Peaslake thst is evidenced by the active support and fundraising for a wide range of causes such as Peaslake School, the Village Hall restoration, Peaslake Fair, Pealake Players and the current appeal to repair the fence around St. Mark's Churchyard. 4. A smaller parish council would encourage many additional Peaslake residents to become councillors as there would be a greater focus on the community of Peaslake and a faster, more stream-lined decision making process. An independent Peaslake Parish Council would build on the success of the already thriving Peaslake Community Council. 5. Lower council administration costs would provide an opportunity to enhance the services provided to the Peaslake community. <p>Lastly, I am very concerned to hear about several allegations of poor conduct by a block of councillors representing the Shere and Gomshall Ward against Councillors from the Peaslake Ward. These allegations include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Attempts to stop Peaslake councillors voting on certain Peaslake matters.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>7. A report of misconduct against two Peaslake councillors that was quickly dismissed by Guildford Borough Council.</p> <p>8. Withholding information that was important for Peaslake and arbitrarily dismissing residents concerns about potential flooding caused by the proposed development of Peaslake Farm.</p>
Resident	SW	As a resident in Peaslake I support this proposed change as I believe that having an independent Peaslake Parish Council would provide significant benefits to the residents of Peaslake both in the short and long term. It would represent a significant measure to improve local democracy and local accountability.
Resident	SW	<p>I signed the the petition requesting GBC carry out a review.</p> <p>I am deeply sad that the behaviour of some members of the current Shere Parish Council has led to this 'schism'. Because of the lack of natural rotation on the SPC, councillors remain on the SPC when they are no longer fit for the task or properly interested. SPC has not been a happy coalition over many years. Currently we have 4 coucillors representing Peaslake of which only two are active and interested. Only two attend Peaslake Community Council with any regularity (Gerry and Tania). I run the Climate Cafe in the village which organises many sustainablility/climate related events locally alongside community action such as litter picks, hedge planting, biodiveristy surveys etc. I am very delighted that Gerry sometimes attends, in spite of being the busiest member of the SPC representing Peaslake.</p> <p>I believe that that an independent Peaslake PC could work effectively - there are currently enough keen and capable members of the village community who could make up an effective and well operated council. My fear is that, as this is for the long term we could find that in 10 years time we have less committment of people coming forward. A clique could build up if a rotation of members is not adopted. We would need not to fall into the same traps as SPC, with it's atmosphere of 'them and us', the Chair having more opinions and voice and clout than anyone else, and a lack of clear and honest communication to the wider public.</p> <p>If Peaslake remains as part of SPC, it could be workable if GBC put measures in place for an arbiter/moderator at every council meeting to check behaviour, language used, any bullying tactics. I can see an argument for remaining together if a rotation of councillors happens, if councillors are treated equally, no matter if they have a diference in opinion. In general, I think a unified SPC is a better answer, but only if a review of behaviour is carried out.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>With regular monthly support, together with the Peaslake Players, Peaslake Fair, regular monthly Luncheon Club for the Aged, it is not surprising that -PEASLAKE- should be allowed to run its own finances and not Shere Councillors. We supported the extension to the Memorial Hall and for years we have cared for our little school. We are entitled to OUR fair share of the Guildford Council money you kindly give the four villages.</p> <p>PLEASE - give us a chance to continue supporting Peaslake.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>We came to live in Peaslake 24 years ago. We were welcomed and it has been so lovely living in a caring village.</p> <p>We want to manage our own finances as we feel Peaslake has been losing out and there is so much we can achieve. In July last year Mike Keeble (Shere councillor) suggested that we find a way to go forward and this is what we want to do.</p> <p>We in Peaslake all helped to extend the Memorial Hall. We each bought a brick and 41% plus was raised by Peaslake alone. This extra accommodation will be used for various groups including Peaslake Players and can be rented out in the future. Also, as an example of community spirit, in April (with one week's notice) 40 people turned up to plant hedging onto the Peaslake Farm fields. The cemetery was also tidied up by volunteers.</p> <p>Our two councillors Gerry and Tanya were reported by Shere councillors for misconduct. How could they do this?? The animosity Shere and Peaslake has been going on for years and we believe the only way forward is for Peaslake to set up its own council which will bring consultation and democracy to the fore.</p> <p>Many years ago I ran Shere Bowls Club and organised several jumble sales. Only two weeks ago I served coffee at the Art week in Shere church so we can still be friends with the other three villages but without the hassle and aggravation. PLEASE give us the chance - I know that we can work all things out and benefit our little village.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>We are writing in support of a separate Parish Council for Peaslake and have lived in the village since childhood, we are both members of the community.</p> <p>Peaslake is different from Shere, it has its own community and priorities. But within the Parish Council we are a minority voice. We would like us to have our own Parish Council with local councillors who make decisions in the best interests of Peaslake.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Peaslake has a community Council which is active and well attended. But it has no money or power to make decisions, and it isn't listened to by Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>Peaslake has the ability to run it's own affairs, the Peaslake community Council is well run and open to all residents. The Peaslake village fair attracts about 1200 visitors and is run together by the community to raise money for local charities, we also support Peaslake village school and have just raised £200 K for an extension to our village hall.</p> <p>Please give Peaslake the chance to run our own Parish Council and provide a better service to our community.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I support the creation of a Parish Council specifically for Peaslake. This would support local democracy by allowing the residents of Peaslake to directly influence and control aspects of the village that seem to be sidelined by the existing Parish Council. Examples of this are the provision of social housing on the Peaslake Farm site (where the current Parish Council has not exactly been speedy in pushing this forward), flooding in the centre of Peaslake and management of the mountain bikers who descend on Peaslake in their hundreds every weekend.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>We are writing in support of the possible independent Peaslake Parish Council. We believe that this change will allow our small community to continue to thrive in an ever complicated and busy world. Although a small village community we have often demonstrated that we are able to organise ourselves and enthuse our villagers and groups to support local Peaslake issues. For example - our annual summer Peaslake Fair, the successful struggle to keep and maintain our small village school and the short term running of our pub in between ownerships. We believe that a separate parish council will help us to continue in this manner in the following ways -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our local councillors will have more time and energy to devote to Peaslake concerns and this will lead to faster decision making. • We will be in control of our own finances and may be able to lower admin costs and so spend more on Peaslake projects. • Villagers will hopefully become even more interested in helping with the parish council and getting involved with village groups and organisations. • Our local councillors will be known to us all and more accountable for their decisions. <p>With thanks for your attention to this important matter.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>I wish it to be known I fully support the proposition that Peaslake should have its own Parish Council. I was born and bred in Peaslake and came back in 1986 to live in the house in which I was born!</p> <p>I feel as individuals by having our own council our concerns will be far better met and as such will assist in bringing us more together as a community.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing as a longstanding resident of Peaslake to put forward my full support for the establishment of an independent Peaslake Parish Council. I understand that Guildford Borough Council is in the process of evaluating the case for an independent Peaslake Parish Council, and my wife and I wish to register our 100% support for this potential change (she will write separately).</p> <p>My support is based on three considerations: 1) I believe that there is a strong business case and strong and qualified local leadership ready to take on and make successful a Peaslake Parish Council; 2) I firmly believe that local authority should sit at the very closest local level possible to its remit, for both effectiveness, local responsiveness and best democratic principles; and 3) I believe that Peaslake has been poorly (and at times very poorly) served by the present arrangements with Shere Parish Council, as regards substance, prioritisation and local councillor behaviour.</p> <p>The time is right for this change, there is extremely strong local support for it, and we all dearly hope that GBC will support a move that will strengthen both democratic representation and local authority effectiveness.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing as a longstanding resident of Peaslake to put forward my full support for the establishment of an independent Peaslake Parish Council. I understand that Guildford Borough Council is in the process of evaluating the case for an independent Peaslake Parish Council, and my husband and I wish to register our 100% support for this potential change (he will write separately).</p> <p>My support is based on three considerations: 1) I believe that there is a strong business case and strong and qualified local leadership ready to take on and make successful a Peaslake Parish Council; 2) I firmly believe that local authority should sit at the very closest local level possible to its remit, for both effectiveness, local responsiveness and best democratic principles; and 3) I believe that Peaslake has been poorly (and at times very poorly) served by the present arrangements with Shere Parish Council, as regards substance, prioritisation and local councillor behaviour.</p> <p>The time is right for this change, there is extremely strong local support for it, and we all dearly hope that GBC will support a move that will strengthen both democratic representation and local authority effectiveness.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>Peaslake is currently one element only of the Shere Parish Council and this current structure makes it ineffective for our village to have its local issues prioritised and addressed in a timely manner.</p> <p>The positive elements I feel we will derive in the village as a result of the change are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having meaningful direct accountability on our doorstep for our parish councillors to carry out our priorities. • Having an increased sense of engagement in the village due to the increased ownership of issues and proximity of our dedicated representatives. • Having direct financial control over the spending of our allocated precept, no longer being absorbed into a greater fund spread across four villages. • In essence , making local targeted decisions and leveraging the many Peaslake community activities which are already in place , notably the School , Village Hall , Peaslake Fair , Open Gardens , etc... <p>I am confident that the structured approach in making this application , including an illustrative financial budget and the local consultation process to date is indicative of the determination and professionalism of the supporters of this change and would ask that you give this request every consideration.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to confirm that I approve of the plan to establish a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>The idea of Peaslake Village having its own separate council has been talked about in the village for a long time, the few members we have on Shere council are overlooked and in the minority in regards to making decisions for our village as they are outnumbered by the Shere council members.</p> <p>We have the right as village residents to make independent decisions for ourselves as to what is needed and required within the village boundaries and not have to wait ages to see anything getting done.</p> <p>As a resident of Peaslake for nearly 50 years I think it is time for our community to discuss and decide what we require to make our community closer and better.</p> <p>We have issues with flooding in the village centre and we may want to have yellow lines in the village centre or decide to have a better play area for the local children.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>We wanted to put a discreet toilet in the main car park in the village to try and raise funds for the local area but I believe was blocked by Shere Council, because of this the single village store has had to fund the renovation of their store and put in a toilet for customers and visitors to the village. Throughout the year we have multitudes of cyclists, walking visitors and children doing their Duke of Edinburgh and all have access to the shop toilet facilities (the shop had to pay to have this available as their was and has been for many years, talk of people using the Hurtwood as a toilet, which is not acceptable especially when families are out enjoying the woodland walks).</p> <p>We are a close community and all have strived over the years to make the village accessible to visitors and look after out elderly residents who have lived in the village for most of their lives. I think most if not all Peaslake residents feel that it is time now for us to be independent.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to express my strong support of the proposal to establish a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>I firmly believe an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen local democracy by making local decisions focusing on issues that are relevant to Peaslake - in particular demolition of the derelict Peaslake Farm and increased flooding risk from potential redevelopment of the site. 2. Putting an end to the widespread feeling that the current Shere Parish Council primarily serves the interests of the village of Shere, to the detriment of the village of Peaslake. This perception of dominance by Shere is partly explained by the large block of councillors representing Shere, with much smaller numbers representing Peaslake and Holmbury St. Mary. Incidentally, a new Peaslake Parish Council would be a good opportunity to reform Shere Parish Council and to split it into three roughly equal sized wards comprising Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St. Mary. 3. Improve accountability by ensuring local councillors known to the residents are responsible for making decisions affecting the Peaslake Community, while remaining good neighbours with Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St. Mary. 4. Further encourage the already thriving and resourceful local community in Peaslake that is evidenced by the active support and fundraising for a wide range of causes such as Peaslake School, the Village Hall restoration, Peaslake Fair, Pealake Players and the current appeal to repair the fence around St. Mark's Churchyard.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>5. A smaller parish council would encourage many additional Peaslake residents to become councillors as there would be a greater focus on the community of Peaslake and a faster, more stream-lined decision making process. An independent Peaslake Parish Council would build on the success of the already thriving Peaslake Community Council.</p> <p>6. Lower council administration costs would provide an opportunity to enhance the services provided to the Peaslake community.</p> <p>Lastly, I am very concerned to hear about several allegations of poor conduct by a block of councillors representing the Shere and Gomshall Ward against Councillors from the Peaslake Ward. These allegations include:</p> <p>a) Attempts to stop Peaslake councillors voting on certain Peaslake matters.</p> <p>b) A report of misconduct against two Peaslake councillors that was quickly dismissed by Guildford Borough Council.</p> <p>c) Withholding information that was important for Peaslake and arbitrarily dismissing residents concerns about potential flooding caused by the proposed development of the derelict Peaslake Farm.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I have lived in Peaslake for 26 years where I am involved in the community, especially our Fair which is an annual, succesful, community run event hosting around 1500 visitors.</p> <p>I feel an independent council would be of great benefit to Peaslake. We have a strong community council & would do well making all of our own decisions & not have to be involved with the bureaucracy of being the smaller part of another council. We are fully capable of dealing with the challenges involved & I believe Peaslake would have a bright future with its own residents at the helm.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I have lived in Peaslake for just over 30 years in the early years there were no real concerns but after the Millennium there was a deteration I found SPC were carrying out decisions without Consulting Peaslake residents maybe this has come about as a result of so many needs from Shere residents.</p> <p>Things really came to a head over the Farm fields in Peaslake for these were always a part of our Village SPC seems to have inveigled their control of this landholding.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>I think that if we had our own council that it would be run in a much more democratic manner. As we are at the extreme end of the three villages all our concerns for instance drainage flooding are not given the priorities they require.</p> <p>As Shere and Gomshall have the largest amount of representation which makes them more dominant</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing as a resident and tax payer in Peaslake to register my support for an independent Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>Since moving here seven years ago and after attending local council meetings, I have become aware of the dominance of the Shere Parish and its councillors over the allocation of funding and decision making around projects affecting Peaslake. In particular the somewhat cavalier attitude to house building on the fields on the edge of the village, with the perception that some Shere councillors are more focused on the revenue this would bring rather than the concerns of villagers around flooding and infrastructure.</p> <p>Peaslake is a small but active community and would greatly benefit from the opportunity to have more say over projects relating to the village, with greater accountability and focus on a fair allocation of funds where they are most needed.</p>
Resident	SW	As a resident of Peaslake for 47 years, I confirm I wish for a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Parish Council.
Resident	SW	I support the petition for an IPPC. It will support democracy, give control of our local services, whilst involving the community to work together.
Resident	SW	I have been a resident of Peaslake for 30 years and am now extremely disappointed with the performance of our Shere parish council. I would like you to therefore accept my vote in favour of an independent Peaslake parish council.
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing in support of the Community Governance Review 2025 Shere Parish Council and the proposal to establish a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>I have lived locally for most of my life, my daughter has lived in Peaslake for 15 years and my granddaughter went to Peaslake Free School where I helped with reading and school lunches! I moved to Peaslake four and a half years ago and have been made welcome as a new resident and have become involved with the village way of life.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>There is a wonderful 'can do' attitude of a broad spread o villagers and the ability to get on with issues as they arise. Recently in April there was a very short (one week) request from Coverwood Farm for help to plant hedging. I was surprised how many volunteers arrived to help (40+). The task was completed by the following day.</p> <p>The village is inundated with cyclists (both road and mountain) at weekends but the village has foundways, which includes the Community Council, of defusing issues whilst maintaining an amiable relationship with our local businesses which have a high degree of dependence upon these visitors.</p> <p>The issues which Peaslake faces are very similar to that of Shere but are very different. Shere tends to welcome visitors interested in the history and quaintness of the settlement and those discovering film locations (such as The Holiday), whereas Peaslakehas a massive hit of cyclists who are more intent on refueling themselves at out village shop and pub.</p> <p>If Peaslake is permitted to establish a separate civil parish I believe it will provide huge benefit to the village. Residents would continue to ind amicable ways of sorting local issues and problems without recourse to rancour, bullying and underhand tactics that have sadly become evident under the current administration.</p> <p>I believe that residents be fully engaged with local issues which would result in a more cohesive community, more timely delivery of outcomes facilitated by improved local democracy.</p>
Resident (x2)	SW	I hereby support the proposal to create a new civil parish of Peaslake and the establishment of a new Peaslake Parish Council.
Business	SW	<p>We understand that the village of Peaslake is seeking Parish Council status. The Peaslake Village Stores would like it to be known that we are in complete support of the application. We have owned the Peaslake Village Stores since 2008 and we had a very unprofessional experience with the Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>In March 2014, without consultation with us, the owners, the Shere Parish Council submitted an application to the Guildford Borough Council, to list our shop as an Asset of Community Value. In effect limiting our ability to sell the shop and make related management decisions in the event something unexpected happened to one of the owners. Significantly devaluing an asset we have put a lot of love and money into. The Guildford Borough Council formally notified us of the application they had received, with just 7 working days to prepare a defense. It transpired that their application had started the previous August.</p> <p>It had been badly researched and poorly prepared (and many errors were made) . Local support had to be demonstrated in the application, so the Shere Parish Council sent emails out to a select few. The final count of support being 1 who lived</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>in Peaslake, 6 from outside and 4 classified as not known. This approach demonstrated that the Parish Council did not have the interests of Peaslake and the Peaslake Village Stores in mind and furthermore it shows a poor unfair biased approach.</p> <p>This also suggests that the Shere Parish Council were deceitful and did not respect the villagers of Peaslake, the Shop and the Post Office, they seemed to think that a proper consultation was not needed. It was very upsetting at the time, causing great concern and anxiety to the Staff and ourselves and we believe it is an example of their general approach to issues relating to our village.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Having lived in Peaslake for over 20 years under Shere Parish Council, becoming an Independent Parish I think would benefit Peaslake in many ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We could have our own voice on matters affecting the village and be able to make our own decisions on how our village is run as well as deciding how financially the monies are spent. 2. To be able to have control on how local matters are handled as they arise. 3. To have our own Councillors who would care and discuss decisions to be made for the residents of Peaslake. <p>I am sure you will receive many letters from residents feeling the same way with their own thoughts on this and questions that need to be answered. I am one of many who feel it would be in our own interest to have our own Parish Council.</p>
Resident	SW	I wish to support strongly regarding an Independent Peaslake Parish Council. We can then focus on our own issues.
Resident	SW	I feel very strongly that decisions regarding matters in Peaslake should be made by Peaslake residents. I therefore support an independent Peaslake Parish Council.
Resident	SW	<p>I have lived in Peaslake for 39 years (before that I lived in Holmbury St Mary).</p> <p>I am writing with my response to the Public Consultation on whether a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council should be established, covering the existing South-West parish ward of the parish of Shere.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>As a long-time resident, I have observed that Peaslake already has a very significant community cohesion and identity of its own, evidenced not least by the strong local support for our own institutions such as Peaslake School, the annual Fair, Peaslake Players etc. It is also clear from recent meetings that when issues arise which affect Peaslake specifically, such as the development of Peaslake Farm, the Peaslake residents take a very keen interest indeed. A Peaslake Parish Council is likely to result in improved community engagement because the residents will know that it represents their interests directly. Much of the business of Shere Parish Council seems somewhat distant to Peaslake residents, but I believe they would be keen to come forward and represent their immediate locality within a smaller Parish Council, thus improving local democracy and getting more local people actively engaged. With a smaller and more relevant council it is likely that the councillors will be personally known to many/most of the Peaslake residents, which again will be good for local democracy. In addition, a smaller council is likely to require less of a time commitment from individual councillors (so attracting more candidates) and councillors would know that their efforts related directly to the immediate locality.</p> <p>At the moment, matters affecting Shere tend to dominate parish affairs. Out of a total of 13 councillors, only four represent Peaslake. Our councillors have found it hard for the village to have an adequately influential say in decisions which largely or solely affect Peaslake. They have experienced unnecessary and unacceptable delays with modest but helpful projects such as the fitting of an extended handrail at the Old School Room in Peaslake. I believe that a smaller Peaslake Parish Council would be more efficient in dealing with issues affecting the village.</p> <p>Peaslake Village Hall is a central location for the village and council matters which require public space (meetings etc) could be conveniently conducted there. Renting this space for the purpose would also assist directly in funding of the Hall.</p> <p>The financial analysis carried out by existing Peaslake councillors takes into account the likely cost of a separate Parish Council administration. It is estimated that the administrative costs of a separate Peaslake Parish Council would take considerably less money as a proportion of the available precept than under the current arrangement, and the proposal would be that larger projects are budgeted for over several years where necessary.</p> <p>Finally, there considerable distrust between SPC and Peaslake residents going back some years but recently brought into sharp relief over (a) proposals for the development and use of Peaslake Farm and its fields, (b) withholding of information considered important to the village and (c) dismissing villagers' legitimate concerns about related issues such as flooding in the village. Within SPC there have been attempts to stop Peaslake councillors voting on Peaslake matters and a formal report of misconduct was made against two of our councillors. This was quickly dismissed by Guildford Borough Council but has left a very unpleasant atmosphere.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		In summary, I think that the proposed change would improve democracy and local services and encourage Peaslake residents to become more involved and work even better together than they do now. I am confident that any issues arising during the transition will be satisfactorily dealt with by our councillors.
Resident	SW	<p>I have served as a Peaslake ward councillor on Shere Parish Council (SPC) since 2015. I firmly support the creation of a separate Peaslake Parish Council. Below, I explain why.</p> <p>1. Strengthening Local Democracy</p> <p>1.1 Local Decision-Making</p> <p>One of the main drivers for a Peaslake Parish Council is residents desire to have power devolved so that Peaslake councillors take local decisions in the best interests of our community and spend our precept on Peaslake priorities.</p> <p>Shere Parish Council is large, with 13 councillors. Only four represent Peaslake. We are outnumbered and accountability is limited.</p> <p>Peaslake is more than ready to take on devolved responsibility. Established in 1945, the Peaslake Community Council (PCC) is a community led forum; meeting monthly; typically, 25-30 people attend, with a mix of attendees varying from meeting to meeting. Meeting minutes are published on the PCC's own website www.peaslake.org and emailed to around 160 people and a summary is included in the parish magazine. 10 volunteers take it in turn to chair and take minutes. The atmosphere is friendly and respectful.</p> <p>The limitation of the PCC, which parish council status could address, is its lack of authority to decide, act and allocate funding to improve the village or enhance life for residents.</p> <p>We have an agreed set of medium term Peaslake priorities that were agreed in consultation with residents. Councillor Florent and I led this piece of work and submitted it in May to SPC for their strategic plan. Frustratingly, a request to cost the main action for reducing flood risk has already been blocked by SPC. Under SPC administration, it's a struggle to get things done that Peaslake residents want. And, conversely there is a pattern of SPC imposing things on Peaslake that residents don't want.</p> <p>At a recent meeting, someone asked why does Shere Parish Council behave so badly? Another resident summed it up. She said “because they are on top”. That is how many Peaslakers feel, and there is plenty of evidence to support it. Examples include SPC</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - imposing their wishes on the community - not listening to opposing views - intimidation of councillors - lack of transparency <p>In Appendices 1 and 4, I set out two case studies which illustrate these behaviours. Appendix 2 covers my experience of intimidation.¹</p> <p>[</p> <p>Why I believe a Peaslake Parish Council would be different</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We would have 5 local councillors directly accountable to residents who know the community and its needs. - Peaslake already has an engaged and active community (see Section 2), with a strong culture of openness, consultation and communication through the Peaslake Community Council. This spirit can be carried forward into a Peaslake Parish Council. <p>1.2 Trust, Transparency and Respect</p> <p>As a Peaslake parish councillor, I have encountered intimidating behaviour. I have been reported to the Monitoring Officer for misconduct (a criminal offence) and faced two false allegations, one of unprofessional conduct and another for bullying (details in appendix 2). Because of these experiences and my concerns about the accuracy of the minutes, I now record council meetings and nearly always communicate by e-mail so that I have an independent record.</p> <p>Both Councillor Florent and I have formally disassociated ourselves from SPC's response to the Community Governance Review. The response is marked by a combination of financial threats covered in Section 3 and misleading statements. The positive comments about the PCC are belied by past criticisms of it not least by the two peas lake councillors you don't attend. Most striking of all is the lack of understanding or care about the reasons why nearly 40% of the Peaslake electorate petitioned for the creation of an independent council.</p> <p>In the final section off their response coma there is a mention of building trust. However, trust is built on honesty, transparency, and the belief that all parties genuinely have each other's best interests at heart. After 10 years serving as</p>

¹ The resident enclosed with their written representations, a portfolio of evidence which is available for viewing by councillors on request.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>appease lake ward councillor, I am convinced that SPC's priorities and investments are largely focused on north ward with little interest in peaslake except as a source of revenue for the council.</p> <p>1.3 Better Democratic Balance in the Wider Parish</p> <p>SPC is split into 3 wards. North Ward (Shere and Gomshall) with 6 councillors; South West Ward (Peaslake) with 4 councillors and South East (Holmbury St. Mary) with 3 councillors. If Peaslake secedes, there is an opportunity for further democratic reform by changing the boundaries into 3 separate wards (Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury) with 3 councillors each.</p> <p>2. Improving Community Engagement</p> <p>A Peaslake Parish Council offers the opportunity to involve the Peaslake community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attracting A broader range of people to stand for election - increasing collaboration and aligning local governance and voluntary activity <p>2.1 Collaboration</p> <p>Peaslake residents have a strong sense of community. Local residents organise an annual fair (attracting 1200+ visitors) to support local charities, the Peaslake Community Fund supports local projects, a new Community Garden is being created led by locals, Peaslake School has been supported by local funds for decades, the village hall extension is led by locals and part funded by local donations. And much more.</p> <p>A Peaslake Parish Council could strengthen impact by enabling more collaboration and aligning local governance/ resources and local activities to achieve more for the community. For example, convening the Peaslake Community Fund, the Peaslake Community Garden CIC, local farmers and Surrey Hills NGOs to create together an orchard that provides community benefits and mitigates flood risk; or partnering with SCC, local farmers, central government and the community to implement essential flood prevention works.</p> <p>2.2 Better Representation</p> <p>There is plenty of talent and the range of experience among Peaslake residents, but little appetite to stand for Shere Parish Council. What could change that and encourage more people to step forward?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A smaller councillor workload - a welcoming and open culture

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>- knowing that what you do makes a difference to <u>your</u> community.</p> <p>Smaller workload: Focusing only on Peaslake issues substantially reduces councillor workload. For example, only 20- 25% of planning applications relate to Peaslake. A significant amount of council meeting time is spent discussing North Ward issues (traffic, the car park, pedestrianisation etc).</p> <p>Positive culture: I encouraged Councillor Florent to stand for election. She is younger, has a family and works. She is able and comes to meetings well prepared. Just the type of person that local democracy needs. Yet, her first experience at the Council was shocking. She will include details of that and later episodes in her submission.</p> <p>Residents who attend SPC meetings often express concerns about the behaviour and attitude of councillors, noting instances of intimidation, dismissiveness, and attempts to defer issues that don't align with SPC plans. While they frequently thank Councillor Florent and me for our efforts, it does not inspire others to run for the Council.</p> <p>A Peaslake Parish Council is a different prospect. Already three people, not previously involved in local governance, have expressed interest in standing for a Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>3. Improving Local Services and Priorities for Residents</p> <p>A Peaslake Parish Council offers the following opportunities.</p> <p>Speed up actions so residents' concerns are addressed timeously.</p> <p>Build partnerships with voluntary groups, not for profits, neighbouring parish councils facing similar challenges, and statutory bodies like the SCC Flood and Resilience Team to solve problems and share resources.</p> <p>Increased community engagement and satisfaction by simple steps like keeping residents informed and involving them in follow up on their proposals.</p> <p>Provide transparency on spending allowing Peaslake residents to see how their precept is used and exercise scrutiny and accountability.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>The claims made in SPC's submission about an independent Peaslake missing out on access to wider funds are not borne out by the facts (see 3.4). The threat that Peaslake residents may no longer have access to the Drop in Centre is petty; would only affect 2 Peaslake residents and the Peaslake Parish Council would meet the cost.</p> <p>3.1 Speed of Action I attend the Peaslake Community Council, where most village upkeep issues originate. I am frustrated by the long delays in moving from request to action. Appendix 3 the Forest School case study illustrates this.</p> <p>3.2 Communication and Follow-Up There is no routine follow up on outstanding Peaslake issues unless I request it. Correspondence is rarely copied to councillors. SPC is reluctant to include residents when replying to my requests even when the idea started with the resident. A Peaslake Parish Council could transform residents' experience with simple communication systems and a more public service focused attitude.</p> <p>3.3 Partnerships SPC argues a Peaslake Council's small size would be a disadvantage, but independence would allow empower Peaslake to work more flexibly with partners and wider stakeholders on key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC flood resilience team has offered support and funding advice for flood mitigation but SPC has blocked progress on this. • Discussions with Friends of the Hurtwood (local land managers) have been productive on parking and could expand to flood and forest fire mitigation. <p>Local government devolution brings many opportunities to work better and more collaboratively outside of SPC in the interests of residents. Parish council status combined with devolution would empower peas lake to build on existing relationships and crucially create new partnerships that better fit our needs.</p> <p>3.4 Financial Transparency and Use of Resources Transparency: SPC provides no detailed spending breakdown by village because the Clark said it's not possible. The published end of year account yields little information. See Appendix 6.</p> <p>Administration: In 2024/25, 56% of SPC's budget was spent on administration (53% the previous year). Although a Peaslake Parish Council would have a smaller precept, it would spend a smaller percentage on administration and focus</p>

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		<p>spending on priorities like flood prevention, ditch and footpath maintenance, and village upkeep (see illustrative budget at Appendix 7).</p> <p>Access to additional funds: SPC's CGR submission claims all villages can access parish wide resources, including Shere Car Park income, but Peaslake struggles to secure investment. Current projects to be funded from car park income are focused solely on North Ward. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repayment for Shere Car Park surfacing: £40K • new toilets in Shere: £80K • Proposed renovation of Tanyard Hall, Gomshall: £70-100K (conservative estimate) <p>No funds have been allocated for Peaslake flood mitigation. Residents' repeated requests to remove derelict Peaslake Farm buildings have failed, though such an eyesore would not be tolerated in Shere.</p> <p>SPC's CGR submission (section 6) states that an independent Peaslake would lose access to grants for community organisations (such as the £6K grant to Holmbury Village Hall) and posits that it is unlikely that an independent Peaslake would be able to replicate the level of SPC grants.</p> <p>In fact, in March 2023, Peaslake Memorial Hall applied to SPC for a donation towards their £200K community hub extension. In June 2023 (following discussion at 3 separate meetings) a grant of £3K was awarded. I am confident that a Peaslake Parish Council could match this level of support and possibly exceed it.</p> <p>4. Peaslake: A Cohesive Community But Not an Equal Partner in Governance</p> <p>4.1 Cohesion</p> <p>Peaslake has its own distinct identity. There's a diverse mix of backgrounds, ages, wealth and experience. Some families have lived here for generations, while others (the newcomers) have moved in over the last 20 years. People tend to stay in Peaslake. And you often hear 'Peaslakers' say how lucky they feel to live here.</p> <p>There's a deep sense of community, with many people knowing each other and integrating across village groups and Peaslake School. The village comes together to address community needs. Last year, Peaslake raised funds for its defibrillator through small donations and a pub quiz. Large projects like the Village Hall extension (approx. £200K) were</p>

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		<p>funded with 60% from institutions and the rest from local donations (such as the “buy a brick” campaign. Previous campaigns saved Peaslake School and the local pub.</p> <p>There are also numerous social groups, including the Peaslake Players (amateur dramatics), badminton, pickleball, the Villagers Group, Mah Jong, local cycling groups, and a monthly quiz. New initiatives like the Community Garden and the Climate Cafe attract a wide age range.</p> <p>A recent volunteer call for help with fencing at Peaslake Farm and the Community Garden saw 50 volunteers of all ages, who planted 850 metres of hedging in a single day. A separate call for help with tree and vegetation trimming in the Peaslake Cemetery attracted local bikers who took on the heavy lifting.</p> <p>4.2 inequality Peaslake’s relationship with SPC is characterised by a sense of mistrust and real inequality. It's not a partnership. Whether it is allocating funding, taking decisions, or culture and behaviour, North Ward councillors call the shots, supported by the Clerk. ‘They are on top’.</p> <p>Creating a Peaslake Parish Council would change the power dynamic; empower the amazing Peaslake community; and form the basis for a healthier future relationship with SPC.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I give notice that I wish Peaslake to have an independent parish council. In particular an independent parish council would improve democracy and local services and get the community more involved and work even better together.</p> <p>Peaslake has a history of strong community. For example self governing and funding Peaslake School. I was a trustee for many years. The strains between Peaslake and Shere has been evident for years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father Charles was ousted by the Shere Parish when highly regarded by Peaslake Parish • A history of poor conduct from Shere Councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attempting to stop Peaslake councillors voting on Peaslake matters ○ Reports of misconduct against two Peaslake councillors ○ Withholding information regarding local matters eg flooding. • Relationships are not good at the expense of local services and happiness • It is time for an independent council.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Therefore an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local decision making • Make the most of the powerful already organised community (school, fair etc) • Make a greater difference on local matters • Accept greater identifiable accountability • Tap into the very high level of local talent in the village. It is exceptional and part of the reason the village had the skills to keep the school open for so long. <p>It would overcome the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage Peaslake has having 4 of 13 councillors making local issues lost in governance • The inefficient time, skills and governance of the larger council. E.g taking 18 months to change a hand rail in the village • The increasing reputation of misconduct of Shere councillors and relationship breakdown in the council. <p>In summary an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow decisions about Peaslake to be made in Peaslake • Build on the strong sense of community and support village groups and organisations that already exist • Consult, listen and act in residents' best interests • Deliver local accountability and faster decision making • Lower administration; more spend on services.
Resident	SW	<p>I give notice that I wish Peaslake to have an independent parish council. I hold the opinion that an independent parish council would improve local services and get create a more involved and collaborative community. Peaslake has a history of strong community however there have been strains between Peaslake and Shere has been evident for years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father Charles was ousted by the Shere Parish when highly regarded by Peaslake Parish • A history of poor conduct from Shere Councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attempting to stop Peaslake councillors voting on Peaslake matters ○ Reports of misconduct against two Peaslake councillors ○ Withholding information regarding local matters eg flooding.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are not good at the expense of local services and happiness <p>Therefore an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve local decision making Make the most of the powerful already organised community (school, fair etc) Make a greater difference on local matters Accept greater identifiable accountability Tap into the very high level of local talent in the village. It is exceptional and part of the reason the village had the skills to keep the school open for so long. <p>It would overcome the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantage Peaslake has having 4 of 13 councillors making local issues lost in governance The inefficient time, skills and governance of the larger council. E.g taking 18 months to change a hand rail in the village The increasing reputation of misconduct of Shere councillors and relationship breakdown in the council. <p>In summary an independent Peaslake Parish Council would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow decisions about Peaslake to be made in Peaslake Build on the strong sense of community and support village groups and organisations that already exist Consult, listen and act in residents' best interests Deliver local accountability and faster decision making Lower administration; more spend on services.
Resident	SW	<p>As a resident of Peaslake for a number of years I write to confirm that I would like Peaslake to have an independent Parish Council.</p> <p>As an Independent Parish councillors would be able to make decisions regarding the village quickly and focus on what matters to villagers actually living in the village. A Peaslake Parish Council would be able to build on the strong sense of community that already exists and being smaller would be to attract local villagers to the council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am emailing to confirm my agreement for an independent Peaslake Parish.</p> <p>Having lived in Peaslake my whole life and deeply benefited from the villages community and services, through attending Peaslake School, I believe Peaslake will thrive as an independent parish.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Having an independent parish will allow village matters to be considered and discussed from members who experience these first-hand. Peaslake deserves a fair say on its community and services, given the unequal representation the village has amongst the current parish, independence will ensure Peaslake matters are never undermined or ignored.</p> <p>An independent Peaslake Parish would allow the village to flourish, ensuring the Peaslake community have the full say in the functioning and maintenance of our beautiful village.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I would like to write in full support for the setting of a Peaslake Parish Council separate and distinct from the existing Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>This is a unique opportunity to establish genuine local democracy to the village, and comes at just the right moment in advance of the LGR that will create a new unitary authority structure. My belief is that smaller distinct Parish Councils will be able to focus on the truly local issues and environments within the communities and make a materiel difference to the quality of daily life in the villages of the Surrey Hills. I have been a resident of Peaslake for 6 years and have been active as a parent of Peaslake School, a member of the community council and more recently a founding member of the Peaslake Community Garden and a self builder of a new home. This interaction with and on behalf of the communities within Peaslake has led to a number of occasions where I have had contact with Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>There is no doubt in my mind that a Peaslake Parish Council alongside the new unitary authority structure will give the best opportunity for agency and influence within the community that I am now a part of. There is also no doubt in my mind that there is sufficient critical mass and capacity within the community to build and sustain a vibrant local democracy.</p>
Resident	SW	I believe a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council should be established, with the area of that new civil parish comprising the area of the existing South-West parish ward of the parish of Shere.
Resident	SW	I would like to register my support for an independent Peaslake Parish Council. I am a Peaslake resident and feel we have a very strong, informal, community spirit, that makes proposals and suggestions for the good of our community. Unfortunately as these decisions do not always benefit the larger majority they can often be discarded or dismissed, without consideration.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>I believe Peaslake residents, have the capacity, intelligence and skills set to be in control of Peaslake issues and this formalising of support for each other will build a better community. We will be able to personalise the needs of our residents.</p> <p>I feel more residents will be involved with the community and decision making if they have a greater access to the people supporting them. When people are not in personal contact with decision makers it is easier to lay blame or misunderstand the decisions being made. With a smaller committee; with issues personal to the residents of Peaslake, I believe we will have a more positive, proactive interaction. Decisions can be swifter and benefits to the Peaslake residents will be visible to our residents.</p> <p>Peaslake is lucky to have a physical central hub - shop, pub, bike shop, church, village hall. All these establishments at one time or another have been in danger of closure, yet the informal community have rallied to save our services. This proves that a Peaslake Council is a viable option.</p> <p>Peaslake's community can still work closely with its neighbours, if it benefits everyone. Friendships formed at coffee morning across the wards should not be broken, there should be opportunities for facilitating this in both Peaslake and the other wards. However with such a large area to cover it is difficult to see how the current set up can meet the needs of all individuals. So often schemes are put forward without explanation and are seen as "pure money making" and not in the best interest of those they are affecting.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>This email is to support the need for Peaslake to have its own Parish Council.....our village is not small and it would not be difficult to get people on our council. We would be making our own decisions and sort out problems which Shere Council take so long to sort out and we will have our own accountability.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to add my support to the proposal to create a separate Parish Council for Peaslake.</p> <p>From what I understand the current arrangement with Peaslake being part of Shere Parish Council has not been working well with the views of the Peaslake Councillors being overridden by the views of the non-Peaslake Councillors.</p> <p>The Peaslake Community Council believes they can better serve the village in a separate Parish Council and not increase cost in the process which seems probable.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Given their sizes it does not appear logical for Peaslake, Shere, Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary and parts of Abinger Hammer to share a Parish Council.</p> <p>I would feel differently if dealing with a more powerful body, but Parish Councils are inherently local in nature.</p>
Residents x2	SW	I support the proposal for a new civil parish of Peaslake and that a new Peaslake Parish Council should be formed, with the area of that new civil parish comprising the area of the existing South-West parish ward of the parish of Shere. I believe my support to be in the best interests of local community engagement, local community cohesion and local democracy.
Residents x 2	SW	<p>We are writing to confirm that we both SUPPORT the proposal that Peaslake should have its own Parish Council.</p> <p>We have been resident in Peaslake for just over 10 years. We are actively involved in village affairs, eg; a trustee of Peaslake village Hall, helping to organise the village fair, and participating in social clubs.</p> <p>We are only too aware that Peaslake should have a separate Parish Council run by Peaslakers who are familiar with with the needs and requirements of Peaslake, rather than being dictated to by a remote organisation, and would request that this be taken into account when the proposal is deliberated.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I would like it placed on record that I am very much in favour in establishing a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>At present many of the decisions effecting Peaslake are not taken by Peaslake people but by a council which comprises of councillors from other villages forming the majority representation. Although there are bound to be negative issues on balance separating the villages seems to be the better option.</p>
Business	SW	<p>I write in support of the Shere Parish Council Community Governance Review and specifically the proposal for Peaslake to set up its own parish council. I am the owner of The Riders Hub and as such, I have regular contact with residents in the village. Running a cycling shop in a rural village in the Surrey Hills calls for care and consideration, especially at weekends when the village can be subsumed by cyclists. Where difficulties have occurred they have been discussed and resolved amicably.</p> <p>In addition, I have created five jobs at the shop, including two apprenticeships and employ a further four young adults at weekends. I regularly participate at Peaslake Community Council Meetings where village issues are aired and I have found</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		it to be a very useful forum which helps prevent misunderstandings. I have a sense that the village appreciates its local businesses and wants to see them thrive. Shere and Peaslake have similar issues - crowds of weekend visitors - but have different identities and solutions to those issues. In my opinion, it would seem sensible that Peaslake solves its own issues and prioritises what is best for the village.
Resident	SW	<p>I support setting up a an independent Peaslake Parish Council as it would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable decisions about Peaslake to be made in Peaslake 2. Act in Peaslake residents' best interests 3. Build on the strong sense of community and support village groups and organisations 4. Act in Peaslake residents' best interests 5. Provide local accountability and faster decision making 6. Lower administration costs
Resident	N	<p>I live in Gomshall; My honest view is I don't have any objection to the Peaslake separation; It will probably fester for years if rejected, and Peaslake will probably appeal and re-apply again and again.</p> <p>Let them go - Shere can then concentrate on Shere and Gomshall, rather than spending time, energy, and money, on a small village that doesn't want to be part of the combined parish.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to input my views.</p> <p>Putting it bluntly - I don't actually care if they go, and it just causes ill feeling if they stay where they don't want to be.</p> <p>Perhaps they should have their own independent surgery as well - that would relieve pressure on Shere</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>I have lived in Shere parish since 1972, firstly in Gomshall and then over 41 years in Peaslake so I fully support the view that a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake parish council should be established.</p> <p>From around 2012 particularly there has been significant deterioration in the manner that Shere Parish Council (SPC) has exercised jurisdiction of its South-West Ward which incorporates Peaslake. There have been matters that have been imposed or attempted on parts of our village without direct consultation with the residents concerned, and rather than exercise dialogue with villages SPC appears to ready to unnecessarily resort to legal means to endeavour to reach its own objectives, costs seemingly funded by local taxpayers themselves via Parish funds. In addition to this some residents have had to incur other significant expenditure themselves in an endeavour to safeguard their immediate environment and interest etc when in trepidation of Council intentions, and to try to ensure that SPC always acts transparently as a democratic local public body. Sadly, however this has not been the case.</p> <p>Issues which have been of great concern to residents have been closed to the public when on Parish Council meeting agenda, even when the venue is in our village itself. Two of our especially hard working Peaslake councillors stand up for the community and its environment but they have been subject to unwarranted efforts by SPC to disqualify them from voting at council meetings. The GBC monitoring officer ruled those SPC actions unjustified and gave immediate support to the Peaslake councillors concerned. In fact the officer however might have intervened earlier in the same vein bearing in mind behaviour and apparent lack of transparency within the parish council. The exclusion of any of our own village councillors from any matter would mean no proper representation for our Ward and some could be excused for thinking that might have been the intention all along.</p> <p>Relevant historical legal documentation has been ignored, and in one case especially, an SPC objective in Peaslake has been persistently pursued by them without regard or assessment of environmental implications for existing residents and dwellings in parts of the village, including where significant problems are already experienced. That is despite information and advice being provided to SPC in this regard, including an independent consultant's assessment funded by the community at its own expense, as well as another separate report on the main drainage problems suffered by parts of the village. There has been reluctance, denial and/or delays by SPC to implement measures that would address basic issues affecting our village, and a recent request by one of our local councillors for approval to just identify costs and potential funding sources to take forward recommendations by Surrey County Flood Resilience Team to mitigate flood problems in Peaslake, was simply refused by Shere Parish Council. In the meantime SPC instead are apparently considering incurring potential large expenditure in their own North Ward improvements including to their own Tanyard Hall office building etc. – seemingly not a priority, at least so not in the eyes of local taxpayers in Peaslake, especially those who experience flood risk and associated problems.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Shere Parish Council is the largest one by area in the Guildford borough and at present Shere and Gomshall is the dominant North Ward and has the largest number in its councillor representation. And would seem to be more 'suburban' in its outlook and in its desires to include our own South West Ward village (and its local precept allowance) in its 'aspirations'. Peaslake (with less councillors) is more rural with its own appreciable population that has different aspirations and outlook and has a long established Community Council that already has the infrastructure and organisation for residents to discuss village issues and views etc and communicate accordingly. There is also a great village spirit, partly in reaction to SPC, with residents readily supporting the community in all manner of ways including organisation and fund raising for local causes and institutions.</p> <p>Sadly local democracy and fairness for Peaslake under Shere Parish Council is somewhat lacking, and their adage of 'what is good for the whole of the Parish' invariable seems to mean – what is actually good for Shere!</p> <p>Local democracy needs to return to Peaslake via its own parish council which then, being one Ward only, and on a smaller manageable administrative scale, and run locally rather than from Shere/Gomshall, would also encourage younger local folk to become more involved. The view is that decisions should be made by people who know and understand their own community and can discharge their responsibilities without hindrance from those of other wards seeking control or interference and with their own agenda.</p> <p>It is important to remember that the idea of considering a separate parish council for Peaslake actually came from Shere Parish Council itself via one of their councillors and was placed on the agenda of their council meeting of 4th July 2024, and apparently without any prior consultation with councillors from Peaslake. Not that the suggestion has been unwelcome to many in our village and SPC giving us at least a chance to move towards an independent council has been much appreciated.</p> <p>I trust therefore that my views and comments above will be taken into consideration in the review and consultation and I again confirm my support for establishing a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake parish council comprising the area of the existing South West parish ward of the parish of Shere.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>I write in response to the Shere Parish Council (SPC) Community Governance Review 2025 as to whether a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new parish council should be established. I am in favour that Peaslake should separate from SPC</p> <p>The villages of Shere and Peaslake are similar – containing residential properties, businesses and large numbers of visitors, particularly at weekends. The needs, however are entirely different. Shere has a history stretching back to Domesday Book and is an attractive “chocolate box” location attracting visitors from the historic perspective as well as those seeking the locations of more recent film sets. Peaslake visitors are predominantly cyclists – both mountain and road cyclists. Their needs are poles apart.</p> <p>Peaslake established a community council just after the war for the specific purpose of welcoming home returning servicemen and women. It has continued regular meetings ever since but has become a focal point for the activities of the myriad of village groups which includes Friend of the Hurtwood, Peaslake Free School and the Church. It is an appropriate forum to discuss village issues with input from the regular attendance of 20 – 30 residents.</p> <p>SPC appears to operate on a self serving basis. There is little or no consultation resulting in decisions being imposed upon the village. The development of Peaslake Farm is a good example. The decision to build affordable housing was taken by SPC and delivered as a fait accompli. Suggestions that business units might be a better alternative were dismissed. The balance of the council membership means that Peaslake councillors were simply outvoted.</p> <p>Last year defibrillators situated in each village had come to the end of their service life and needed replacement. Despite originally funded by SPC it was announced that they could not afford replacements. A resident of Peaslake organised a quiz night hosted by the Hurtwood Inn. Money was raised and our local MP unveiled the replacement shortly before last Christmas. I find it difficult to understand the mentality of not affording four defibrillators - under £2000 per unit - for each parish village when they offer such a precise form of saving lives.</p> <p>A balanced view Despite the suggestion by a Shere Ward councillor that SPC should explore the feasibility of the Peaslake ward forming its own Parish Council, SPC has found it necessary to publish a 'balanced' document to counter the GBC Community Governance Review paper by offering positive and negative solutions. It is neither balanced nor particularly accurate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It states that “some Peaslake residents have signed a petition which gives the impression that some means a few. In reality 40% of residents who are on the electoral register signed the petition

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance, Ward Structure and Balance – the document suggests that if Peaslake forms its own Parish it would potentially create an imbalance by leaving only two wards. This is just nonsense. If Shere and Gomshall are separated there will remain 3 wards – problem solved. Increased Administrative Costs – SPC budgeted administrative costs for the 2024-5 represents 56% of total expenditure. No Parish Council should operate at those levels of opulence. The expense of sending the document by first class mail to every household in the Parish equates to the cost of 3 defibrillators although I concede that they may have received a discount on postage. The deceit, however, is clear to see. <p>What makes Peaslake a suitable candidate to form its own Parish Council?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self determination. The community is good at coming together and sharing talents. In April 2025 Coverwood Farm asked for help to plant hedging on the Peaslake Farm field site. The provision of cuttings was dependant on planting within 7 or 8 days. The request was circulated through the Community Council which resulted in some 40 individuals turning up on the due Saturday and planting was completed by the following day. More than 25 years ago the church gave notice that it would no longer provide funding for the village school. The community pulled together and whilst the school temporarily moved to another location within the village, the huge amount of work required to make the case for a free school, including buying and upgrading the existing school building did not deter the village from following its aims. The school has flourished over the past 25 years and looks to continue to thrive. The village is not afraid to take on tasks which, at first sight, seem monumental. I was approached by Broadband for the Surrey Hills (B4SH) to establish a plan to bring gigabit broadband to the village. B4SH provides communities with a secure, underground, full fibre, symmetrical (upload and download speeds are the same) broadband service to the Surrey Hills. It is largely dependant on volunteers and investment but is now available in most parts of the village. It is noted that GBC has invested capital into the business. The improvement in broadband speed and reliability has meant that homework, working from home and non buffering TV programmes can be achieved without stress. The take-up from roads which have full access to the service ranges between 70% - 95%. The most significant and vital contributions have derived from landowners who have granted free wayleaves over their properties to ensure that the whole community has the opportunity to benefit from a major upgrade to our village infrastructure. Unless the community supported the project it would have floundered within weeks. <p>Why Peaslake needs its own PC</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The village has been badly served by SPC for years. Hostility towards ward councillors. Frequently marking council papers as confidential so that they cannot be shared or discussed externally. A parish council should be open, inclusive and democratic. I don't think that SPC would pass the test. • Little money has been spent on Peaslake – Some £200,000 has been raised to extend the Peaslake Memorial Hall to facilitate a community hub. SPC contribution amounted to £3,000. • Peaslake is an open community and thrives on initiatives and groups working together. The successful annual fair is organised by a very effective WatsApp group that delivers significant funds for local groups including the free school. • The community broadband, installed and serviced by B4SH, has played an important part in the success of the fair over the past three years by providing a reliable card reader service for all stall holders and the car park. • There is a strong feeling, within the community, that Shere gets what it wants in terms of monetary support for council projects. Yet projects requested by other villages within the Parish are stalled or delayed. It took a very generous 18 months to gain approval for an extension to the hand rail for better access to the Old School Room. • The SPC Annual Report 2024/25 provides perfect examples of monetary imbalances:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Skudges in Peaslake are being cleared and improved for use as a forest school. ○ Parking opposite the garage in Holmbury St Mary has been repaired. ○ Old Fire Station toilets, Shere – planning application submitted for a full refurbishment. ○ Plans are being prepared for a lift and internal restructure of Tanyard Hall to facilitate a further expansion of the drop-in centre. <p>Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that the request by Mike Keeble in July 2024 - “Having heard the voices of Peaslake residents at the last full council meeting Councillor Mike Keeble would like to propose that the SPC explore the feasibility of the Peaslake Ward forming its own Parish Council. It was agreed that the Council would neither support nor oppose the proposal at this time” reflected a more profound realisation that the bitterness and mistrust could only be resolved by his suggestion. • It was interesting to note that SPC soon changed its mind and resolved that it would not be in the interests of the parish, in general and the residents of Peaslake in particular for the current boundaries of the parish to be changed to enable Peaslake to form its own parish council. • Perhaps a little cynical, the change of Chair at SPC seemed to coincided with the submission of the Community Governance Review petition. • If the change was to indicate some form of appeasement, it doesn't work for me.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For years, bitterness, mistrust and bullying are words I hear levied against SPC. This is intolerable and begs the question why? What has the Monitoring Officer or GBC Councillors who attend Parish Council meetings been doing? • With a background like that It is clear that future decisions about Peaslake should be made and implemented by Peaslake residents. • A Peaslake parish will build on the strong community and support of village groups and organisations. • Open discussion and consultation will bring about better and faster decisions and immensely improve local democracy.
Resident	SW	<p>I write, responding to the above Community Governance Review, in support of Peaslake establishing a new civil parish and a new parish council.</p> <p>I have lived in Peaslake for more than 25 years and have witnessed altercations between Shere Parish Council (SPC) and Peaslake residents Sent from my iPads (SPC) on several occasions. Much of this stems from proposals that have been l,posed by SPC on residents of our village. The concept of open discussion and consultation is far from the truth and seems to be an alien democratic process.</p> <p>No wonder villagers become enraged over sensitive issues like the future development of Peaslake Farm and the community asset order imposed upon the village shop some 10 years ago.</p> <p>The mistrust of SPC's intentions goes back an awful long way. The recent change of chair is unlikely to herald a new dawn as the incumbent was co-opted as a Shere and Gomshall ward councillor in 2022.</p> <p>I am satisfied that village involvement of the Community Council, which is the village interest group and meets monthly to discuss village issues, will be able to operate alongside a new parish council with a significant improvement to community cohesion and engagement as well as an improvement to democracy.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I have lived in Peaslake since 1992 and am fully in support of the proposal to create an Independent Peaslake Parish Council. This will certainly strengthen the community spirit locally and I would expect more to become interested and involved in local affairs as a result. Peaslake is already a thriving community of many different interest groups and is more</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>than capable of managing its own affairs. There are many talented people living here. So this would provide further stimulus to many to get involved. Councillors would be on the spot helping things to move along more quickly; another benefit as there has been some criticism of the status quo in this regard.</p> <p>There has always been a feeling that we are the poor relation to Shere due to the councillor vote imbalance and this has caused some resentment over the years.</p> <p>I very much hope the adjudicating committee will vote in favour of this change. It will reduce the burden on the other local communities as well so there is a plus for them too.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing in SUPPORT of creating an Independent Parish Council for Peaslake.</p> <p>My reasons are:-</p> <p>The change would promote much greater interest in local affairs for the benefit of all and strengthen support within an already well-honed community. With a smaller focus new people might well be attracted to become councillors as the task would be less onerous. This presumably would apply to adjacent communities as well.</p> <p>Peaslake Residents could be absolutely sure that local decision making would lie in the hands of Peaslake elected councillors. This is democratically more sound than the current situation whereby Peaslake only has 4 votes out of 13 and its fortunes often lie in the hands of neighbouring communities.</p> <p>Decision making would no doubt be quicker as would project delivery due to the accessibility of Peaslake dedicated Councillors.</p> <p>There appears to be no financial disadvantage from pursuing this.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I support the proposal that the south west ward of the civil parish of Shere should become a new civil parish of Peaslake with its own parish council. There has been serious friction between the inhabitants and councillors of Peaslake and Shere respectively over the years and Peaslake has shown, especially through its community council, that it is capable of managing its own affairs. It seems to me that the remaining wards of Shere parish council, the north ward and the south east ward, would not constitute a cohesive civil parish and that the south east ward should be considered for amalgamation with one of the parishes on its eastern or southern side.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SE	<p>I am not a resident of Peaslake but do live between Abinger and Holmbury and am therefore more closely affiliated and involved with Peaslake than any other village and I reside in the overall Shere parish area.</p> <p>As such I feel that the Shere Parish Council is extremely parochial in their outlook. They are Shere-centric, and the focus of their activity and understanding of local needs seems to be Shere based. The village of Peaslake has an extremely active and involved local community of interested residents, with good engagement in village life and interests. Peaslake already runs a monthly community council to discuss and resolve local issues, and to run an annual fair, which raises funds for all of the local groups and clubs that are involved. There is a hall with a growing number of clubs and a school that peaslakers have fought hard to run and maintain for the last 30 years.</p> <p>I feel that the issue resides in Shere not listening to Peaslake when issues arise. In particular at a Shere Parish Council meeting held in Peaslake recently it was clear that the chairman in particular was unwilling to listen to the views of the Peaslake community, which had turned out in large numbers and filled the hall.</p> <p>Our councillors do their best to represent us but find themselves blocked or excluded. As the workings of any Parish Council should be open and transparent and not individually influenced in this way I think the issues lie with the current Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>Why else would Peaslake be wanting independence when there are clearly financial benefits to a collective?</p> <p>Given the situation with the Shere Parish Council then independence makes sense. If the issues with the parish council could be sorted out then collective governance would make sense.</p> <p>With any issue of this sort you need to ask how come it has arisen. From the above the reasons are clear. What is done to resolve matters is for you to decide.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I have been a Peaslake resident since 1989, some 36 years. I fully support and am in favour of a new civil parish of Peaslake and the formation of a new Peaslake parish council.</p> <p>The aim would be for Peaslake matters to be discussed and decided upon by Peaslake residents who know and understand their own community for more openness and transparency in the discussions and decision making.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>The proposed development of Peaslake Farm for 'affordable' housing is of major concern to Ewhurst Road residents and villagers. On many occasions when this was an item on SPC agenda it would invariably be the last item and it would be excluded to myself and other members of the public and we would have to leave the meeting.</p> <p>So any discussions/decisions would be between the full council and just four Peaslake councillors who were outnumbered by others on a matter of major concern to the Peaslake community.</p> <p>A recent issue is that of flood risk to the village as a result of the development. SPC have in the past dismissed an independent flood report commissioned by Peaslake residents at their expense and have chosen to ignore it.</p> <p>More recently the Peaslake Farm site was examined by SCC flood resilience team. Their main recommendation was for a curved channel section to be formed in the Lawbrook stream and a pond to slow down the flow and collect water in the event of a downpour, reducing the water flow to the rest of the village lying downstream.</p> <p>Although the site is unsuitable for development due to the high water table, the Surrey risk experts were surprised that anyone would consider building houses on the site because of the geography of the location. Ridge Hill is behind, a 17° slope downwards and the Lawbrook stream on two sides and a roadside ditch on the third side. There are at least five springs on the site which appear most winters.</p> <p>Added to which is the loss of permeable land to the potential housing, SPC has chosen to reject this recommendation at this stage, but may reconsider if the housing scheme proves uneconomic.</p> <p>This is another instance of expert advice being available and SPC rejecting it (they are not the experts) and taking a stance that is potentially damaging to the village.</p> <p>Peaslake has a very strong community spirit as can be exhibited by the attendance to the Peaslake Community Council, which every resident of Peaslake is automatically a member. We meet each month and it is very well attended, most meetings have at least 30 attendees, and discuss matters purely concerning Peaslake. This is chaired and minutes taken and published for all to see. No hidden agendas here.</p> <p>There is very strong support for the village school, the village hall, Peaslake Players theatrical group, Peaslake Fair, and other local clubs and events. The latest being fund raising to replace the local cemetery fence, with some £15k being raised to date.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>A budget has been drafted to prove the viability for a Peaslake parish council. We have exhibited the wealth of talent available and the Peaslake community involvement to fund raise projects and events. I have confined my comments and opinions to matters that I have been personally involved with. I am sure that there will be other respondents who are able to give far more detailed information on matters that I have only touched on and other topics ref to SPC and a Peaslake parish council for the Peaslake community.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I would like to express full support for the establishment of an Independent Peaslake Parish Council as its own entity, distinct from the existing Shere Parish Council, of which it is currently a part.</p> <p>As the village diversifies and increasingly fewer people attend those institutions that are permanent, e.g., local Parish church, or where only a few are meaningfully connected at any one time, e.g., Peaslake Village Free School (while their children are pupils) or local pub, I believe that the creation of an even more localised Parish Council would more meaningful serve the needs of all those in the village across their lifespan. It would also provide a body of truly local individuals and a mechanism to actively promote the health and welfare (in its broadest sense) of the village population, its services and community structures. In my view these need to be reenvisioned for the 21st Century to be relevant to modern society, and support positive and meaningful relationships between the structures that exist and those individuals within them, and support the emergence and interconnectivity of new ones, that are so vital to the well-being of all.</p> <p>This is a particularly timely moment to re-establish genuine local democracy to Peaslake and comes at a timely moment as the LGR will create a new unitary authority structure.</p> <p>I am of the view that smaller distinct Parish Councils will be able to focus on the truly local issues and environments within the communities and make a material difference to the quality of daily life in the villages of the Surrey Hills. Not least as the residents will have the confidence that their village Parish Council will genuinely have the best interests of the village at heart, and not be a secondary or distal priority to a larger and combined entity.</p> <p>I have lived in Peaslake for 6 years and have been active as a parent of Peaslake School, a founding Director of the Peaslake Community Garden CIC and a self-builder of a new home. I am actively engaged in BASH within Peaslake, the Peaslake Eco Church and support local and national environmental issues. I also am an active volunteer in a number of annual village events, e.g., village Fair, Peaslake open Gardens, etc. My experience of Shere Parish Council has been one of partiality to Shere and has, unfortunately, behaved with a lack of transparency and integrity at times, which has been</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>very disappointing. This does not extend to all Councillors but has meant that collectively it has not, in my experience to date, acted in the best interests of those it serves. Peaslake and its community has lacked the high quality local support it is rightly due by its own Parish Council.</p> <p>I believe that an Independent Peaslake Parish Council, alongside the new unitary authority structure will give the best opportunity for agency and influence within the community to be exerted by those in the community, and that for many villagers, trust in their (new) Council body could be restored, and reignite the energy, capability and investment in the village by its residents that has been eroded by the current Council and processes.</p> <p>I believe there are enough individuals and groups within Peaslake who would lend their weight and energy to an Independent Parish Council and that this would be sustainable to the benefit of the village, and those villages which are its neighbours, now and into the future. The village deserves to be part of and promote vibrant local democracy and I think this would achieve that aim. Most of all the community want to be more involved, and to be able to work better together, but they need the effective infrastructure to achieve this.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I fully support setting up an independent Peaslake Parish Council as it would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable decisions about Peaslake to be made in Peaslake 2. Act in Peaslake residents' best interests 3. Build on the strong sense of community and support village groups and organisations 4. Provide local accountability and faster decision making 5. Lower administration costs.
Resident	SW	<p>Regarding the community governance review and consultation, I am a near 25 year resident in Peaslake and I have the following observations to make.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can see that splitting into two smaller decision making units is not the most obvious more today but I can understand it given the particular circumstances of the Parish. • Peaslake is a very distinct and quite active, rounded community as Surrey villages go. There is a track record of independent local action, the free school being a case in point. • This has at times clashed with the slightly feudal character of Shere as the 'dominant' village. • None of this would matter that much had there not been a long history of distrust, personal tension and controversy over issues pertaining specifically to Peaslake.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an ideal world this could be solved amicably within a wider Parish but as it is I fear that Peaslake will struggle to retain good, active councillors in the present environment and this will make matters worse. • On a ten year view I believe an independent Peaslake Parish Council is viable and possibly the best outcome. • Whether this is the right solution over the longer term is more open to debate.

NO OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSAL/NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Residents x 2	SW	I have read most of the letters and leaflets about the creation of Peaslake becoming a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake parish council. My husband and I have lived in Peaslake for 39 years which we have enjoyed. We are neither for or against this petition. We seem to be a happy and comfortable village. We wonder if all the bother of change is really necessary, so really we will leave the decision with the young folk.

OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSAL

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Residents x2	N	<p>As longstanding (43 years) residents of the Parish of Shere, Peaslake, Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary and Abinger Hammer, we would like to express our opposition to the idea of Peaslake having its own separate parish council.</p> <p>The present arrangement of local parish governance works perfectly well here, and has the added advantage of Peaslake having its individual voice through the Peaslake Community Council, a non-statutory body that has a loud voice in local</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>affairs and is well regarded throughout our villages. In short, it is an effective pressure group that ensures that Peaslake opinions are always heard at present parish council level through the elected Peaslake ward representatives of that village.</p> <p>A separate Peaslake parish council, we believe, would be so small and represent so few residents as to be financially unviable and simply become a drain on already limited local government funds.</p> <p>Moreover, many people in all our local villages have worked tirelessly over the decades to bring the separate villages in our parish closer together and more united, not for all these efforts to be undermined now by this pointless exercise of so-called "independence".</p>
Resident	SE	<p>I have received your documentation about the Governance review requested by Peaslake Parish who wish to become independent from Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>I live in the Shere (South East Ward) on the edge of Peaslake. Whilst there are pro's and con's for the split I do not support it and prefer to see us as one Council. I feel there are more positives by staying as one.</p>
Resident	SE	I can see no logical reason why Peaslake should change its position in the local community.
Resident	N	<p>Further to the letter we recently received re the above, I am writing to say that I do not wish this to be taken further. The reasons being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I understand this will, without a doubt, increase our council tax. Which is something I do NOT want 2. We would not see any benefit from this in Shere/Gomshall 3. this will cost money to perform and administer and that is something that the Council cannot afford. The money must be better spent on more important and urgent matters 4. Also the work on this will detract councillors and other staff from their normal duties and effort should be better spent sorting out current issues that the Council have. 5. It needs to be made clear honestly the pros and cons of the reason for considering this work. <p>Please take these on board.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>I write regarding the proposal that Peaslake should be separated from Shere Parish Council and I wish to emphatically object to any separation. My view is to strongly support remaining within Shere Parish Council for the following reasons. I believe there would be duplication of offices as Peaslake would require a separate Parish Clerk and Financial Officer with extra office equipment, insurance and audit plus additional maintenance contracts. This would incur greater costs for the whole parish.</p> <p>There would be a smaller base of expertise to be drawn upon and the cohesion of a united parish would be lost. There would be division instead of a council acting as a whole with a stronger voice. Peaslake could be marginalised.</p> <p>A pressure group set up a petition to leave and I believe based the decision mainly on a single issue rather than looking at the workings and benefit of the council as a whole.</p> <p>We are well served by the parish councillors who have wide experience, integrity and many have served loyally for some time, for this I am grateful. Shere Parish council including Peaslake has existed for over 130 years and I understand has operated effectively in all this time.</p> <p>So, in summary I write to strongly support keeping Peaslake within the existing Shere Parish and to object to Peaslake separating.</p>
Resident	N	<p>When considering the proposal to establish a new civil parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council, it is useful to have in mind the reasons why the existing civil parish of Shere was created in its present fashion, in 1894. Firstly the villages of Shere and Gomshall are sister villages with a shared school, village hall and other communal facilities. For this reason they have to be part of the same civil parish and, because of their commonalities, to be in the same ward of any parish council. Peaslake is more independent, having its own church, school and village hall. However it is within the ecclesiastical parish of Shere and it would be incongruous for this ecclesiastical parish to be split into two halves in two separate civil parishes. The creation of a civil parish of Shere, Gomshall and Peaslake would have left the small village of Holmbury St Mary isolated in the south east corner of Guildford Borough and it must have been considered appropriate to incorporate it into Shere Parish. If a new Peaslake Parish Council were to be created, what is now the South East Ward i.e. Holmbury St Mary, would only have a minute geographical connection to the rest of Shere Parish. I consider that all the arguments are still valid.</p> <p>The Shere Parish Council thus created is the largest in area of the twenty three in Guildford Borough. It has a sense of community unlike some parliamentary constituencies e.g. Godalming and Ash. Its size gives it greater income through the</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>precept, which means that larger projects may be carried out in specific areas of the parish, resulting in financial flexibility. Naturally there are sometimes differences of opinion between wards but I know from personal experience of serving as Shere Parish Councillor for 25 years, including 14 as chairman, that the three wards work together in an amicable, constructive, cooperative manner in the interests of the whole community. Shere Parish Council have an attractive office with two meeting rooms in a 15th century building which was purchased for the princely sum of £1.00, as part of a section 106 agreement, when the Gomshall Tannery site was re-developed. It would be necessary for a new council to provide an equivalent facility at extra cost with new staff. It should be mentioned that a drop-in centre for elderly people is very successfully run by the present council and this facility would be lost to the elderly of Peaslake. All these are reasons why the present structure should be retained.</p> <p>I summarise my view in the words of the old saying “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Here are some of the reasons why I think the current position should remain in place:</p> <p>Democracy: Any boundary change will result in Shere being twice the size of the remaining ward, ie Holmbury, as it is now, with Peaslake, there are now 7 councillors for these 2 wards combined, with 6 in Shere. So there is a balance between the largest ward now, and the other 2 wards, so if this change came in Shere would become unrepresentative, and democracy and balanced representation would be weakened.</p> <p>Identity and cohesion: The existing parish has been defined for over 130 years, and has managed in that time to retain separate identities, but at the same time blended with the joint identity of a parish as a whole for the greater good. Many examples of this exist e.g. Peaslake Players, who draw members from the whole parish and beyond: Shere Swimming Pool Club, members from all over the parish: Drop-in Centre, based in Gomshall, for all in the whole parish: Shere Surgery serves the whole parish. There are many more examples. So we have cohesiveness, and we have parish identities as a whole, while retaining our own village fairs, and affairs, in balance. The fact that it is named Shere Parish Council is irrelevant, but it is the largest ward for historic reasons. For 131 years it has served the whole community well.</p> <p>Efficiency: Any split would mean less resource to go around, for all, because many services, contracts, costs, would be duplicated. So less revenue all around, for the same thing. It’s wasteful, unnecessary, and makes little sense for Peaslake to go on its own.</p> <p>Viability:</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Peaslake would be small, and be less able to raise grants, loans, funding for projects, (e.g. housing) on its own. The council would be maybe 5, so all councillors would have to sit on all committees, making the job of councillor quite onerous, and also limits special knowledge and experience that can be drawn on by a bigger council. Balance and perspective could be lost, while a small clique could be in charge.</p> <p>Finances: Any split would mean less for all. The precept has not yet been determined, and there is little, if any, external revenue generated by Peaslake. Whereas Shere ward does have these opportunities, being larger, and with many more tourists too, the benefits of which currently are shared by all. Ownership and liability of assets would have to be divided, and some of these, especially the farm at Peaslake, at this time it is not clear as to who would own it.</p>
Resident	N	<p>I object to a new civil parish for the following reason:</p> <p>The petition should be deferred because of the major re-organisation in the local governance of Surrey. The petitioners have had over a hundred years to submit their petition. A deferment for an agreed period would not be unreasonable until the re-organisation is completed.</p> <p>My general view is that the majority of residents live in Shere & Gomshall and pay all the taxes, while the minority live in Peaslake & Holmbury and enjoy all the benefits of Shere & Gomshall amenities.</p> <p>My particular view is that Guildford Borough Council should draw to the secretary of state's attention the need for social housing and the availability of land in this part of Surrey over and above the petition.</p> <p>Insufficient detail is being provided about house building applications in this part of Surrey. I fear the majority of applications have been made purely out of social greed.</p> <p>Petitioners should be named.</p>
Resident	SE	<p>I am writing to you to express my opposition to the proposal to split Shere Parish Council and create a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>My reasons are as follows:</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will make no economic sense. The setting up of a new Parish Council would likely leave the residents of Peaslake (not to mention Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury) worse off. Peaslake residents would need to pay for the infrastructure and organisation that goes with running a Parish Council, while the wards remaining in the now shrunk Shere Parish Council are likely to have an increase in their precept to pay for the missing Peaslake contribution. A smaller Shere Parish Council will likely not lead to smaller running costs. Currently Peaslake residents are able to benefit from the money generated by Shere - especially through Shere's car parking. Should they split, it is difficult to see how they would be able to find funds to pay for community projects (such as the Drop in Centre) other than through an increased contribution from their residents. • In addition the removal of the "Peaslake contribution" to the Shere Parish Council Budget might also make it unviable for the community projects that the Parish Council currently support throughout the parish to continue. So the consequences of the proposed split could be a lose lose for both Peaslake residents and those in Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury. • With the future arrangements for local government in Surrey going in the other direction (the abolition of Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council in favour of two large unitary authorities) it makes little sense for the voice of the Surrey Hills villages (currently represented by the existing Parish Council) to be diluted and fragmented. • Lastly, the removal of Peaslake from Shere PC will create an imbalance on the existing Parish Council. Currently no single ward holds a majority on the PC but should Peaslake's 4 councillors be removed that would leave Shere and Gomshall's 6 councillors with the ability to dominate any decisions and allocation of funds. This would not be in the best interests of my ward (Holmbury St Mary). <p>In summary then, I am against the proposal and urge you to reject it.</p>
Resident	SW	Having read the document sent to me with regard to the setting up of Peaslake parish council, I am against such a move. I cannot see that there is any advantage to this for Peaslake residents. The figures given by the proposals simply do not add up. It is a foolish idea with all the other changes to local government that are proposed during the time I have been a resident in Peaslake I cannot honestly say that I have felt that Shere Parish Council has not worked with the best interests of Peaslake in mind.
Resident	SE	<p>I have read all the information made available by your good selves and others. I have also spoken to several Peaslake and Holmbury residents.</p> <p>I can see nothing that would benefit Peaslake or the remains of SPC should Peaslake village break away from SPC.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>I can only see additional expense being created in order to maintain the running of Peaslake village and Shere and Holmbury villages.</p> <p>I would also imagine that two smaller councils would carry less weight in any negotiations, for additional funding etc. that might occur with Surrey Council and others.</p> <p>If I had a vote, I would vote AGAINST Peaslake leaving Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>I have been a resident of Holmbury St Mary for 34 years.</p>
Resident	SE	<p>My husband and I were dismayed to receive communications from you recently regarding a petition from a number of residents in Peaslake, who wish to separate the Peaslake Ward from Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>This is the first we have heard of this proposal and we both think it is ridiculous. This must surely have been instigated by a very small group of people who do not appreciate being part of the wonderful community which is under the umbrella of Shere Parish Council. We have been 'as one' for many years and have all enjoyed the friendships and benefits which our shared community has had to offer and continues to offer.</p> <p>We have lived in Holmbury St Mary for 34 years and Peaslake has been very much part of our lives. As a family, we have many friends and interests within the current boundaries of Shere Parish Council. Our youngest daughter attended Holmbury Playgroup and all three of our children attended Shere Village School. All three were members of the Shere and Peaslake Parish Choir and the Young Peaslake Players. Our eldest daughter attended Brownies at Holmury St Mary and our son was a member of the local Scouts and Venture Scouts at Gomshall.</p> <p>I myself have been an active member of the Villages Group (which used to be the Peaslake Wives) and it's associated Book Club, for many years. We have members from all the Villages within the Shere Parish Council area. Bridge is another more recent interest for us and again we play with different groups locally.</p> <p>Our social life and friendship groups involve people from all the Villages here. Why would we want to split up a wonderful community which has always worked for us.</p> <p>We have no idea why some Peaslakers wish to make this change. We don't know who they are and so far haven't come across anyone who thinks that this is a good idea. Our Peaslake friends can't understand it as they would also lose their</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>right to free parking in Shere, have no share in the income from the car park, no priority membership or access to the swimming pool in Shere and no access to the drop in centre. We can't think of any sensible reason why most Peaslakers would want this.</p> <p>It will be a sad day for us all if this is allowed to happen.</p>
Resident	N	<p>I do not believe that Peaslake should separate from the larger parish that is Shere Parish Council. I definitely agree with the Shere Parish Council view and points expressed in their letter to you stating the reasons to remain as one parish.</p> <p>Peaslake already has a strong community and local identity which is enhanced - not damaged - by being part of the wider parish. They have their own church, school, village hall, successful drama group, and community council. There is no problem engaging their residents.</p> <p>Shere Parish Council has organised assistance when needed and also supported the ward in any emergencies - such as dealing with tree damage, surface water flooding, traffic problems etc. They have always immediately dispatched the parish's contracted maintenance team to clear fallen trees, to unblock clogged ditches that are not clearing the water as they should.</p> <p>Peaslakers are active participants of the Drop in Centre (based in Gomshall) and the Jubilee Library at the rear of Shere village hall. The parish council have provided grants to Peaslake village hall in support of past capital projects and installed speed monitoring equipment in the village. There is constant interaction between the two villages and their residents. Peaslake Stores is famous for its quiches, deli and cheese straws.</p> <p>I feel it is significant that it is just two of the parish councillors who represent Peaslake who are leading this motion to separate. The other two ward councillors are not in agreement. There is the same division of opinion between Peaslake residents, made obvious by the number of attendees from Peaslake at the Extraordinary Council meeting called by Shere Parish Council to thoroughly discuss the matter. The public are always able to have their say before an item is debated. Of those present at this EGM those who wished to remain within SPC outnumbered those who wished to leave.</p> <p>Unfortunately there has been definite misinformation in leaflets circulating in Peaslake encouraging the separation. They have been stating as fact things that are not correct. It is very concerning that their residents are not being supplied locally with accurate information.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	N	<p>I write, as invited, to express my views on the proposal contained in the community governance petition concerning Shere Parish - namely that Peaslake should become a new independent Peaslake parish council. In your terms of reference document, I note particularly the paragraph saying the government has emphasised that recommendations made in community governance reviews ought to bring about improvement in the following four areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Engagement? - I cannot see how this would come about if you recommended a new Peaslake parish. Peaslake already has a longstanding Peaslake Community Council. This non elected body of individuals from the village community meets monthly. It plans, discusses and reports on the activities of a wide range of village organisations and events and on village issues identified. Normally at least two of Peaslake's four elected councillors attend these meetings and raise at subsequent full parish council meetings any issues that the Shere Parish Council may have a role or duty to become involved in. At the village level there seems little or no need or opportunity for increasing community engagement. Removing Peaslake issues and contact from the forum where they are integrated within the wider three ward community will only decrease the level of community engagement. 2. More cohesive community? - Reducing the need/opportunity for the current three wards to come together to jointly consider and discuss matters of common interest and concern will likewise only damage the cohesiveness of the wider communities. Being rural villages we all share similar problems. And as for the impact on the Peaslake community itself, it is already obvious that the petition has created a divide within the village. Two ward councillors object to the concept and believe it is not in the best interest of the ward and the parish as a whole, whilst the two promoting the break obviously disagree. And there is also clear evidence of a similar split in opinion within the village community. When Shere Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting, held specifically to discuss this possible separation, more Peaslake residents attended who disagreed with this proposal Peaslakers present who supported separation. So less, not more cohesion results if the recommendation is for a change in structure. 3. Better local democracy? - A community electing their own representatives to a policy making and administrative body charged with acting in the best interest of all residents within a shared area - an area of a broadly uniform environment and similar demographic - is surely the definition of democracy. We currently have a three ward structure with electoral ward representation proportional to population and no ward on its own commanding a majority. A small authority - one village - electing its own councillors with no broader involvement and shared oversight is democratic, but democracy with less safeguards and breadth of vision than currently exists. Also a smaller body is a democracy more vulnerable to domination and total control by any organisation or pressure

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>group choosing to nominate and vote in its own members as councillors. Some democratic structures are better than others. Our current broader based structure is I believe better than which is being called for.</p> <p>4. More effective and convenient delivery of local services? - Clearly to establish and run a new additional parish council will add to the current cost base. There will be direct duplication of some costs such as audit and insurance and employing a new clerk will not facilitate an equivalent cut in current staffing hours but probably more significant would be the impact of the 28% reduction in the precept income that would be seen in the remaining two ward council of Shere and Holmbury. A large proportion of the current Council's costs are fixed – e.g. the costs of running Tanyard Hall, the public toilets, operating the Drop in Centre, staffing etc. Without Peaslake's current proportional contribution to these fixed costs, there is likely to be either, cuts in services or increases in precept rates, if the costs of all ongoing services are to be covered by a reduced precept base. This would not represent a more effective and convenient delivery of local services to either of the two parishes that would be existing if the petitioners' request were to be accepted by the Review. In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We already have a long standing, proven and effective democratic structure, and a history of professional administration and governance. 2. The requested change in boundaries and administration offers no improvements in the four areas identified by government as the rationale for any Community Governance Review changes. <p>I am therefore strongly against the establishment of a new civil parish of Peaslake together with a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p>
Resident	N	<p>Although I think this a matter for Peaslake residents, my concerns for Peaslake establishing its own Parish Council are that residents would lose shared community facilities with Shere Parish residents; extra costs of administration and a risk of a large group taking up its own agenda to push through to the detriment of others. If Peaslake leaves the current Parish the ability to stand up to the larger governing authorities will be reduced along with funding capacity of large projects in the area.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>With regard to the above we are against setting up a separate Parish council for Peaslake.</p> <p>We believe it will result in additional costs which will increase council tax and the loss of amenities for the 3 villages. We cannot see any material gains for Peaslake or the other villages.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing to object to the proposal that Peaslake may possibly leave the security of Shere Parish.</p> <p>My concerns are as follows:-</p> <p>Loss of combined Parish revenues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of one sided decision making on Parish matters. • Possible supplements being charged to Peaslakers to cover shortfalls and correction of any wrong decisions. • The expense of changing street furniture/signage with Shere Parish written on it. • Loss of combined Parish facilities that are a benefit for those who wish to use them now and in the future. • Lack of proper foresight, information and communication from anonymous proposers. To date I have received no information from them directly through my door or by other means. I find this unsettling and down right inconsiderate to our close knit community. • The cost both financially and in man hours of carrying out such unnecessary change. Is it worth it? <p>As far as I'm aware our Parish as it stands is not broken. There's an old saying, "if it's not broken don't try to fix it".</p> <p>If people must come up with bright ideas, the question they should always ask is does it really and truthfully need doing. Why should we be affected unnecessarily by some ideas person trying to keep their role.</p> <p>We as a community should not have to worry about this sort of thing, instead our focus should be on enhancing our Parish. Looking to solve problems together united as one.</p>
Resident	SW	Regarding the community review, I would like to 'stay put' with Shere Parish Council and not for Peaslake to become an independent parish council.
Resident	N	<p>I am strongly opposed to the proposal to establish Peaslake as a new civil parish for a variety of reasons, as outlined below.</p> <p>1) The current parish of Shere whilst comprising a fairly large area geographically, has a relatively small number of dwellings. In seeking to establish Peaslake as a separate parish, the nett effect will inevitably lead to a dilution in terms of funding, particularly in regard to any mutually beneficial parish council community projects and initiatives; eg, the Tanyard Hall which is currently of great benefit to many of the elderly within the parish. Will this mean that the newly</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>established Peaslake parishioners will be excluded? Will Shere and Holmbury parishioners be barred from similar Peaslake community funded projects? A touch facetious maybe, but funding for parish projects could become an issue.</p> <p>2) It is clear that the Peaslake demographic has changed dramatically over recent years, with a clear shift from a rural mainly agricultural based economy, serviced by local people, to predominantly a 'new moneyed' elite, with an agenda to preserve in aspic the rural idyll that they seek. Whilst what can be popularly termed 'local people' are not particularly vocal or forthcoming in presenting their views, the relatively well-educated but vociferous elite are well-versed in pushing their views as a representative majority. The Peaslake Farm building debacle being an obvious case in point. Shere is not entirely immune from similar elitist agendas, but generally is considerably more democratic in its approach to matters affecting and within the community.</p> <p>3) I genuinely feel that as a long-term resident of Shere and a true local (born in Peaslake), that Shere Parish council has served the three wards of the parish well, showing no fear or favour in regard to any particular ward. The Parish Council has also strongly pushed the local agenda with both Guildford Borough Council and to an extent with Surrey County Council, but am concerned that by establishing Peaslake as a separate Parish, the position of both parishes will be weakened in their representations to GBC or SCC on matters local.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>As a Peaslake resident I am against the idea for Peaslake Village going solo, leaving Shere Parish Council. With a new Head of Shere Parish Council I feel there will be better relations between all the villages. I also worry that the Peaslake councillors who are hoping to split away might be good now. But do they realise all the changes that need to be made? Hiring our own accountant, legal advice, etc etc. All expensive issues.</p> <p>For several reasons my husband and I are not supporting the idea of Peaslake splitting away from Shere Council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I do not support the establishment of a new civil parish for Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council. I think that we are better served by being a part of the Parish of Shere, it provides for economies of scale and is better able to fund facilities in the area, due to its income streams (such as from car parking) which would not be available to a Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>The current composition of Ward Councillors on Shere Parish Council i.e. 6 Councillors for Shere, 3 for Holmbury St Mary and 4 for Peaslake, ensures that no one Ward can approve a proposal without the support of a least one Councillor from one of the other Wards, providing for a good balance and ensuring that no-one Ward can force a decision through.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>I am also concerned that the establishment of a new, smaller civil parish for Peaslake will have a negative impact on the democratic mandate. There is evidence to suggest that small local authorities are less likely to hold elections; more often than not filling seats via co-option.</p> <p>With the proposed establishment of Unitary Councils within Surrey, now is not the best time to be looking at the composition of Parishes, as it may be that the Unitary Councils will wish to look at devolving functions to the Parishes and very small Parishes would struggle to take on further responsibilities.</p> <p>In my view, it is not necessary to establish a separate Parish Council in Peaslake on the grounds of inefficiency and poor conduct as the existing Parish Council has governance arrangements in place to ensure it represents the various needs and interests of the local communities that it serves. So I do not consider that it is necessary to propose a separate Parish Council for Peaslake in order to address current challenges and it would have a significant detriment to existing community cohesion.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Thank you for your communication regarding the Community Governance Review which you are undertaking in relation to the Parish of Shere.</p> <p>I do not support the establishment of a new civil parish for Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>A small village such as Peaslake does not need its own Parish.</p> <p>I think that Peaslake is better off as part of the Parish of Shere, Shere Parish is more sustainable and is better able to fund facilities in the area, due to its income streams (eg car parking).</p> <p>If the proposed Unitary Councils wish to pass further functions to the Parishes a Peaslake Council would be less able to take on these further responsibilities.</p>
Resident	SE	<p>Having sought to understand the reasons for the proposal for Peaslake to leave Shere Parish Council, I wish to object to the proposal. It would leave an imbalance between Shere and Holmbury Wards, and could lead to a diminution of services for both due to reduced income. I see no real benefit to Peaslake of having to provide all their own services (clerking etc) and losing access to common services such as Tanyard Hall. It is possible to have a strong sense of community for each section within the Parish council, as the current Holmbury parish councillors are showing with their efforts to bring the village together both over this question and that of traffic in the village.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Resident	SE	<p>I should like to register my opposition to separating Peaslake (South West Ward) from Shere Parish Council please. My main reason is because of the implications for Shere Parish as a whole if Peaslake becomes an independent Parish. In my view the resulting Governance Structure and Ward Balance would adversely be affected, so much so that it would no longer be viable for Holmbury St Mary to remain part of Shere Parish. It might work if Holmbury St Mary were then to join Peaslake as a separate Parish Council but obviously that would be dependent on Peaslake wanting to do that and again the overall implications for Shere Ward. I would also be concerned about the increased financial and operational considerations for Holmbury St Mary and indeed the whole Parish. Finally, given the proposed changes at Borough Council and Surrey Council level, I believe that this proposal is badly timed and I am not convinced that smaller, separate parish councils would work with their new structure.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	<p>My wife and I were really surprised that this ever got off the ground, it would break up the current 5 villages cause a lot of cost at tax payers expense and not achieve a jot of good, in fact it could be disruptive.</p> <p>Given the changes being considered in merging local councils this would be going completely the wrong way and I wonder what the real request is for and whether it is just to satisfy some ego's at locals expense.</p> <p>There is not a large enough population in Peaslake to maintain a true balance in members etc. and maintain any balance of views.</p> <p>We agree totally with Shere Councils comments in support of maintaining the present arrangement.</p>
Residents x 2	N	<p>We do not support the proposal to create a separate parish of Peaslake. We think the critique and rationale set out in section 3 of the pamphlet which was sent to all households give sound reasons for leaving the parish arrangements as they are.</p>
Residents x 2	N	<p>We have read the document, carefully, several times and feel that overall it would be a backward step for Peaslake to split from the current council system.</p> <p>Our first point is that there would be a substantial cost increase in creating a new council and in many ways would be clear duplication.</p> <p>Has it been calculated just how much additional local taxes, per household, would be imposed to achieve a new Council?</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>What would be the tangible benefits for Peaslake residents?</p> <p>The shared facilities, currently accessible to all residents, could be severely curtailed or simply ended.</p> <p>With the total number of Shere Parish residents at around 3,500, and Peaslake residents numbering around 878, making up one quarter, we feel it would sadly diminish community cohesion. Any possible boundary changes would be a mystery to most people and to what clear benefit?</p> <p>We consider that the council and residents of all the parishes would be best served as one unit, whilst taking into account the evident concerns of some Peaslake residents seeking more relevant and targeted outcomes that may reflect their particular problems and challenges.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>This proposal is not in our community's interest as it neither gives improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy nor will it result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services. It will be far better, in my view, to stay together for several reasons. This proposal has caused a division in our community which will get worse if Peaslake becomes a separate parish and people will discover the impact of this. Our villages are a close community with several interests overlapping the boundaries. It would be terrible if that would tear apart. Financially it will also hurt, and Peaslake will loose out, not gain anything.</p> <p>I am therefore very much against forming a new civil Parish of Peaslake and a new Peaslake Parish Council.</p>
Resident	N	<p>I am responding to the above consultation. I am a resident of the parish (the village of Shere itself) and also a former Borough Councillor for the Tillingbourne Ward, comprising the parish of Shere (and two other parishes). My views are as follows:</p> <p>Ordinarily, I am in favour of allowing decisions to be taken as locally as possible, and if there is a strong feeling amongst residents of Peaslake that they are not being as well looked after, as part of the parish of Shere, as they could be if they were in their own separate parish, then that needs serious consideration. However, in this case there are some important points that I think may outweigh that principle.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How strong and widespread is the feeling? In my experience, the vast majority of people are unlikely to have strong views on the subject, and the fact that sufficient names have been given to a petition is still likely to mean that only a small minority of Peaslake residents positively support any change.

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		<p>2. Cost / benefit analysis. Although there may not be significant costs to introducing any changes, there will be some. And it is not clear what the anticipated benefit would be. The parish currently comprises only four villages, with Peaslake having four Councillors, so it is not as if the voice of Peaslake is not listened to or can be ignored. In my experience of attending Parish Council meetings, I certainly have not found that to be the case.</p> <p>3. As well as Shere Parish Council, I have experience (from my Borough Councillor role) of attending two smaller Parish Councils, in the form of Albury and St Martha's. Controversial, maybe, but my experience suggests that smaller parishes ironically are less responsive to local people than larger ones. They tend to spend lots of time discussing arcane issues and going round in circles, which perhaps reflects why there is very poor attendance at Council meetings from local people, other than the Councillors themselves. In contrast, Shere Parish Council is always well attended by the public, even on a comparative analysis, taking into account the larger population. It is still easy to raise local issues and to get action; I can't remember a time when an issue couldn't be discussed due to time or attention constraints, or any occasion when Peaslake was marginalised in discussion.</p> <p>4. We do need to consider the effect on the rest of the parish if Peaslake were to go its own way. A look at the parish map shows that, in terms of geographic and community links, the result for the rest of the parish would be ridiculous. The links between Holmbury and Peaslake, via Hoe Lane and Rad Lane, for example, are much stronger than those between Holmbury and Shere or Gomshall; in fact, they are almost physically detached! So if there were to be any split of the parish, it would be far more logical for Peaslake and Holmbury together to be become a separate parish, rather than any other split. As well as the geographical and community links, the relative populations of two new parishes on that basis (Peaslake / Holmbury on the one hand and Shere / Gomshall on the other) would be more even, with seven Councillors and eight Councillors respectively.</p> <p>5. Linked to the above, are Councillors or residents of Holmbury suggesting there should be change? This is relevant because if Peaslake is getting a poor service as part of Shere Parish now (which must be the main catalyst for the petition?), then the same would presumably apply to Holmbury? If this is not the case, might this all be a little personality-driven, back to my first point, rather than a real groundswell dissatisfaction within Peaslake?</p> <p>For these reasons, I do not personally support a breakaway Peaslake Parish Council, because I do not think it would provide benefit to the people of Peaslake, quite apart from detriment to others in the existing parish. I am grateful for your consideration to the points I raise.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Residents x 2	SW	We live in Peaslake and would like to let you know that we feel Peaslake should remain within the Parish council and not have its own.
Resident	SW	<p>Peaslake has been part of Shere Parish for generations. The relationship is well-established, with a history of effective collaboration, representation, and shared services that benefit the whole community. Any change to this structure risks creating unnecessary division, duplicating administration, and weakening our collective voice.</p> <p>1. Strong Local Representation Peaslake has elected councillors who live locally and should speak for our interests. This direct representation ensures village concerns are actively addressed.</p> <p>2. Shared Resources and Efficiency We all benefit from shared funding and maintenance of facilities such as the village hall, playground, car parks, and footpaths. Remaining part of a larger parish ensures economies of scale and cost-effective service delivery.</p> <p>3. Preserving Community and Identity Peaslake shares deep historical, social, and environmental ties with neighbouring villages. A split could undermine our unity and reduce opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>4. No Clear Benefits to Separation No compelling case has been made for Peaslake leaving Shere Parish. On the contrary, a split could introduce financial and administrative burdens and weaken our influence in local decision-making.</p> <p>5. Respecting Democratic Will Changes to parish boundaries should only occur if supported by a clear majority of residents. Most feedback indicates Peaslake wishes to stay part of Shere.</p> <p>In summary, Peaslake is stronger, better served, and more effectively represented as part of Shere Parish Council. We urge Guildford Borough Council to maintain the current arrangement in the best interests of our community.</p>
Resident	SW	My wife and I have been residents of Peaslake for 40 years and felt it necessary to give this issue a great deal of thought during the last few weeks. I have spoken to residents who support both sides of the argument as well as reading a number of documents which have been circulated which highlight many of the pros and cons that are evident in this

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>issue. We were in favour of requesting the Council to carry out the Community Governance Review to enable a proper discussion to take place within the community.</p> <p>I believe that the Council are particularly interested in how this change would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve democracy and local services: and • get the community more involved and work even better together. <p>I feel I should comment specifically on these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I accept that a smaller Council would obviously be able to focus directly on local issues but there are likely to be financial restraints on what they can achieve along with a risk that people become wary of standing for election for what could quickly become a role requiring a substantial time commitment. Basically I see little upside to improving democracy and that if anything local services could worsen. • Peaslake does have a great community spirit which is why the village is a sort after destination with property buyers. The local school , village shop and local hostelry as well as an improved village hall are all things much enjoyed by resident and visitors alike and I see no reason why these and other attractions cannot continue to thrive and grow within the current local council arrangements. There have been challenges with the current governance by Shere Parish Council but we now have a new Chair and I very much hope that this will allow a fresh approach moving forward and previous grievances can be resigned to the history books! <p>In conclusion I feel that that it would be best if the existing status quo is maintained and Peaslake remains an integral part of Shere Parish Council.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Together & Better: Holmbury St Mary – Peaslake – Shere – Gomshall</p> <p>Summary View</p> <p>As a long-standing resident of Peaslake (19 years) I am calling for our village to remain part of Shere Parish Council, which we have been central to for 130 years - in collaboration and friendship with our neighbouring villages.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>I believe our community is best served by continuing our long-standing relationship, which provides fair local representation, economies of scale in services, and a united voice across our neighbouring villages that holds greater weight. I therefore respectfully urge Guildford Borough Council not to form a stand-alone Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>I, like many other residents of Peaslake, am concerned that this might be imposed without a proper democratic mandate, and that it would risk additional costs being passed on to residents through reduced efficiency and reduced access to shared services & income. I also believe that this change is unnecessary, and that any friction and disagreements which have led to the move to separate would best be addressed by taking positive steps to work more harmoniously and cohesively together in the future, for the common good.</p> <p>I endorse the summary of pros and cons set out by Shere Parish Council in their recent overview of the Community Governance Review.</p> <p>Key Reasons Why Peaslake Should Remain Within Shere Parish Council</p> <p>Peaslake has been part of Shere Parish for generations. The relationship is well-established, with a history of effective collaboration, representation, and shared services that benefit the whole community. Any change to this structure risks creating unnecessary division, duplicating administration, and weakening our collective voice.</p> <p>1. Strong Local Representation Peaslake has elected councillors who live locally and speak for our interests. This direct representation ensures village concerns are actively addressed.</p> <p>2. Shared Resources and Efficiency We benefit from shared funding and maintenance of facilities such as the village hall, playground, car parks, and footpaths. Remaining part of a larger parish ensures economies of scale and cost-effective service delivery.</p> <p>3. Preserving Community and Identity Peaslake shares deep historical, social, and environmental ties with neighbouring villages. A split could undermine our unity and reduce opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>4. No Clear Benefits to Separation No compelling case has been made for leaving Shere Parish. On the contrary, a split could introduce financial and</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>administrative burdens and weaken our influence in local decision-making.</p> <p>5. Respecting Democratic Will Changes to parish boundaries should only occur if supported by a clear majority of residents. Whilst many residents have been persuaded by intensive lobbying, including some misinformation*, that independence would be a good idea, there are many contrary views and there is no clear evidence that the majority of residents support independence.</p> <p>In summary, Peaslake is stronger, better served, and more effectively represented as part of Shere Parish Council. I urge Guildford Borough Council to maintain the current arrangement in the best interests of our village and the whole of Shere Parish.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>Together & Better - Holmbury St Mary – Peaslake – Shere – Gomshall</p> <p>Summary View As a long-standing resident of Peaslake (19 years) I am calling for our village to remain part of Shere Parish Council, which we have been central to for 130 years - in collaboration and friendship with our neighbouring villages. I believe our community is best served by continuing our long-standing relationship, which provides fair local representation, economies of scale in services, and a united voice across our neighbouring villages that holds greater weight. I therefore respectfully urge Guildford Borough Council not to form a stand-alone Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>I, like many other residents of Peaslake, am concerned that this might be imposed without a proper democratic mandate, and that it would risk additional costs being passed on to residents through reduced efficiency and reduced access to shared services & income. I also believe that this change is unnecessary, and that any friction and disagreements which have led to the move to separate would best be addressed by taking positive steps to work more harmoniously and cohesively together in the future, for the common good.</p> <p>I endorse the summary of pros and cons set out by Shere Parish Council in their recent overview of the Community Governance Review.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>Key Reasons Why Peaslake Should Remain Within Shere Parish Council</p> <p>Peaslake has been part of Shere Parish for generations. The relationship is well-established, with a history of effective collaboration, representation, and shared services that benefit the whole community. Any change to this structure risks creating unnecessary division, duplicating administration, and weakening our collective voice.</p> <p>1. Strong Local Representation Peaslake has elected councillors who live locally and speak for our interests. This direct representation ensures village concerns are actively addressed.</p> <p>2. Shared Resources and Efficiency We benefit from shared funding and maintenance of facilities such as the village hall, playground, car parks, and footpaths. Remaining part of a larger parish ensures economies of scale and cost-effective service delivery.</p> <p>3. Preserving Community and Identity Peaslake shares deep historical, social, and environmental ties with neighbouring villages. A split could undermine our unity and reduce opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>4. No Clear Benefits to Separation No compelling case has been made for leaving Shere Parish. On the contrary, a split could introduce financial and administrative burdens and weaken our influence in local decision-making.</p> <p>5. Respecting Democratic Will Changes to parish boundaries should only occur if supported by a clear majority of residents. Whilst many residents have been persuaded by intensive lobbying, including some misinformation*, that independence would be a good idea, there are many contrary views and there is no clear evidence that the majority of residents support independence.</p> <p>In summary, Peaslake is stronger, better served, and more effectively represented as part of Shere Parish Council. I urge Guildford Borough Council to maintain the current arrangement in the best interests of our village and the whole of Shere Parish.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
Shere Parish Council		<p>This letter is Shere Parish Council's response to the Corporate Governance Review, initiated by Guildford Borough Council pursuant to a valid community governance petition submitted to it by some of the residents within the Shere parish ward of Peaslake.</p> <p>On Wednesday 28 May Shere Parish Council resolved that it would NOT be the best interests of the residents of the parish in general, and the residents of Peaslake in particular, for the current boundaries of the parish to be changed to enable Peaslake to form its own parish council.</p> <p>The reasons are set out follows:</p> <p>1. Cohesive communities The villages of Shere Parish ("SPC") (Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake and Shere, plus a large part of Abinger) are all thriving, cohesive communities with unique identities. We see no evidence that Peaslake (or any of them) has ever in any way been diminished or prejudiced by being part of a single parish for in excess of a hundred years.</p> <p>2. Representing their community Peaslake is represented by 4 councillors who have collectively proven highly effective in identifying and conveying to SPC the needs and concerns of the Peaslake residents.</p> <p>Furthermore, two of these councillors attend the Peaslake Community Council (a long established and well supported community interests' group) and are, thereby, able to provide a level of engagement with the residents of the community additional to that achieved by one-to-one contact.</p> <p>The direct result is that SPC has always been very well informed and, therefore, able to provide the necessary support and resources of the wider parish in meeting the needs of the Peaslake residents over many years. This, we are able to evidence.</p> <p>The Peaslake councillors are also very effective in feeding back to their community all matters relating to Shere parish and how these affect them. They also have a well proven track record of rallying their community to attend parish council meetings.</p>

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		<p>3. Delivering democracy We appreciate that some Peaslake residents believe that becoming an independent parish would enhance democratic representation. There is, in our view, no tangible evidence that within an independent Peaslake democratic representation would improve. By contrast, it is possible that within such a small parish the ability of individuals to exert undue influence may be increased.</p> <p>SPC is less vulnerable to this both because of its greater size and because it is warded – the split based on population being Shere & Gomshall 6, Peaslake 4 and Holmbury St Mary 3. However, if Peaslake became an independent Parish Council there would a democratic imbalance between the remaining wards, which would mean North Ward could always out vote Holmbury St Mary. We believe that this could only be addressed with a change in boundaries to produce three remaining wards i.e. separate Shere, Gomshall and Holmbury St Mary wards.</p> <p>4. Delivering good governance The demands of governance will never get easier or less complex. Proportionally, this is less onerous in terms of cost and effort for a larger parish. In our view, a Peaslake parish might struggle to meet the required governance standards without having to spend a disproportionate amount of its income on delivering them. Furthermore, the resources of Shere being a larger parish enable it to afford to employ staff that meet the highest standards of experience and qualifications.</p> <p>5. Delivering benefits and services SPC provides a range of benefits and services(e.g. its drop-in centre) that Peaslake residents may no longer have access to, were Peaslake to become independent.</p> <p>6. Access to financial resources We believe that all the villages within Shere parish benefit greatly from being part of a single parish, because they can each call upon resources in time of need that exceed the resources that could be available to them, if they were independent parishes.</p> <p>At present, the residents of Peaslake have via SPC access to the entirety of SPC’s financial resources including benefiting from the strong income stream produced by Shere car park. The residents of an independent Peaslake parish would no longer have access to this.</p>

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		<p>Moving into the future, we believe that Peaslake would especially benefit from access to enhanced resources (i.e. well above its level of precept) as its topography places it at particular risk of flooding which will require ongoing support and intervention to manage.</p> <p>SPC also provides grants for community organisations within its boundaries that directly benefit its residents. At its May 2025 meeting SPC gave £6,000 towards the refurbishment of Holmbury St Mary's parish hall. An independent Peaslake would lose access to such grants. It seems unlikely that Peaslake would be able to replicate the level of such grants out of the precept transferred to it.</p> <p>7. Maximising financial resources</p> <p>Were Peaslake to become independent duplication of expenditure would arise in several areas e.g. administration and staffing, and provision of services most economically delivered via a contractual arrangement encompassing the whole parish e.g. landscape maintenance etc. This duplication would cut into the resources of both parishes.</p> <p>Shere would experience an approximate 28% loss of precept. Only a limited amount of this loss could be offset by savings arising from Peaslake becoming independent. This is because the bulk of SPC's expenses paid out of precept relate to fixed costs that may be unaffected by Peaslake's departure; e.g. the costs of Tanyard Hall and the public lavatories in Shere.</p> <p>In turn, Peaslake may find that the precept transferred to it is (for reasons detailed elsewhere in this letter) insufficient to cover both its overheads and deliver meaningful benefits for its residents.</p> <p>In both instances, the result may be that the amount of precept paid by residents of both parishes might need to rise. Were the split not to occur an increase from this cause would not arise.</p> <p>8. Effect of creation of unitary authorities</p> <p>It is anticipated that the creation of unitary authorities in Surrey will enable SPC to take on tasks that can be better managed at local level and delivered in a timelier manner than at present achievable. Because SPC would be able to leverage economies of scale and expertise Peaslake would benefit from local delivery of tasks that it might not be able to take on if it was independent.</p> <p>Last words</p>

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		<p>Because individuals or groups of individuals disagree with each other, even very strongly, does not mean that the governance structure under which they operate (in this case a civil parish) is flawed or needs to be changed.</p> <p>Rather, where troubles between Shere parish and some individuals within Peaslake seem to have arisen from a failure in human relationships (which in our view is the driving force behind the petition for a CGR), we strongly believe that the best interests of all residents should be addressed through the building of better communications and trust, within the boundary of the existing parish.</p> <p>We acknowledge that this is not a "once and done" exercise, and needs to infiltrate every aspect of the parish's work and its relationship, with consideration of all residents' interests becoming an integral part of its every day functioning.</p>
Resident and business owner	SW	<p>Here are some reasons why I think the current position of Peaslake as part of Shere Parish Council should remain in place:</p> <p>Democracy: Any boundary change will result in Shere being twice the size of the remaining ward i.e. Holmbury, as it is now, with Peaslake, there are 7 councillors for these 2 wards combined, with 6 in Shere. So there is a balance between the largest ward now, and the 2 other wards, so if this change came in Shere would become unrepresentative, and democracy and balanced representation would be weakened. Identity and Cohesion: The existing parish has been defined for over 130 years, and has managed in that time to retain separate identities, but at the same time blended with the joint identity of a parish as a whole, for the greater good. Many examples of this exist- eg: Peaslake Players, who draw members from the whole parish, and beyond: Shere Swimming Pool Club, members from all over the parish: Drop in Centre, based in Gomshall, for all in the whole parish: Shere Surgery serves the whole parish. There are many more examples. So we have cohesiveness, and we have parish identities as a whole, while retaining our own village fairs, and affairs in balance. The fact that it is named Shere Parish Council, is irrelevant, but it is the largest ward for historic reasons. For 131 years it has served the needs of the whole community, well.</p> <p>Efficiency: Any split would mean less resource to go around, for all, because many services, contracts, costs, would be duplicated. So less revenue all around, for the same thing. Its wasteful, un-necessary, and makes little sense for Peaslake to go on its own.</p> <p>Viability: Peaslake would be small, and be less able to raise grants, loans, funding for projects, (e.g. housing) on its own. The council would be maybe 5, so all councillors would have to sit on all committees, making the job of councillor quite onerous, and also limits special knowledge and experience that can be drawn on by a bigger council. Balance and perspective could be lost, while a small clique could be in charge.</p>

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		<p>Finances: Any split would mean less for all. The precept has not yet been determined, and there is little, if any, external revenue currently generated by Peaslake. Whereas Shere ward does have these opportunities, being larger, and with many more tourists too, the benefits of which currently are shared by all. Ownership and liability of assets would have to be divided, and some of these, especially the farm in Peaslake, at this time it is not clear as to who would own it.</p> <p>Thank you for inviting and receiving my comments.</p> <p>Please let me know if you need me to elaborate on the above in anyway or can offer a more in-depth opinion as I have been closely involved with many of the challenges Peaslake has had to deal with over the last 30 years and for a period also saved/co-owned the village stores.</p>
Residents x 2	SW	We are of the view that there should be no changes to the existing governance of the parish. We do not want a split between Shere and Peaslake and are happy with the existing arrangement.
Resident	SE	<p>My comments in response to the Community Governance Review of Shere Parish follow.</p> <p>Two widely made points are:</p> <p>that a split into two councils will inevitably increase costs as there would be two bureaucracies to support and;</p> <p>that a parish containing only the current North Ward and South East Ward would risk the marginalisation of the much smaller South East Ward.</p> <p>I share these concerns.</p> <p>I support the position of Shere Parish Council in their letter of 9th June, 2025 that it would not be in “the best interests of the residents of the parish in general, and the residents of Peaslake in particular, for the current boundaries of the parish to be changed to enable Peaslake to form its own parish council ” and their reasons for taking this position.</p> <p>Additional points I make are that:</p>

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		<p>There is a benefit in the current arrangement of the greater talent pool of knowledge and experience amongst members across a larger community.</p> <p>Separation would sever the deep historical links between the communities. Hoe in the South West Ward was a satellite from Shere and Gomshall area from Middle Ages and Peaslake was a later outlier. Both Shere and Gomshall were Saxon manors noted in Domesday and their land extended over the hills down onto the Weald.</p> <p>The map in the information sheet shows Holmbury Hill as being in the South West Ward. A separation would mean that Holmbury St. Mary would not be in the same parish as the hill from which it takes its name. If the separation were implemented there would be a case for changing the boundary.</p> <p>The fundamental reason for the proposal, although some would deny this, is the opposition from a minority of South West Ward residents to the Parish Council's longstanding attempts to build affordable housing on the farmyard at Peaslake Farm. One (ill founded) controversy is not a valid reason to restructure the entire parish.</p> <p>My views are based on an unrivalled experience of the affairs of Shere Parish Council having been attending its meetings since the end of the 1960's.</p>
Resident	N	<p>In regards to your letter about the implications of separating Peaslake from Shere Parish Council if they won't if they want that I don't agree about the rest of us having to pay more council tax to help them etc. They have always thought of themselves above the rest of us. I know several people who come from Peaslake and go to the Drop in Centre in Gomshall and they look forward to that as I do in seeing them. Just leave things as they are, it's worked all these years. It's always the new people who move here always wanting to alter things.</p>
Resident	N	<p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to establish Peaslake as a new civil parish.</p> <p>While I understand the intention behind the proposal, I believe it will only result in unnecessary additional costs without delivering any real benefit to the community. At a time when we should be looking for ways to reduce administrative expenses, splitting off Peaslake will lead to duplicated costs for administration, meetings, and other parish functions—costs that could otherwise be kept down through shared services and joint resources within the existing parish structure.</p>

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		<p>Furthermore, we already have a strong, well-established sense of community within the current parish boundaries, built on a long history of working together. Splitting this apart risks undermining that shared identity and weakening the cooperation that has served our area well for many years.</p> <p>There is also the issue of disruption. Any such change would inevitably cause confusion and difficulties during the transition, with no clear explanation as to what would be gained from such upheaval. I fail to see how the proposed changes would result in better outcomes for local residents, either in terms of services or community representation.</p> <p>For these reasons, I do not support the creation of a new civil parish for Peaslake and strongly urge that this proposal be reconsidered.</p>
Resident	N	I do not want Peaslake to be separated from Shere Parish Council.
Residents x 2	N	We do NOT believe that changing the boundary of the current Shere parish would be in the best interests of its residents for all of the reasons set out by Shere Parish Council in their formal response to you – as published on their website.
Resident	N	<p>As a resident within the above PC area, I have been invited to submit an opinion on the secession of Peaslake from the above.</p> <p>I believe that the wider best interests of the residents of Shere PC will continue to be best served without change to its Parish boundaries.</p> <p>I have noted the case for secession and, without allocating responsibility or blame, note an apparent fall out between certain individuals (unknown to me personally).</p> <p>To a degree the initiation of this review seems based upon individual jockeying through personality and <i>politics</i>. The existing PC provides a framework for representation and I think it normal for differences to be resolved within the current, long established setup. Especially given the absence of evidence of popular, let alone majority support from the residents of the wider SPC, let alone for that matter the residents of Peaslake despite the best efforts of certain individuals presumably resident in Peaslake. It is poor democracy when this tail wags the dog.</p> <p>I don't personally know the individuals concerned in this secession manoeuvre, whether in favour or against.</p>

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<p>As a resident of Shere of over 25 years standing, I have been comforted by the sense of closeness between Shere and Peaslake (as well as of the other villages within SPC). They are each outstandingly distinct and impressive communities but they share so much in common as a part of a constellation of villages within a beautiful part of the Surrey Hills. I like this shared identity.</p> <p>Whilst I acknowledge there can be a case, theoretically at least, that a smaller PC could govern more narrowly in favour of a village, given the commonality between the villages of SPC, I am of the view that the duplication of functions between any villages within SPC, including Peaslake, would be likely to bring about</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. an increase in tax and 2. a diminution in influence for all the residents of SPC including those of Peaslake. <p>My personal experience is that many of my fellow residents of Shere like to support the businesses and events in other parts of SPC and vice versa.</p> <p>One example being Shere Swimming Pool Club, where I have had expressed Peaslake-based concerns about whether such residents would retain their priority access to membership. I would hope this would be possible regardless of any regrettable secession outcome. Especially for existing members, as securing membership outside of the "local" category is virtually impossible due to high levels of demand. What "ordinary" residents like me hate is unproductive, <i>political</i> wrangling. Better together!</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing in response to the Community Governance Review of the Parish of Shere, to register my strong objection to the proposal to create a separate Peaslake Parish Council.</p> <p>By way of background: I am 35 years old and was born and raised in Peaslake. After spending around a decade in London, I returned a few years ago and now live with my parents in the village. I care deeply about this community and the wider parish it belongs to.</p> <p>My reasons for opposing the proposed split are as follows:</p>

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		<p>1. Lack of a clear and robust rationale</p> <p>I have attended both the Shere Parish Council extraordinary meeting and the most recent Peaslake Community Council meeting to better understand the reasoning behind this proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Parish Council meeting, the Chair stated the proposal was “due to a breakdown in human relationships.” One Peaslake councillor later elaborated that the idea had stemmed from perceived poor treatment by the Council (towards herself and another Peaslake councillor) regarding a Peaslake Farm issue. At the Peaslake Community Council meeting, the rationale for the split was framed as “taking back control,” with claims that Shere receives a disproportionate share of funding. However, no specific unmet needs or underfunded services in Peaslake were articulated, despite an explicit question on this from an attendee. <p>Neither interpersonal disputes nor vague notions of local empowerment seem sufficient grounds for creating a new parish council. From what I’ve observed, the proposal appears to stem more from personal frustrations than from a well-considered strategic case or evidence-based rationale.</p> <p>2. Duplication of costs and strain on local resources</p> <p>Creating a separate Peaslake Parish Council would result in duplicated administrative and operational costs, such as hiring of a Parish Clerk. There is also the question of volunteer capacity—my understand is that finding people willing to stand as councillors is already difficult and it is unclear how a new council would be staffed and resourced. It’s also unclear whether this would negatively impact the recruitment and sustainability of our Peaslake Community group.</p> <p>3. Unnecessary division within our community</p> <p>One of the things I value most about our current structure is the sense of shared community across Peaslake, Shere, and Holmbury St. Mary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Shere Parish Council meeting, I found the atmosphere welcoming and inclusive. In contrast, the tone at the Peaslake Community Council meeting was aggressive and dismissive of dissenting views. My father, who has a stammer and struggles with public speaking, was heckled while trying to contribute, and he eventually gave up trying to speak. Others who opposed the proposal were interrupted or told they had no right to speak because they hadn't attended previous meetings. Based on that, I too felt unable to express my views freely.

Response from: resident/business/ local organisation	Parish ward: N/SW/SE	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I fear that, if the proposal proceeds, decision-making in Peaslake will be dominated by a small, insular group with strong personal agendas. We risk losing the diversity of perspectives, objectivity, transparency, and accountability that comes from being part of the wider Shere Parish. <p>Even the <i>proposal</i> of this split has already created damaging division. At the start of the Shere Parish Council meeting, one Shere resident declared that Peaslake residents "want all of the benefits and none of the costs." This polarisation is unnecessary and deeply upsetting.</p> <p>In summary, I urge you to consider the lack of compelling justification, the potential duplication of costs, and the negative impact this proposal is already having on our community cohesion and social fabric. I strongly believe that Peaslake is better off as part of the wider Shere Parish, where collaboration, resource-sharing, openness, and inclusivity are possible.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I am writing regarding the review of the Parish of Shere.</p> <p><u>My background/ experience of the Parish and Parish Council:</u></p> <p>For some years I was a Parish Councillor for the South-West Ward, covering the area of Peaslake where I have lived for the past 38 years.</p> <p>As the local councillor, I attended the Peaslake Community Council each month to inform those residents who attended what had been happening at Shere Council and to take back any worries or concerns that may have arisen.</p> <p><u>Summary of why I think Peaslake should stay within Shere Parish:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issue with the current set up - the Parish Council works well and addresses any need we may have. Enables diverse perspectives - the fact that the councillors come from different villages allows a broader view of things. Shere Parish Council gives a balance of perspectives and ideas of people from different wards and this is a great benefit to everyone. Difficult to recruit councillors - getting people to stand for office is always a problem but having a large Parish Council helps accommodate this. From my experience, it is not easy to recruit people to stand for office – be it Parish Councillors, Village Hall Committee or WI. I did raise this point about how we would get people to stand

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		<p>for Parish Council given how difficult it is now but I was told younger people would step up and that this would be a good thing It is true that having younger people step forward would be great, it is not the reality of the situation; there is no evidence or rationale to suggest this happen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unnecessary duplication and expense will be incurred - Shere Parish has its own Hall and if we split Peaslake would be forced to incur extra charges for hiring hall, Parish Clerk etc. In this climate money needs to be spent wisely. • This proposal has already caused significant damage, division, and upset within the community - the Parish is like a family and if Peaslake were to be split off it would cause a great deal of distress throughout the Parish. Distress and division which even the proposal has already caused. Since this proposal I personally have found it difficult to talk to a few people in the village, who attend Community Council but have never attend Parish Council Meetings, because they refuse to discuss the matter or listen to any alternative view. I am not the only one who is having to avoid the subject with their friends and neighbours. Furthermore at the start of the last Parish Council meeting one Shere resident stated that he felt “Peaslake wants all the perks and none of the cost” – which simply isn’t true. Many Peaslake residents are happy with the existing set up and the division, misperceptions, and upset this proposal is causing is very distressing and unpleasant. <p><u>Despite attending Council and Community Council meetings, it remains unclear:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why this proposal has come about – what’s prompted this idea to separate? <p>When I became aware of the proposal that Peaslake become a separate Parish I was horrified and couldn’t understand why or how this had happened. I have since attended both Parish Council and the local Community Council meetings to understand this proposal further.</p> <p>The question of how we got to this point was explicitly raised in the most recent Parish Council meeting and the answer given by the Parish Council meeting Chairman, was that it is due to “a breakdown in human relationships”. When later the question of why we are considering this separate arose again, one of the Peaslake Ward councillors explained in detail how she and her fellow councillor feel they have been treated poorly by the Shere Parish Council, explaining the history of the Peaslake Farm disagreement and how they were reported to the Monitoring Officer.</p>

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		<p>To me, this therefore feels like a personal disagreement and grievance between two Peaslake councillors and Shere Parish – rather than reasonable and just cause to split-up the community of Shere Parish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is currently needed that's not being done? And, where will any potential 'extra funds' be spent to improve the village of Peaslake? <p>Peaslake does not suffer with regard to services (e.g., our verges are mowed, the children's playground is maintained, money has been given for a new kitchen in the Village Hall, an area of wood land had been cleared). This campaign to separate is built on the notion of taking back control, with Peaslake Village having access to more funding – but no one (in either Parish Council or Community Council) has been able to provide a clear perspective on what change is needed in Peaslake or where funding will be spent.</p> <p><u>Personal fears:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future of Peaslake Community Council – it seems likely that the small group who now run the community council will be the same group to take charge of a new Parish Council. It is therefore possible that the community council won't have enough people in the village willing to step forward and keep our community council running. When we already struggle with recruitment – how will we keep Community Council and Peaslake Parish council running? • Lack of transparency and objectivity – the two Peaslake Councillors who are heavily campaigning for the split have not demonstrated a willingness to offer transparency or objectivity. The petition was heavily influenced by door-to-door campaigning, with a number of residents I've spoken to reporting no idea about what it was they were signing. Furthermore, only information on why we should split from Shere Parish Council was published on the Peaslake Community Council website; when a resident requested a balance of both sides be published (i.e., reasons to stay and reasons to separate), he was told the Community Council website isn't for personal opinions. • Toxic atmosphere being created at the Peaslake Community Council, causing people to avoid attending – many local Peaslake residents have now stopped attending the local Community Council meetings because they feel intimidated if they don't agree with all that is being said and feel frustrated at the disinformation being given out. Having attended the meetings, I can attest to this happening. The update from the Parish Council meeting in relation to the proposed split was also only shared by the councillor in the most recent Community Council meeting upon prompting from a resident (who had also attended the Parish Council meeting). There is also open hostility and heckling to anyone who doesn't confirm to their views.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group-think/ lack of diverse perspectives – at the more welcoming and safe Shere Parish Council, myself and other residents were able to speak freely and share our views that we don't wish to leave Shere Parish. We were allowed to stand up and say why we thought it was the wrong thing to leave, without being heckled or shouted down. I also amazed me that one of those present (who regularly attends Community Council meeting) said "I didn't realize anyone wanted to stay". This illustrates the staggering level of group-think occurring at Peaslake Community council. <p><u>Concluding comments:</u></p> <p>We are a good community and I would hate it to be destroyed by the actions of two people with their own personal agenda regarding Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>I was here when the local village school closed and I know how much bitterness can be caused by splitting a community.</p> <p>It is a lovely village and the Shere Parish Council creates a brilliant extended community, offers balance, objectivity and diversity of thought to our governance. It would not only be inefficient and costly, but also heart-breaking to see all these years of community and cohesion torn apart due to personal grievances and agendas.</p>
Resident	SW	<p>I write as one of the 4 councillors representing Peaslake on Shere Parish Council.</p> <p>I do not support the 2 Peaslake Councillors who organised and drove the community petition which has led to this Review. From my experience over the last 10 years on Shere Parish Council I have not seen any behaviour that would limit the ability of Peaslake Councillors to represent their community. On the contrary, Peaslake benefits from the facilities available in Shere, including a good local shop with nearby parking, and a drop-in centre for elderly residents.</p> <p>I observe that one of my fellow councillors appears unable to reconcile differences of opinion amicably in committee, and this I believe has been a driving force in the way that the petition was organised.</p>
Resident	SE	<p>With regard to this topic, I can see no good reason for Peaslake becoming an independent parish especially if it will incur additional cost. Therefore, in short, I am against the proposal.</p>

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Resident	N	<p>Although I can see that for Peaslake to have its own Parish council would offer them the opportunity to be more specific with decisions made locally there are pitfalls. The loss of access to some of the facilities at Shere for example and the necessary increase in local taxes.</p> <p>Overall I do not consider that it would be beneficial to the overall situation to change the current status quo.</p>
Resident	SE	<p>I think it is not sensible to break down the structure of Shere Parish Council for Peaslake</p> <p>The numbers are too small and breaking up as suggested must only result in increased costs, duplication of efforts and unnecessary burdens alongside increased demand on communication routes.</p> <p>The future would also depend upon a guaranteed commitment to A small number of individuals willing to commit to the tasks- it might seem ok today- but in the future??</p> <p>This is a tiny community and breaking it up simply doesn't make sense.</p>