

Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council

Essential Reference Paper "D"

HAVE YOUR SAY

East Hertfordshire District Council is carrying out a review of the area served by Bishop's Stortford Town Council including the town/parish boundary and town council wards. All local residents and organisations are invited to give their views.

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review is a formal process which can result in changes to town/parish areas or electoral arrangements to represent local communities.

Parish and town councils are the most local tier of government in England. They can play an important role in empowering their communities, may comment on planning applications and manage or provide services at the local level.

Issues under consideration

The review is being undertaken following a request from Bishop's Stortford Town Council. The town council identified areas of development to the south of the town that cross the current boundary and asked East Hertfordshire District Council to consider whether the southern boundary of Bishop's Stortford parish should be re-drawn to follow the existing district ward boundary. If agreed, this would mean that the whole of the district council's Bishop's Stortford South ward, part of which is currently within Thorley parish, would instead be included in Bishop's Stortford Town Council's area. The town council also proposed changes to the ward boundaries within the Bishop's Stortford parish to address anomalies and population changes.

East Hertfordshire District Council needs to know the views of local residents and other interested parties in order to decide whether any changes should be made.

Please tell us what you think about the changes suggested by the town council or any other issues concerning parish or ward boundaries or electoral arrangements at the town/parish council level.



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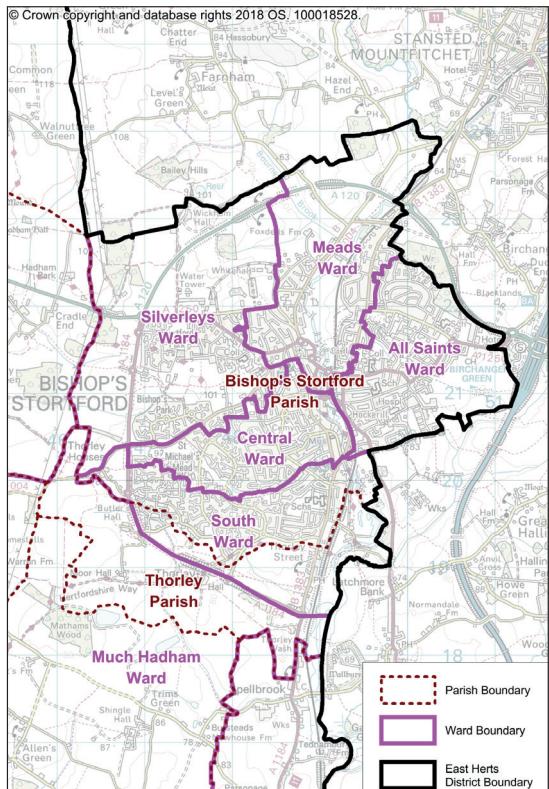
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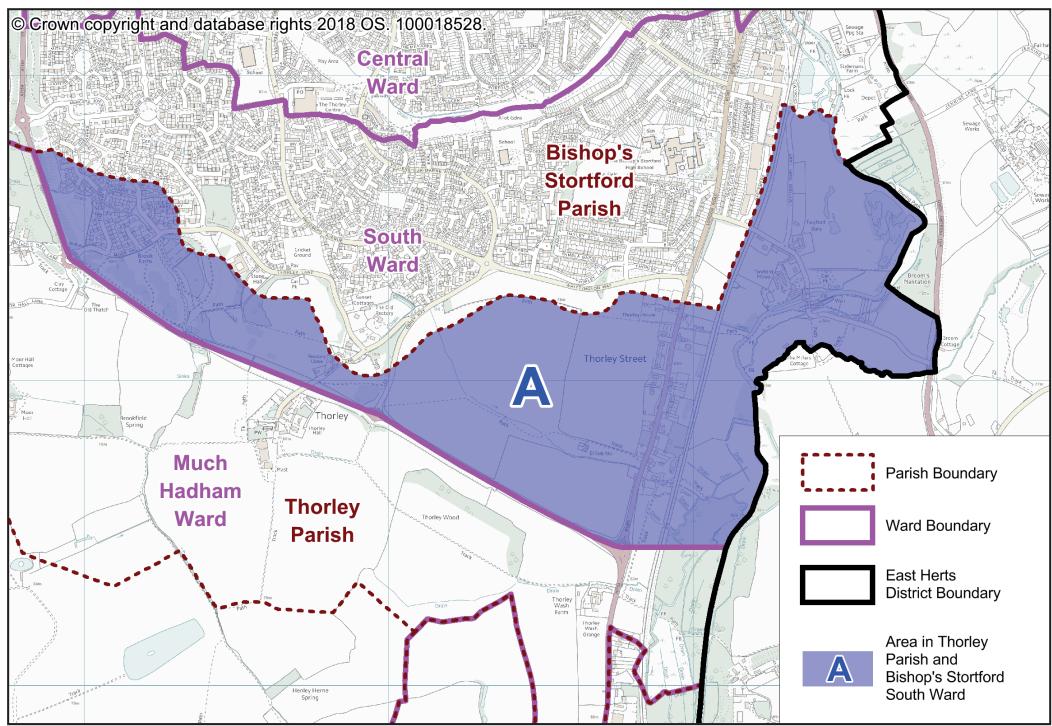
Maps

The map right, shows the existing town council ward boundaries within Bishop's Stortford parish.

The map below shows the current southern boundary of Bishop's Stortford Town Council with Thorley parish. The area identified by the town council for consideration in the review is shaded and labelled 'A' on the map.



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How would residents be affected?

The review could result in changes to town/parish boundaries. For example an area that is currently within Thorley parish could instead become part of Bishop's Stortford parish. Starting with the town and parish council elections in May 2019 residents of that area would elect councillors to represent them on the town council.

Some residents who are currently within Bishop's Stortford parish could become part of a different town council ward from the May 2019 elections.

The level of council tax paid by some residents could also vary due to differences in the 'precept' levied by each town or parish council. A precept is an amount charged by the town or parish council to provide additional local services. East Hertfordshire District Council collects this money as part of the council tax and passes it on to the town or parish council. The table below shows current information about Bishop's Stortford Town Council and Thorley Parish Council. Information on any services delivered is available from the relevant town or parish council.

Town/Parish Council	No. of registered electors (February 2018)	No. of councillors	No. of wards	Council Tax Precept 2017/18 (Band D Equivalent)
Bishop's Stortford Town Council	28,779	18	5	£67.69 per annum
Thorley Parish Council	513	7	2	£8.97 per annum

Why your views are important

In carrying out the review, the council must seek to ensure that any proposals:

- reflect the identity and interests of the community in the area;
- promote effective and convenient local government;
- take into account any other arrangements for community representation or engagement in the area; and
- promote community cohesion.

The council believes that parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest with their own sense of identity and that electors should be able to identify with the parish in which they live. The wishes of local inhabitants and any submissions providing evidence of community identity or local linkages are therefore important considerations in this review.

East Hertfordshire District Council will consider all submissions received during the review before reaching its final decisions.

The timetable for the review

Initial submissions should be sent to East Hertfordshire District Council by online form, email or in writing at the contact details below by **Friday April 6 2018**.

East Hertfordshire District Council will consider those submissions before publishing its draft recommendations for further consultation from May to July 2018.

The review will conclude when the council publishes its final recommendations by October 2018.

How to find out more

Full information about the Community Governance Review including the terms of reference and detailed timetable together with maps of the area under review and the town council's suggestions for minor ward boundary changes are on the website here: **www.eastherts.gov.uk/consultations** or available at the East Hertfordshire District Council offices

How to have your say

You can provide your views on the matters in this leaflet or raise any queries by:

- completing a form online at **www.eastherts.gov.uk/consultations**;
- email to: **electors@eastherts.gov.uk**; or
- writing to: Electoral Services, East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, Herts, SG13 8EQ