



Public Document Pack

James Ellis
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

MEETING : COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW WORKING GROUP
VENUE : LEA ROOM, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025
TIME : 7.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillors D Andrews, M Connolly, A Holt, D Jacobs, J Thomas and G Williams

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AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Community Governance Review - draft recommendations (Pages 3 - 72)

East Herts Council Report

Community Governance Review working group

Date of meeting: Thursday 6 February 2025

Report by: Katie Mogan, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and Edward McCreadie, Deputy Elections Manager

Report title: Community Governance Review - draft recommendations

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary – The group is asked to consider the responses from the initial Community Governance Review consultation and to propose draft recommendations to Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR the Community Governance Review working group:

a) To recommend to Council a set of draft recommendations to go out for public consultation.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Community Governance Review working group first met on 2 October 2024 to discuss the informal responses received from town and parish councils about whether they'd like to be involved in the Community Governance Review.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 16 October 2024, Council agreed the terms of reference and the timetable for the review.
- 1.3 The initial consultation ran from 28 October 2024 to 6 January 2025 and the responses received are contained the in the report attached.

- 1.4 The group are asked to review the proposal received and make draft recommendations for Council at the meeting on 26 February 2025.
- 1.5 As per the agreed review timetable, the draft recommendations will go out for public consultation from 3 March 2025 to 12 May 2025.

Report Author

Edward McCreadie, Katie Mogan, Deputy
Elections Manager, Democratic and Electoral
Services Manager

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katie.mogan@eastherts.gov.uk

Community Governance Review 2024-25 Stage 1 Summary Report

1. Bishop's Stortford and Thorley Boundary

Bishop's Stortford Town Council have proposed: (See [Appendix 1](#) for full submission)

- A. "To move the boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley so the new developments that currently straddle the boundary will be completely in Bishop's Stortford; and
- B. A possible option of the Town Council absorbing the entirety of Thorley Parish into Bishop's Stortford."

The area covered by proposal A is shown by the red lines on Map 1 below.

Cllr David Jacobs submitted an email in support of option A

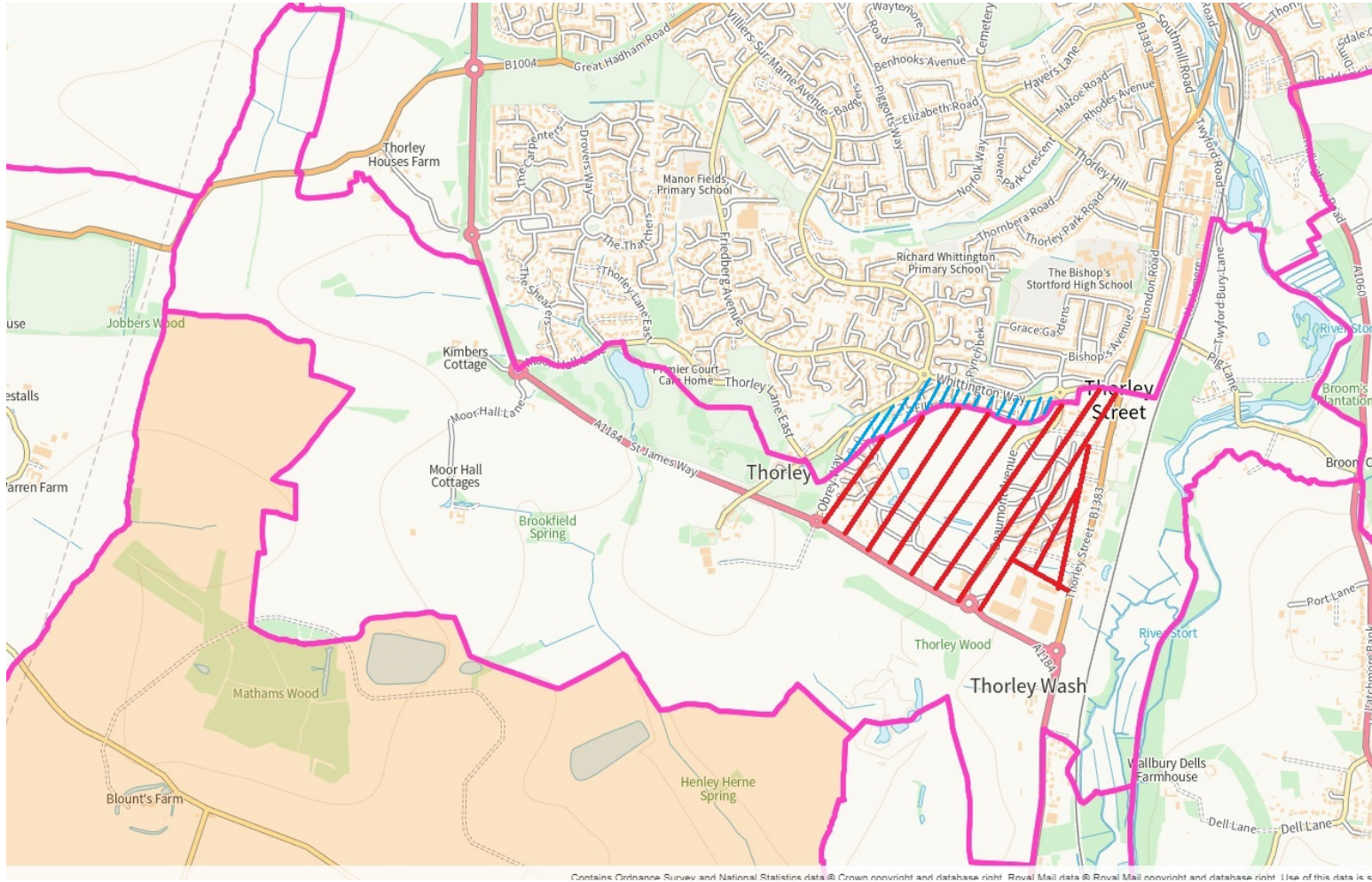
Cllr John Wyllie submitted an email in support of option B

Thorley Parish Council have proposed that the boundary should follow "along the center lines of Whittington Way, along Obrey Way and onto Thorley Lane East" (See [Appendix 1.1](#) for full submission)

The area covered by this proposal is shown by the blue lines on Map 1 below.

Nine Thorley residents contacted the review via the website to object to any boundary changes affecting Thorley. (See [Appendix 1.2](#))

Map 1



2. Hertford and Hertingfordbury

Hertingfordbury Parish Council submitted the following proposals: (see [Appendix 2.0](#) full submission)

- A. "Hertingfordbury Parish Council wishes for the review to consider that we change the boundary to include the village of Hertingfordbury and to move the boundary to exclude the development of Birchall Garden Suburb.
- B. Should the Boundary stay as it currently stands, We wish for the number of Councillor seats to be reviewed which is currently 10 with an electorate of approx 500 residents.
- C. Should we gain Hertingfordbury we would like to have at least 9 seats
- D. We wish to consider changing the name of the parish council depending on the review outcome."

The area covered by proposal A is shown by the red lines and blue lines on Map2 below.

Cllr Bob Deering made the following comments:

" 1. there's a very long standing oddity that what most people regard as Hertingfordbury is part of Hertford Town and is not within the boundary of Hertingfordbury PC. I can therefore see why it might be suggested that the village should be moved into Hertingfordbury parish. On the other hand, however, the present arrangement has been in place for a long time and I'm unaware that it causes any difficulty in practise. So, (a) what do the residents of Hertingfordbury think and (b) if it ain't broke don't fix it.

2. the Birchall Garden Suburb development will be big. My own view is that incorporating any part of it within a parish would be inappropriate so I support the request that Birchall be removed from the territory of Hertingfordbury PC. I don't understand why this needs to wait until the development is more advanced.

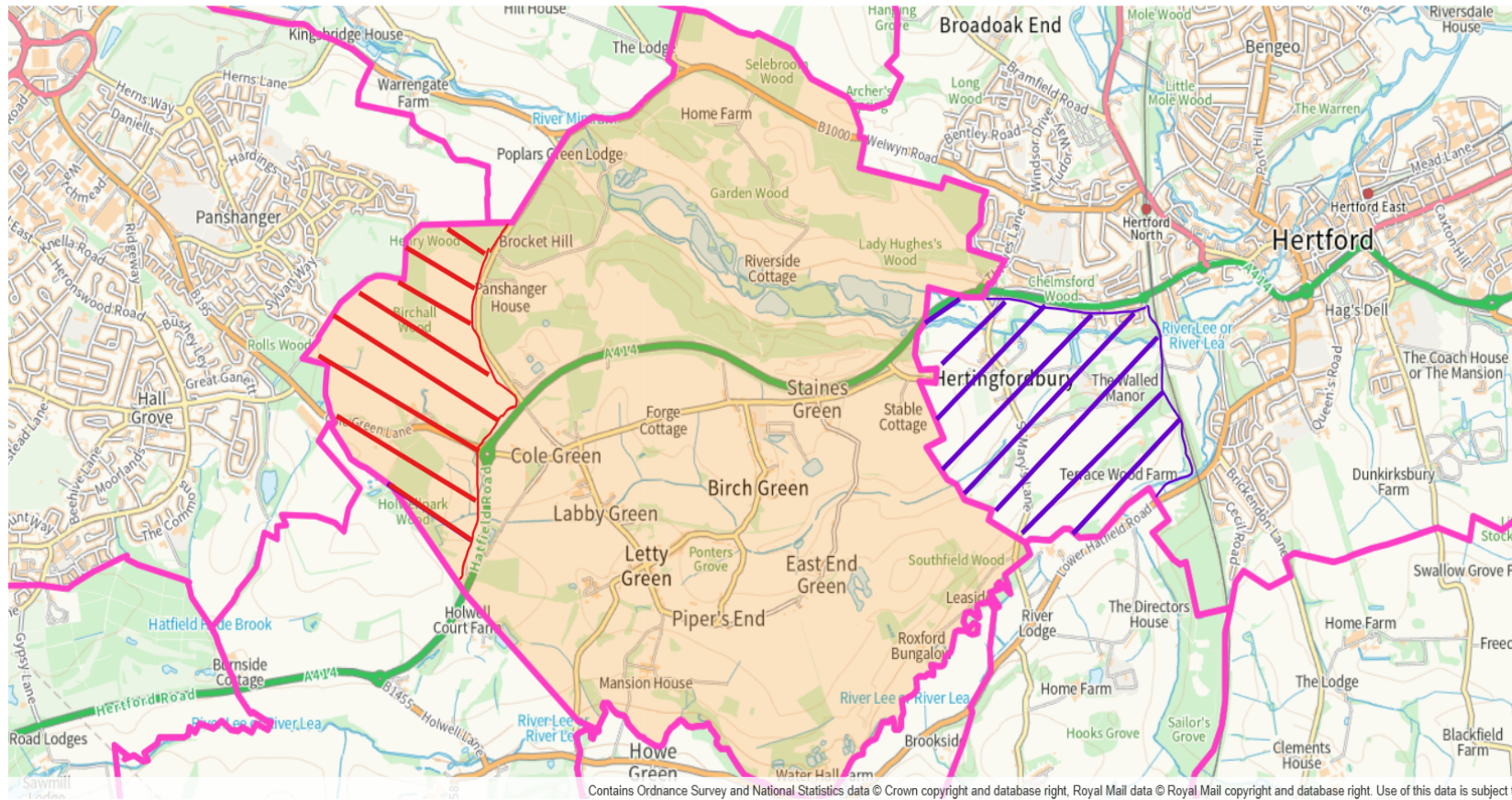
3. the number of councillors presumably depends on what happens re (1) and (2) above. Once it's known how large/small Hertingfordbury parish will be I imagine that the appropriate number of councillors will naturally fall into place."

At the previous meeting of the CGR Working Group it was agreed that it was too early in the planning process to make any proposals on Birchall Garden Suburb, and therefore this would need to look at by a future CGR.

Historically Hertingfordbury Village has been part of the Hertford since the 1920s.

Hertford Town Council made a submission to arguing against the proposal to move Hertingfordbury Village into Hertingfordbury Parish (See [Appendix 2.1](#) for full submission)

Map 2



- EXCLUDE
- INCLUDE

3. Ware and Wareside

Ware Town Council requested a CGR in July 2022 to review the boundary between Ware, Wareside and Thundridge, so the whole of the Ware2 Development proposed in the East Herts Masterplan falls within Ware. [Ware Two](#) (see [Appendix 3.0](#) for full submission)

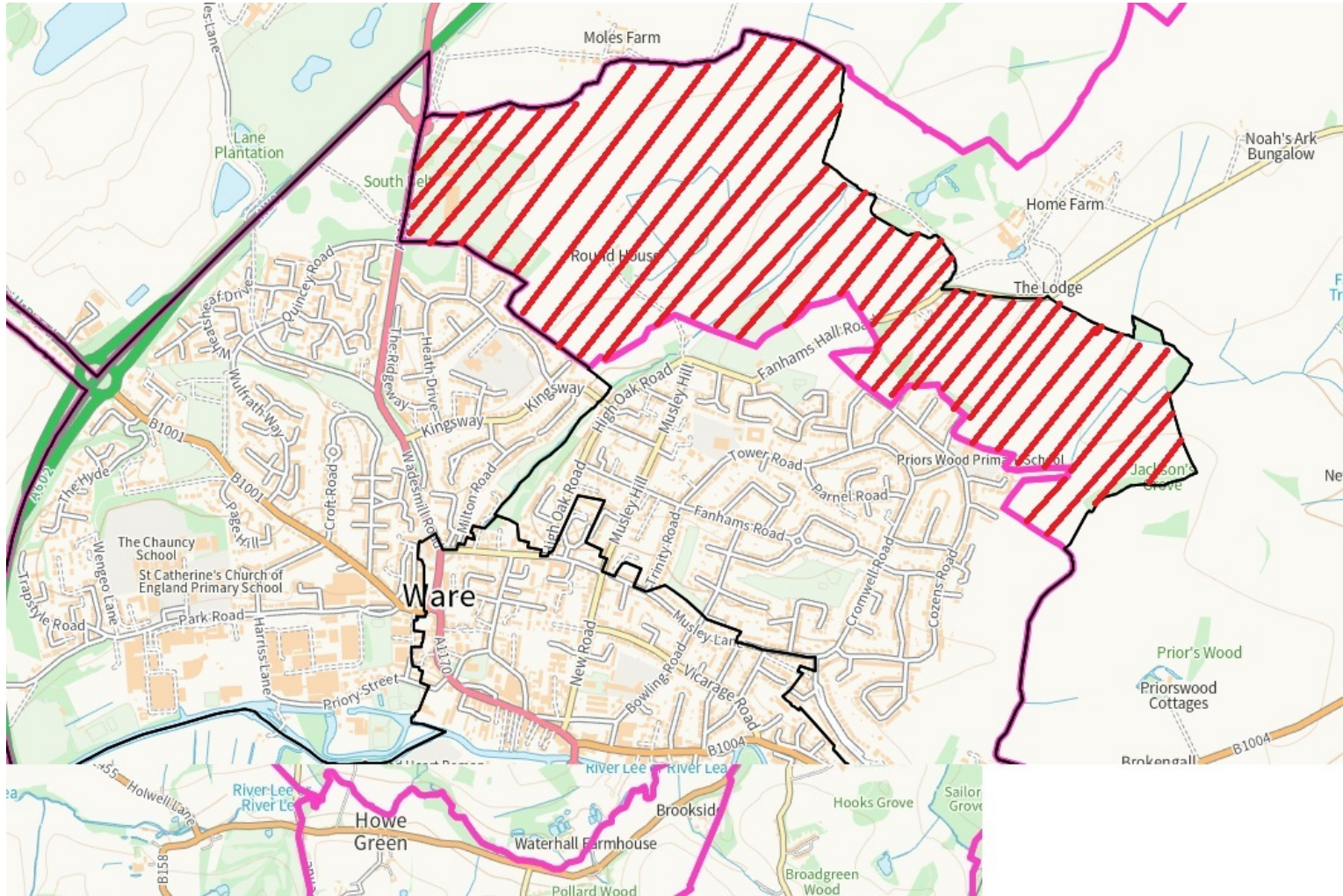
Wareside Parish Council have made a submission arguing against the proposal (see [Appendix 3.1](#) for full submission), the Parish Council argue that the loss of the precept from the new development will have an impact on their ability to deliver services to the parish.

The area covered by the proposal is shown by the red lines on Map 3 below.

During their review of District Council Wards in 2022 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England changed the boundary between Ware Trinity and Ware Rural Wards because in their opinion “ [LGBCE Report](#) page 18 Paragraph 77 “We agree that future electors are more likely to look towards Ware town, rather than the rural surrounding parishes, for amenities. We also consider that placing the entirety of the residential development in a single ward will be conducive to effective and convenient local government.”

Cllr Jonathan Kaye (Hertfordshire County Council) supports Ware Town Council proposal.

Map 3



4. Stanstead Abbots Parish Council and Stanstead St Margarets Parish Council

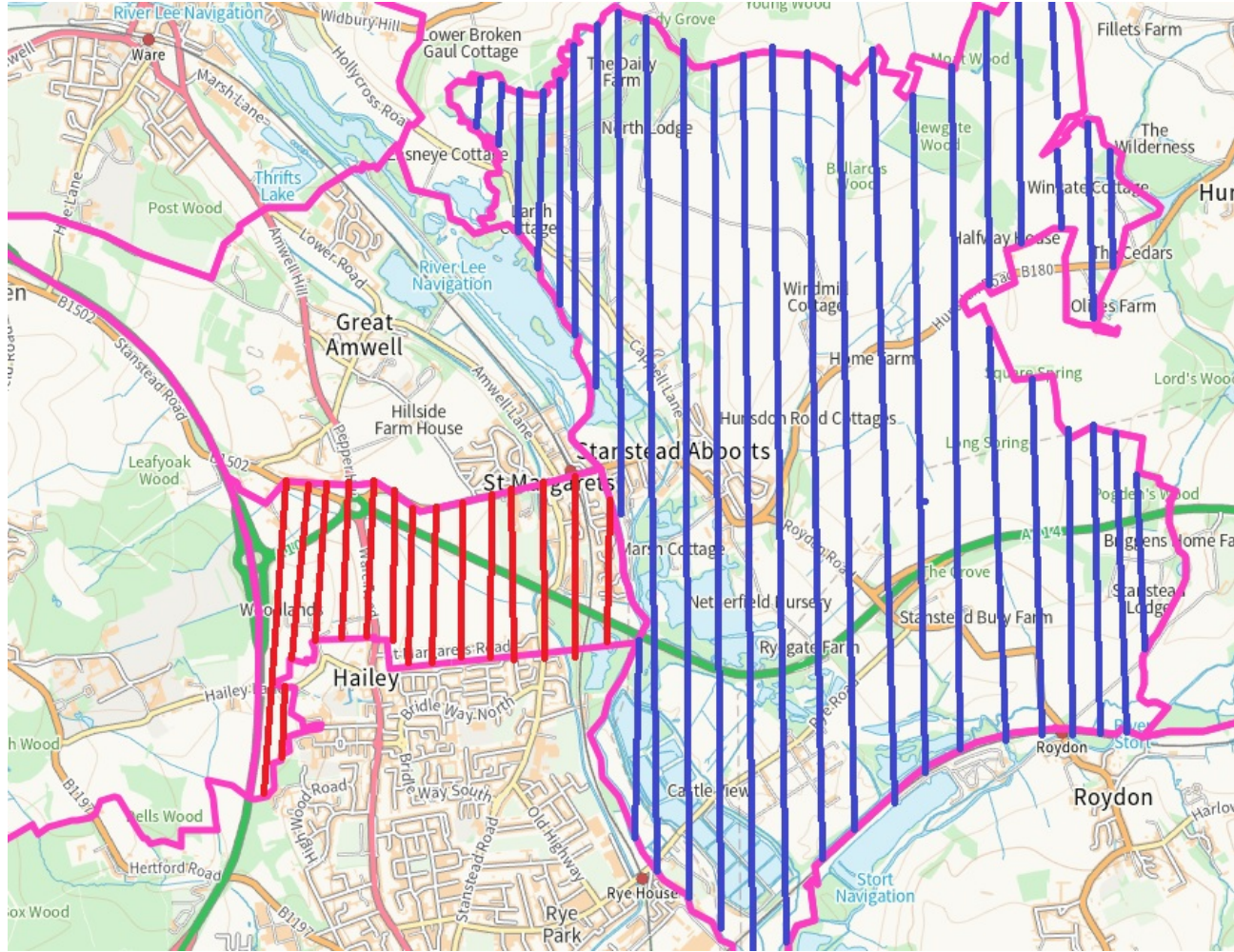
Both Parish Councils support the idea of either grouping or merging ([Appendixes 4.0](#) and [4.1](#) for full submissions). It was also suggested that Great Amwell Parish Council be included in the arrangement, but they have said no (see [Appendix 4.2](#))

The area covered by the proposal on Map 4 below, Stanstead St Margarets identified by the red lines and Stanstead Abbots by the blue.

Both Parishes are in Great Amwell and Stanstead District Ward. Stanstead St Margaret West Ward is in the Ware South County Division and Stanstead St Margarets East Ward and Stanstead Abbots are in Sawbridgeworth County Division.

If the parishes are merged, then EHDC will need to seek permission from the LCGCE to move the Sawbridgeworth County Division boundary.

Map 4



5. Great Amwell Parish Council

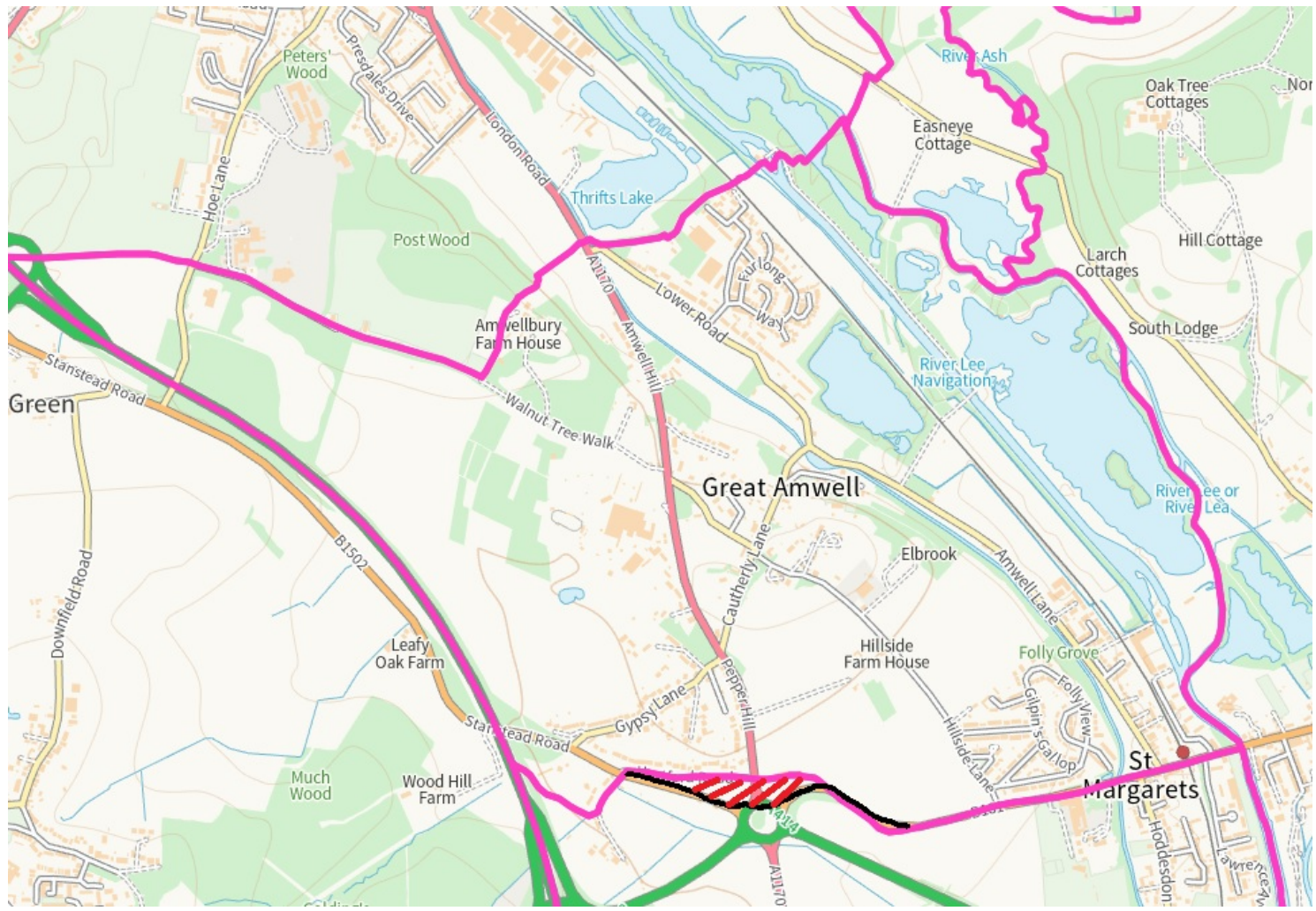
As stated above Great Amwell does not want to be merged or grouped with Stanstead Abbots Parish Council and Stanstead St Margarets Parish Council.

They have asked for the southern boundary to be changed so it “follow the entire length of the B181 to its junction with the Amwell Roundabout, then follow the northern (highway) part of that roundabout and then proceed along the B1502 until it reaches its current intersection with that highway from the old Hertford Road.” as shown on Map 5 below.

(See [Appendix 5.0](#) for full submission)

This proposal would take land from Stanstead St Margarets, but would affect no residents.

Map 5



6. Rush Green Roundabout

The delayed 2023 Community Governance Review proposed changing the boundaries on the Rush Green Roundabout so that the whole area sat within a single County Division, District Ward, and Parish/Town Council.

The rationale behind the change to make it easier for Town, District and County Members to deal with issues generated by the roundabout and the business located on it.

The existing boundaries are shown in black and pink on Map 6 below the proposed boundaries in yellow.

The proposal would affect:

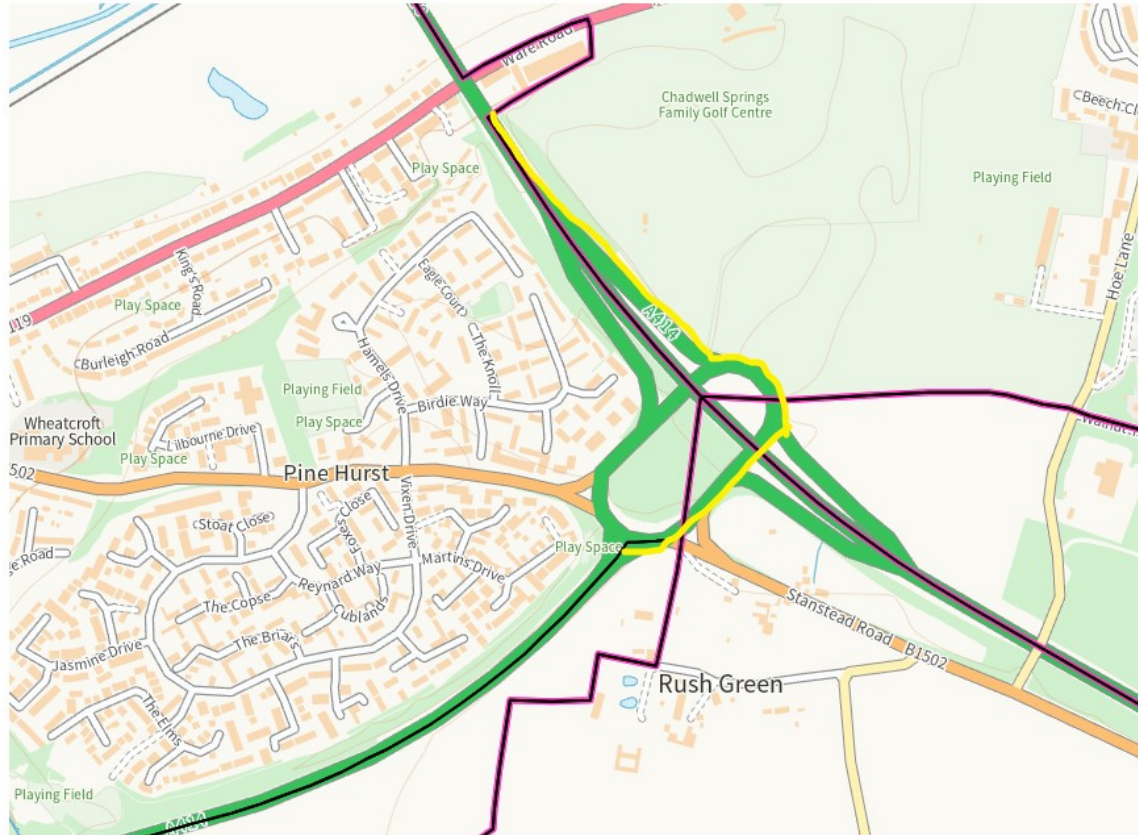
- Ware South, Hertford All Saints and Hertford St Andrews County Divisions
- Hertford Kingsmead, Ware Priory, Great Amwell and Stansteads. Hertford Heath and Brickendon Wards and Hertford Castle District Wards.
- Hertford, Ware, Great Amwell, Hertford Heath, Town and Parish Councils

The new boundaries would put the roundabout in the Kingsmead East Ward of Hertford Town Council, the Hertford Kingsmead Ward of East Herts and Hertford All Saints Division of Hertfordshire County Council.

Hertford Town Council support the proposal.

No residents would be affected by the change.

Map 6



7. Aston and Walken Parish Councils

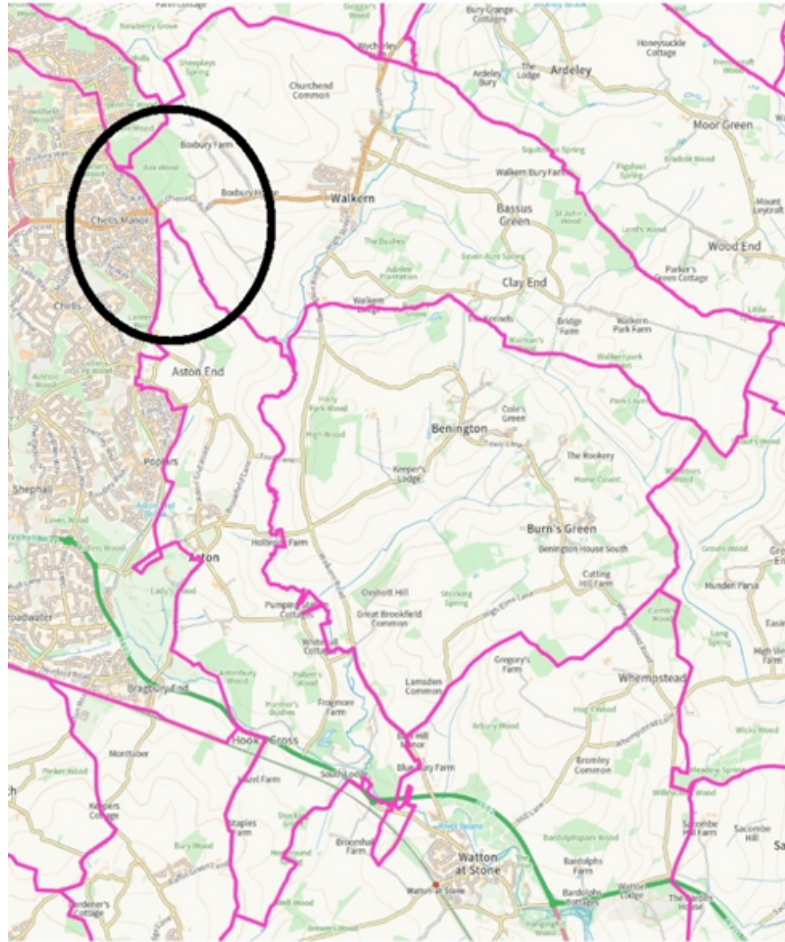
Aston and Walkern Parish Councils have requested that the new Havel Park Development of 600 new homes being built at the northern end of Aston Parish and small part of the western part of Walkern Parish has a separate Community Council.

See Maps 7.0 and 7.1.

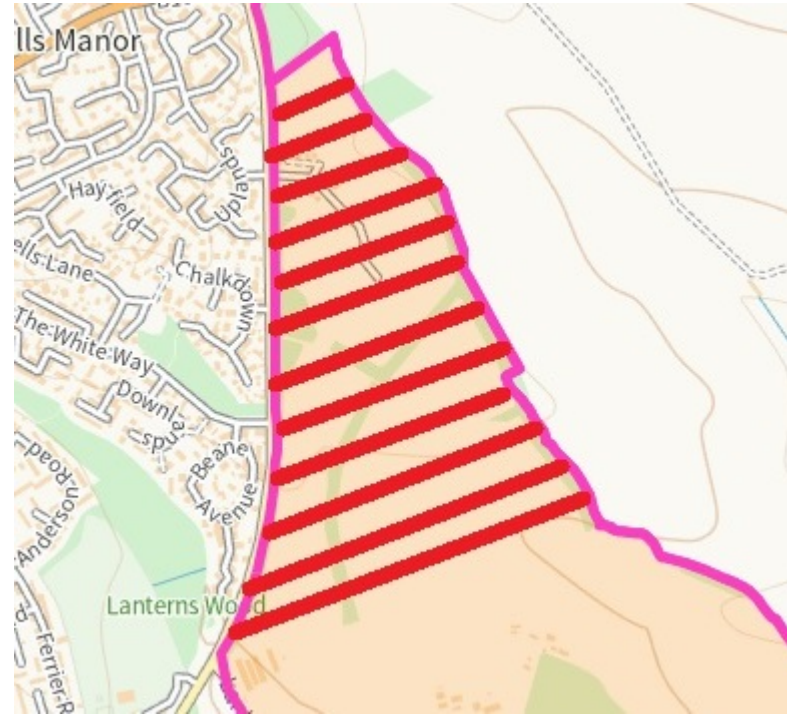
The argument put forward by both parishes is that the development is an urban extension of Stevenage and would not fit with the rural nature the two Parishes.

The full submissions can be seen in [Appendix 7](#) and [7.1](#) below.

Map 7.0



Map 7.1



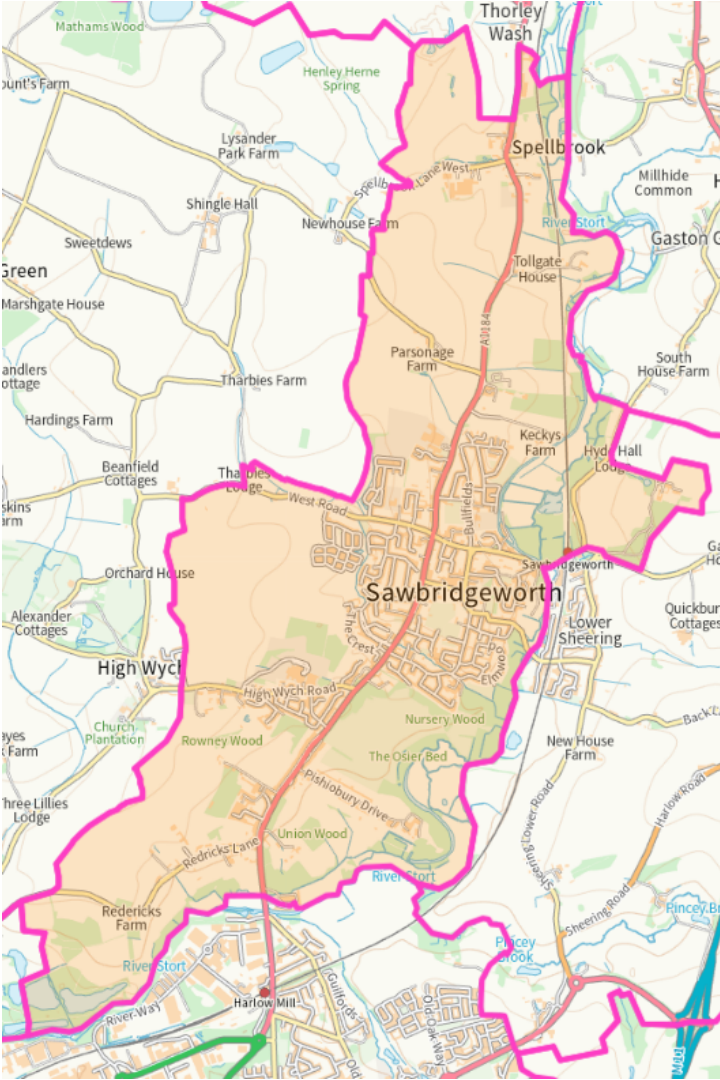
8. Sawbridgeworth Town Council

The Town Council have requested not to be warded.

The Town Council covers the area shown on Map 8 below, has 12 members and 7,200 electors.

The full submissions can be seen in [Appendix 8](#).

Map 8



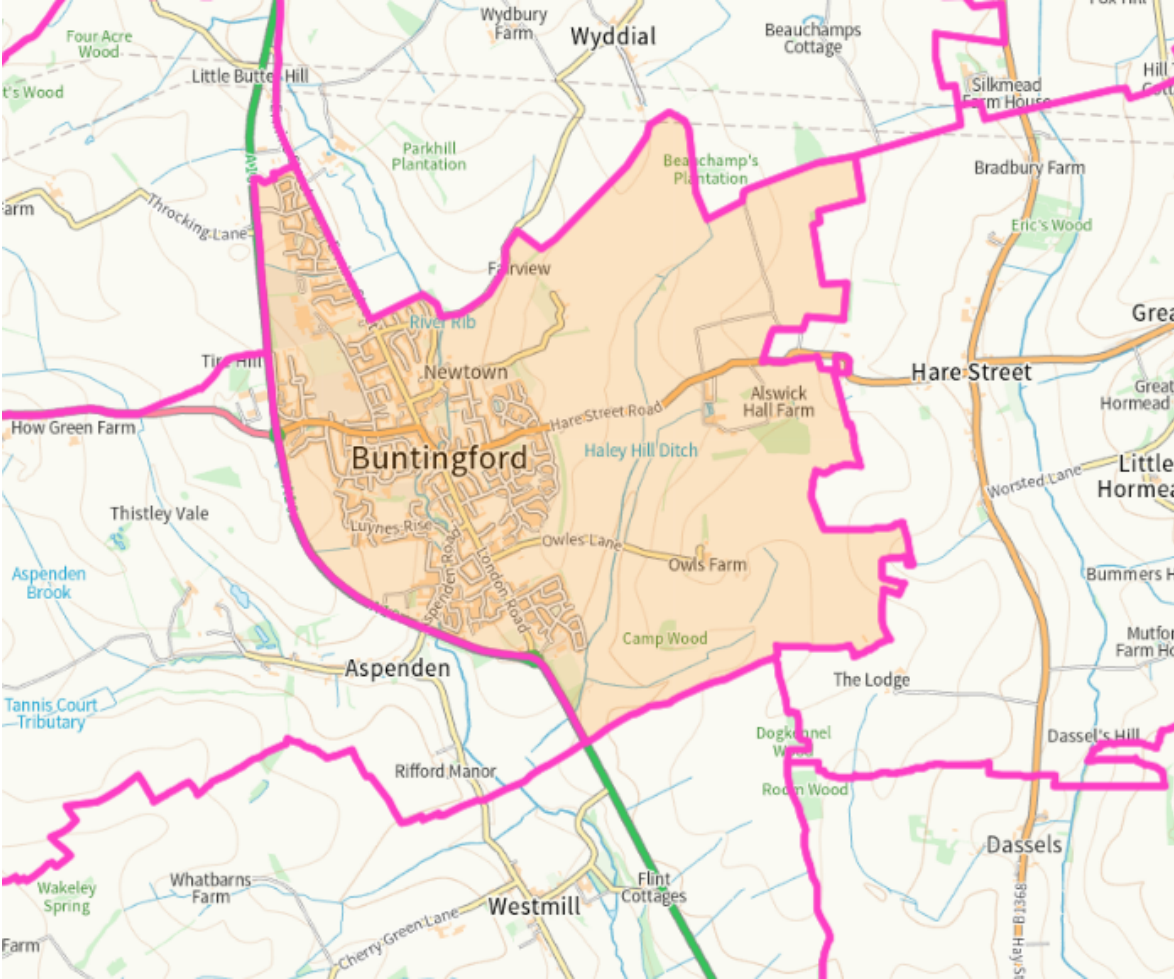
9. Buntingford Town Council

The Town Council have requested not to be warded.

The Town Council covers the area shown on Map 9 below, has 12 members and 6,100 electors.

The full submission can be seen in [Appendix 9](#).

Map 9



10. Tewin Parish Council

No comments on the proposals to remove the current warded structure.

11. Brent Pelham

No comments on the proposal to change the name to Brent Pelham and Meesden Parish Council

The Parish has been using the name Brent Pelham and Meesden Parish Council for several years.

12. Buckland Parish Council

The Parish acknowledges the need to change the name to Buckland and Chipping Parish Council

The Parish has been using the name Buckland and Chipping Parish Council for several years.

13. Stapleford Parish Council

Cllr Joe Thomas supports the changing of name to Stapleford & Waterford Parish Council.

The Parish has been using the name Stapleford & Waterford Parish for several years

Appendix 1 [Return to Main Document](#)

Dear Edward

The Finance and Policy Committee considered this matter (FP49) at its meeting on 11th November 2024:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Representations be made to EHDC prior to 6th January 2025 setting out arguments in favour of the following community governance review options to be considered:

- 1. To move the boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley so the new developments that currently straddle the boundary will be completely in Bishop's Stortford; and**
- 2. A possible option of the Town Council absorbing the entirety of Thorley Parish into Bishop's Stortford.**

There were arguments made to suggest that 2. above would be preferable given that 1. would in effect reduce the size of the Parish considerably.

In terms of the Council's arguments to support the positions above, we would ask EHDC to take into account:

- Bishop's Stortford Town Council is a strong local authority with a track record of delivering quality and value for money services to residents (with no precept demand increases for several years required). The Town Council has a track record

also of taking on new assets and managing new services to good effect (e.g. three new Community centres through a local CIO with a fourth in Thorley being sought). Two years ago, land in Thorley was purchased by the Town Council for an allotments site to be created (40 new plots) in a very convenient location for new residents in the South part of the town (e.g. St James's Park area).

- The many and varied services the Town Council already provides in terms of local entertainments, community centre or local hire services, burial services and allotments are already enjoyed by residents of the Thorley Parish area, including those in the Town Centre (such as the markets and the Castle Pak area/splash park, public toilets etc or services heavily subsidised by the Town Council – such as South Mill Arts theatre). New residents would similarly be availing themselves of the Town Council funded amenities, benefits and activities as the Town has a unified character with the centre as the core of these.
- It is of critical importance, that the argument made by the Town Council is not to be associated with any motives of monopolisation or expansionism. It is argued, moreover that by taking on this area, the Council will be better placed to provide greater and improved services for residents – in part through the increase in precept that would result as the tax base figure increases and in part because the Town Council is in a favourable financial position in its own right at the present time and therefore has the capacity to improve services and assets and to take on new projects going forwards. The local identity of Thorley would and should not be in any way threatened.
- Council Officers are happy to provide more detailed statistical data on any of the above points, as requested and are available to attend meetings in person to make representations to Council Members.

I hope that this is helpful.

Huw Jones

Appendix 1.1 ([Return to Main Document](#))



Community Governance Review formal request for consideration

The Council agreed at its meeting on 24 July 2024, that a Community Governance Review working group will be formed to consider requests from Town and Parish Councils to be involved in a Community Governance Review. The group will review the requests and put forward recommendations to Council on 16 October 2024 on the review's terms of reference and timetable.

All town and parish councils were written to in May 2024 to ask for any informal requests. To help the working group form its recommendations to Council, any town/parish council that wishes to be involved in the review are asked to complete the form below.

Can you please complete this form even if you have already responded to the email sent in May.

Name of Town/ Parish Council(s):

A Community Governance Review can look at the following elements. Please tick which areas you'd like your review to cover and add the name of any other Town/ Parish Council(s) affected and if the proposals been disused with them.

Option	Please (✓)	Other Town/ Parish Council(s) Affected	Discussed with other Town/ Parish Council(s) (Yes/No)
Boundary alterations between existing parishes	✓	Bishops Stortford Town Council	No
Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes			
Electoral arrangements (wards, councillors)			
Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes			
The size of a council			

Changes proposed:

Proposed boundary revision to incorporate full extent of permitted St James's Park development within Thorley Parish. See attached map/sketch. New boundary as shown in black.

Reasons for changes:

One of the stipulated reasons for changing parish boundary lines is to iron out/eliminate anomalies which cause concern/confusion among the community/neighbours adjacent to parish/electoral boundary lines. Unfortunately the last review carried out in 2018 and the previous one created more anomalies than it eliminated.

As a proposal to alleviate some existing anomalies and to prevent potential anomalies when ongoing developments are occupied, Thorley Parish Council propose changes from the somewhat arbitrary parish boundary lines as existing, and re-define the boundary to follow more logical and close-by defensible locations – and in accordance with the District Council's definition of good defensible boundaries, in this case defining centre lines of existing roads/highways as depicted in the sketched map attached, rather than hedges/trees which are not so defensible. Essentially the proposed boundaries would follow along the centre lines of Whittington Way, along Obrey Way and onto Thorley Lane East up to the meeting point with the existing parish boundary, all as depicted on the accompanying map/sketch [marked in black]. This would eliminate a number of anomalies where neighbours have different council tax rates and use different polling stations, seek support from different authorities who may have conflicting policies etc.

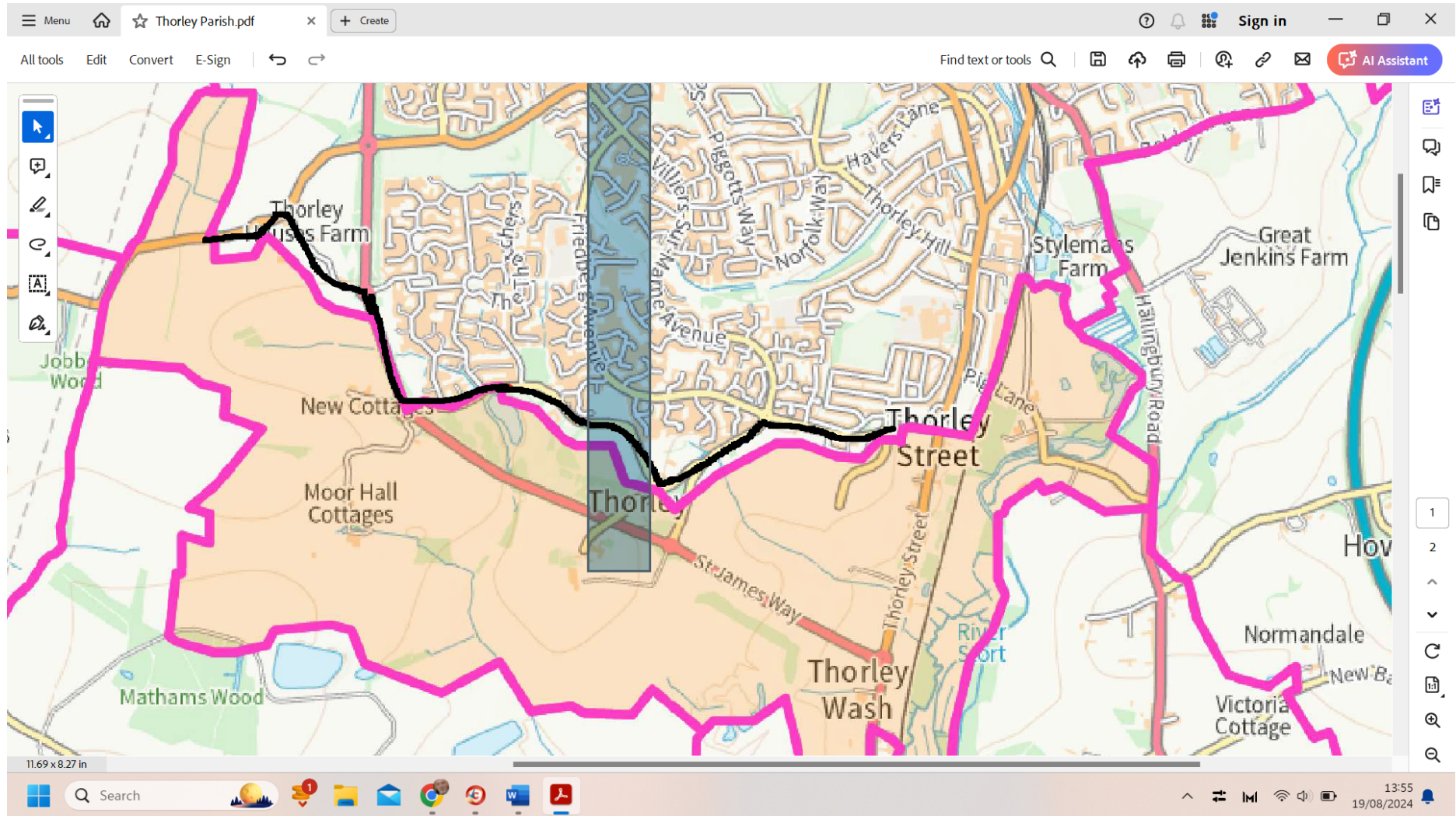
This proposal would rationalise, and give equality to residents of the St. James Park development which at present is divided between Bishops Stortford Town Council and Thorley Parish Council by the Hertfordshire Way R.O.W.

80% of the planned 750 houses on St. James Park are in Thorley Parish, also in Thorley Parish is the Southern Country Park which is a great community attraction, as are the proposed Community Centre, business premises, care home, retail outlets and primary school. In addition to all this, Thorley's "St. James the Great" Church, together with the excellent St Barnabus Centre and Emmaus Centre – altogether great community assets. These are adjacent to the development. The church can also accommodate burials which do not attract the large premiums as levied at present in Bishops Stortford.

Finally, Thorley Parish Council have been heavily involved in the St. James Park development since its inception. Its consolidation wholly within the Thorley Parish boundary will maintain and strengthen continuing community consultation and participation in the important remaining development planning process. Thorley Parish Council have been actively engaged throughout this process - from the original District Plan Examination which first allocated the area for development; participation in the masterplanning and hybrid application process with the

planning authorities; to representation on the continuing St James's Park Community Liaison Group – none of which Bishop's Stortford Town Council have participated in. Thorley Parish Council therefore continue to be the most informed statutory consultee to represent the existing and new community's views on the remaining wide range of Reserved Matters applications and monitoring of planning conditions and obligations on existing consents.

If your request involves a boundary change, please provide a map (you can use the Ordnance Survey election maps [here](#))



Names of the Roads or Geographical Features that will form any proposed boundaries

The proposed revised boundaries would follow along the centre lines of Whittington Way, along Obrey Way and onto Thorley Lane East up to the meeting point with the existing parish boundary, all as depicted on the accompanying map/sketch above [revised Boundary marked in black].

Appendix 1.2 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Full Name: colin arnott

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley

What is your submission: I understand the initial review is considering amending the parish/town boundary between Thorley and Bishop's Stortford to remove the new community at St. James's Park from Thorley to Bishop's Stortford. I do not believe this would be in the best interests of the, ultimately, 750-800 proposed new households of St James's Park (less than half of which are currently occupied) or of the surrounding Thorley community which will be impacted by the development. Thorley Parish Council members and their advisors have participated in the development masterplanning, application process, planning condition and S106 monitoring, and the developers Community Liaison Group and continue to do so. Bishop's Stortford Town Council have not participated in any stage of this process which is still ongoing. Furthermore, I believe that it would be inappropriate to make such a significant change to parish boundaries and community representation until the major changes to District and County level local government arrangements now under consideration for Hertfordshire are resolved.

Full Name: Paul Kennedy

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: St James Park, Bishops Stortford

What is your submission: I would like to be considered as part of the Thorley Parish council than Bishops Stortford Town Council

Full Name: Laura Kennedy

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley parish council

What is your submission: To stay part of Thorley parish council on St James Park estate and we object to the boundaries being changed to Bishops Stortford Town council.

Full Name: Yusuf akdeniz

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley

What is your submission: To have our address in thorley parish and not bishops stortford

Full Name: Isabelle Dean

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley

What is your submission: I wish to oppose the boundary change of St James park being changed to include the whole of st James park.

Full Name: Jordan Gow

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley

What is your submission: Objection to moving into Bishops Stortford parish council from Thorley. I frequent the services in the thorley parish council and do not see any benefit of this changing to bishops Stortford

Full Name: Jeremy Morris

Organisation:

Address: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Thorley parish/bishops Stortford

What is your submission: I don't wish for the boundaries to be changed, we are in thorley and therefore belong to thorley parish



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All town and parish councils were written to in May 2024 to ask for any informal requests. To help the working group form its recommendations to Council, any town/parish council that wishes to be involved in the review are asked to complete the form below.

Can you please complete this form even if you have already responded to the email sent in May.

Name of Town/ Parish Council(s):

A Community Governance Review can look at the following elements. Please tick which areas you’d like your review to cover and add the name of any other Town/ Parish Council(s) affected and if the proposals been disused with them.

Option	Please (☐)	Other Town/ Parish Council(s) Affected	Discussed with other Town/ Parish Council(s) (Yes/No)
Boundary alterations between existing parishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hertingfordbury (Hertford Town Council) Birchall Garden Suburb (W&HBC)	No
Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hertingfordbury (Hertford Town Council) Birchall Garden Suburb (W&HBC)	No
Electoral arrangements (wards, councillors)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hertingfordbury Parish Council	Yes
Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hertingfordbury (Hertford Town Council) Birchall Garden Suburb (W&HBC)	No
The size of a council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hertingfordbury Parish Council	Yes

Changes proposed:

Hertingfordbury Parish Council wishes for the review to consider that we change the boundary to include the village of Hertingfordbury and to move the boundary to exclude the development of Birchall Garden Suburb.

Should the Boundary stay as it currently stands, We wish for the number of Councillor seats to be reviewed which is currently 10 with an electorate of approx 500 residents.

Should we gain Hertingfordbury we would like to have at least 9 seats

We wish to consider changing the name of the parish council depending on the review outcome.

Reasons for changes:

Currently meeting Quorate is difficult as we have struggled to fill 10 seats for a number of years. The way to resolve this would be to include Hertingfordbury so that we would gain more interested residents to co-opt and with that more areas of expertise, or to decrease the number of needed seats. Even with Birchall Garden Suburb potentially bringing more residents we feel this is too far in the future not to consider reviewing now and our best outcome would be not to have BGS within the boundary.

The Parish Council is currently known as Hertingfordbury Parish Council but Hertingfordbury is not part of the parish council. It needs to make sense by either changing the name which we would consult residents on before resolving a new name or including the village of Hertingfordbury within the parish council boundary. We have in the past lost interested residents that could have been councillors because they were confused to find that their village is not a part of the parish council.

The development of Birchall Garden Suburb would be less complicated if W&HBC had all of the development within its boundary. The council feels that this development would not be in keeping with the 'Parish' and it is not of any gain to the Parish Council to have the development within the Parish which is currently made up of countryside, villages and hamlets.

If your request involves a boundary change, please provide a map (you can use the Ordnance Survey election maps [here](#))

Appendix 2.1 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Dear Edward

Further in this matter, an extraordinary meeting of Hertford Town Council considered this matter on the evening of Monday 6 January 2025.

The Council has instructed me to provide the following comments number 1. to 7. Inclusive on the proposals.

To assist I have attached the officer report (with a published addendum incorporated) that provides the background and context of the comments below.

1. Hertford Town Council recognises and respects the work of Hertingfordbury Parish Council to serve its community and to

manage the challenges of recruiting sufficient Councillors to attain a full cohort of ten Councillors.

2. Hertford Town Council is concerned that the residents of Hertingfordbury village are reported as being against the proposals. This position is contrary to the outcomes expected from a Community Governance Review as in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/communitygovernance-reviews-guidance> at Paragraphs 62,63,74 and 80 above.

3. Hertford Town Council is very concerned at the difficulties that may arise with the possible transfer allotments in Hertingfordbury village
Such a transfer could lead to a significant additional financial burden on Hertingfordbury Parish Council .The transfer could lead to a confusing arrangement where existing plot holders who are resident in the current Hertford Town Council administrative boundary could be paying Council tax to one parish/town council and allotment fees to another. This would be the case for plot holders who live in Hertford but not Hertingfordbury village. There are 53 plot holders in this ‘category.’

4. Hertford Town Council is concerned at the removal of residents’ fees at Hertford Cemetery for current residents of Hertingfordbury village. To continue to allow Hertingfordbury residents access to resident’s fees would be inconsistent in how all other (non-resident) parties are treated including those who have resided close to the administrative boundary of Hertford Town Council.

5. Hertford Town Council is concerned at the impact the removal of Hertingfordbury village would have on tis residents in terms of participation in and reliance upon the Castle Plus Neighbourhood Plan that is currently being developed. At first review the neighbourhood plan boundary would have to be changed unless the Council wished to fund a neighbourhood plan for an area it has no jurisdiction over, no democratic mandate from and from which it receives no precept income.

6. Following careful consideration of the matter, the Council is struggling to see benefits for residents of Hertingfordbury village of this proposal.

7. Hertford Town Council respectfully suggests that the solution to the difficulties reflected in 1. above is to reduce the size of the

membership of the council to 7 councillors. Such an action would sit within nationally published guidance on Community Governance Reviews and, according to the guidance, is an appropriate number of councillors to be elected to serve the population of Hertingfordbury PC in its current form.

Should you require any further information or wish to discuss that shown above/attached, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Joseph

Joseph Whelan
Town Clerk



HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Hertford Castle
Castle Street
Hertford SG14 1HR
Telephone number: 01992 552885
town.clerk@hertford.gov.uk
www.hertford.gov.uk

Appendix 3.0 ([Return to Main Document](#))

APPENDIX A

Proposal for a Community Governance Review for Ware

For discussion at Ware Town Council, 18 July 2022.

Background

The current town boundary of Ware is tightly drawn around the residential built-up area. This means that the proposed new North and East Ware housing development, designated as WARE2 in the East Herts District Plan (EHDP) 2018, largely lies outside the town boundary and in the parish of Wareside and, currently, the Hunsdon district ward. There are also a number of smaller anomalies in the boundaries of town wards which are then carried over to district and county wards.

It has been recognised from the outset of the District Plan that the new development is an extension of Ware and looks towards the town for many of its services and facilities; in EHDP 2018 it is included under Ware section, rather than the surrounding villages, and designated as WARE2 rather than VILL#. This is reinforced by the draft proposals on the recent Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) review of the East Herts District, taking into account submissions from local political parties, organisations and residents. They have proposed that the whole of the WARE2 development should fall within Ware Trinity ward, rather than Hunsdon as at present. These provisional recommendations are under review and the final recommendations will be published on 2 August 2022. For the purposes of this document it is assumed that the LGBCE draft proposal regarding WARE2 remains unchanged.

Clearly the same logic would apply to town and parish wards; WARE2 should be incorporated into the Ware town boundary rather than being part of Wareside parish. This would greatly assist effective local governance. If the town and parish ward boundaries remained as they are currently, part of the new Ware Trinity district ward would be in Ware Town Council, but the remainder would be a "Wareside Urban" ward in Wareside Parish Council, with a very different character to the remainder of the ward designated as "Wareside Rural". Links from WARE2 to Wareside are far weaker than those to the town of Ware itself. Moreover, Wareside is in the Green Belt whereas the land allocated to WARE2 has been removed from Green Belt status.

Therefore, we request that East Herts District Council should undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) of Ware and the immediately surrounding area, as soon as possible, with the principal aim being to expand the Ware town boundary to include the whole of the designated area for WARE2. Most of this will come from Wareside parish, with a small corner of Thundridge parish. Other minor boundary anomalies can also be addressed and rectified at the same time. These changes are also expected to be reflected in the associated district and county ward boundaries. A list of suggested changes is shown in the Appendix below.

A District can set a CGR in motion at any time and the LGBCE recommends that this is done promptly where a significant change such as a new housing development is taking place. The WARE2 masterplanning process has been in progress since 2019 and the developers presented final plans in May 2022 with the intention of seeking planning permission shortly. Hence this is an appropriate time to undertake the CGR so that when the new housing is built, the electors will be in both town and district wards with the natural linkage to Ware.

Our understanding is that the Town Council can request a Community Governance Review by contacting, via the Town Clerk, the Head of Legal Services of East Herts District Council (James Ellis). This is proposed as the preferred way forward, with this document providing supporting evidence. This is subject to the final recommendations of the LGBCE and that these still include the WARE2 area within Ware Trinity District ward, which will be known in August. The approach to EHDC can then be made immediately after the final LGBCE recommendations are published.

Recommendation: This Council requests the Town Clerk to contact the Head of Legal Services at East Herts District Council to request a Community Governance Review for Ware.

This recommendation is subject to the final outcome of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) due to be published on 2 August 2002. The Council delegates the Leader of the Council and Town Clerk to make any changes to the request depending on the final proposals from the LGBCE.

APPENDIX: Suggested changes to town ward boundaries in and around Ware

We commend the following changes to East Herts District Council for consideration as part of the Community Governance Review.

1. The extensive area designated for WARE2 in the East Herts District Plan currently within Wareside parish should be transferred to fall within the Ware town boundary by extending the boundary eastwards and northwards. It would then form part of Ware Trinity town ward as well as Ware Trinity district ward.
2. A small part of the WARE2 designated area lies north of the current district, county and Parliamentary constituency line which runs through the middle of a field west of Moles Farm and lies in Thundridge parish. For consistency, the Ware town boundary should be expanded to also contain this small area, which currently contains no electors, and it would become part of Ware Trinity town ward.
3. Orchard Close is arbitrarily cut in half, currently between St Mary's and Christchurch wards, and in the new proposals between St Mary's and Priory district wards. It is a cul-de-sac with its only physical link being to Priory ward and all this road logically belongs in that ward.
4. A single house in Gladstone Road currently falls in Christchurch ward and would be in Priory ward. The boundary should be along Baldock Street and this house would then fall in St Mary's ward along with the rest of Gladstone Road.
5. The area just to the west of Baldock Street is arbitrarily split between Christchurch/Priory and St Mary's wards, whereas it should preferably all belong in one or the other; for example, the eastern edge of Buryfield Park would provide a strong and clearly defined boundary line.
6. The Gentlemen's Field industrial area logically belongs as part of Ware town and Ware St Mary's ward. This is recognised in the East Herts District Plan 2018 which designates this area as the WARE3(c) Employment area, not Hertford. It is physically much closer to Ware, adjacent to housing in the Ware town boundary and all its road connections are with Ware. The Hertford/Ware town boundary would be moved slightly to achieve this.

7. In south Ware, the area round Presdales Pit is logically linked to Ware and the only road access is into Hoe Lane. The Ware town boundary could be moved southwards to the A10 and this area could be taken out of Great Amwell Parish. The logical eastern boundary would be the public footpath from Amwellbury Farm to the A10.

For all these proposed changes, few or zero current electors would be involved and therefore electoral balance would not be adversely affected. It is anticipated that the district and county ward boundaries would also be adjusted in cases 2-7 to give a corresponding resolution of the anomalies. The Community Governance Review would of course take each case on its merits and conclude which of these changes, or others, would be most appropriate.

Appendix 3.1 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Full Name: Rebecca Burdick

Organisation: Wareside Parish Council

Address: 1 Red Lion Yard, Wareside

Email Address: Wpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk

Which town/parish council or area does your submission relate to?: Wareside Parish Council

What is your submission: This submission is in response to Ware Town Council's request that the Review move the boundary between Ware and Wareside so that the whole of WARE 2 as defined in the The East Herts District Plan 2018 becomes part of Ware. A significant proportion of the new homes forming the Ware 2 development will be built on land currently within the parish of Wareside. We understand that under the proposal put forward by Ware Town Council, all of these new houses plus a number of existing properties within Wareside parish would become part of Ware Town. In common with many local councils, Wareside Parish Council is struggling to meet its ongoing day to day costs from its precept which is its only source of current income. Additional projects are increasingly at risk. Two issues facing us at present provide useful examples. The cost of supplying a new defibrillator will have to be met out of dwindling reserves. The Council is expected to pay the cost of running out of date inefficient street lighting which it cannot afford to upgrade. We simply cannot afford to lose the precept from the existing properties which would become part of Ware Town. Furthermore, some of the additional precept from the new properties would have allowed us to improve services to parishioners either through the increased income itself or by allowing us to access borrowed money for capital projects - an option not currently available to us. These improved services would have gone some way towards offsetting the detriments many parishioners feel we face as a result of the Ware 2 development. For example, we recently lost our village school partly as a result of the proposed provision of new schools within Ware 2. Once the new development proceeds there will inevitably be an increase in traffic through the parish leading to further detriment to the existing inhabitants. The development will result in the loss of much loved countryside within the parish. Looked at from a different perspective, many of the existing dwellings in the parish do not have access to proper high speed broadband and the mobile signal in much of

the parish is poor. A more regular bus service would be appreciated particularly by residents without access to a car. These services will no doubt be provided to new residents of Ware 2. Were the new houses to be built within Wareside, the Council would have had greater influence to explore with developers and providers the possibility of securing upgrades to the services to existing dwellings as part of the project. Our objections to the Ware Town proposal could be met to an extent if a mechanism could be found through which some of the lost precept could be made available to Wareside Parish Council. Assistance from Ware Town Council in securing better services for existing Wareside residents would also help to offset the loss of influence which would result from their proposal. We would welcome the opportunity to explore these suggestions further with them and with EHDC. Finally, if the boundary is moved we assume that the recent decision to ward Wareside parish will be reversed. The decision to ward was based on the presumption that new homes from the Ware 2 development would be built in Wareside parish. In the absence of these new homes, warding is unnecessary.



Appendix 4.0 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Community Governance Review formal request for consideration

The Council agreed at its meeting on 24 July 2024, that a Community Governance Review working group will be formed to consider requests from Town and Parish Councils to be involved in a Community Governance Review. The group will review the requests and put forward recommendations to Council on 16 October 2024 on the review's terms of reference and timetable.

All town and parish councils were written to in May 2024 to ask for any informal requests. To help the working group form its recommendations to Council, any town/parish council that wishes to be involved in the review are asked to complete the form below.

Can you please complete this form even if you have already responded to the email sent in May.

Name of Town/ Parish Council(s): **Stanstead Abbots Parish Council**

A Community Governance Review can look at the following elements. Please tick which areas you'd like your review to cover and add the name of any other Town/ Parish Council(s) affected and if the proposals been discussed with them.

Option	Please (✓)	Other Town/ Parish Council(s) Affected	Discussed with other Town/ Parish Council(s) (Yes/No)
Boundary alterations between existing parishes			
Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes	✓	Stanstead St Margarets and possibly Great Amwell	Yes with Stanstead St Margarets No with Great Amwell
Electoral arrangements (wards, councillors)			

Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes	✓	Stanstead St Margarets and possibly Great Amwell	Yes with Stanstead St Margarets No with Great Amwell
The size of a council			

Changes proposed:

We would like to investigate merging with Stanstead St Margarets Parish Council and possibly the part of Great Amwell parish that lies within the Neighbourhood Plan area as agreed with East Herts District Council.

Reasons for changes:

Residents of the Neighbourhood Plan area generally consider themselves to live in Stanstead Abbots, many are unaware of the differing parishes in which they live. St Margarets Parish Council have approached us with a proposal of merging our two parish councils. The inclusion of part of Great Amwell within the Neighbourhood Plan area would seem logical as residents generally think of themselves as living in Stanstead Abbots and look to our parish council when issues arise.

If your request involves a boundary change, please provide a map (you can use the Ordnance Survey election maps [here](#))

Names of the Roads or Geographical Features that will form any proposed boundaries

Appendix 4.1 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Stanstead St Margaret's Parish Council Response to the East Hertfordshire District Council Community Governance Review

BACKGROUND

Stanstead St Margaret's Parish Council are responding to the Community Governance Review ('CGR') that is being undertaken by East Hertfordshire District Council ('EHDC') in accordance with Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the 2007 Act'), the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972 and associated regulations.

The Parish Council had not received the necessary documentation from EHDC to be considered in the initial review. Nevertheless, they conveyed their interest to EHDC in merging with Stanstead Abbotts Parish Council (SAPC) via informal email communication to comply with the deadline.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Parish Council has observed that many residents of St Margaret's parish identify as living within Stanstead Abbotts and are often unaware of the distinct parish boundaries. By consolidating the parish councils, there is an aim to enhance cohesion within the village.
2. The Parish Council does not own any land, buildings, or recreational spaces. However, the St Margaretsbury Recreational Trust includes representatives from each of the three parishes on its board, and its management will need to be considered in the review.
3. The Neighbourhood Plan encompasses a designated area, as assigned by EHDC, which includes Stanstead Abbotts, St Margaret's, and The Folly (a section of the parish of Great Amwell). It is logical for the review to regard this as a beneficial aspect for a potential merger.

4. Hoddesdon Road has experienced substantial development over the years, contributing to the population growth of St Margaret's. Given the limited prospects for additional development within the parish, it is anticipated that population growth will stabilise in the future, thereby facilitating the effective management of parish integration.
5. The existing boundaries are not consistent in their definitions. For example, one bank of the river falls under St Margaret's parish, while the opposite bank is part of Stanstead Abbots. Likewise, one side of Station Road, including St Margaret's train station, is situated within the parish of Great Amwell, whereas the other side belongs to St Margaret's. Unifying the parish councils would result in more clearly defined boundaries.
6. The present composition of the Parish Council for St Margaret's consists of seven councillors. There has previously been challenges in recruiting parish councillors, as numerous residents have mistakenly reached out to SAPC, unaware of the existence of St Margaret's Parish Council. The terms of reference for the CGR indicate that there is no upper limit for the number of councillors, and this would help to retain the places of existing members to ensure there is an even balance of representation for the area.
7. The County Councillor representation is different within the two parish councils. Consolidating the roles into a single Parish Council would streamline representation.
8. Consideration should be given to the employment contract of the one employed member of staff, and what impact a merger would have. The Clerk/RFO for St Margaret's Parish Council is contracted for 7 hours per week, while the Clerk/RFO at Stanstead Abbots is understood to be contracted for 16 hours per week (although this would need to be checked with Stanstead Abbots Parish Council).

Appendix 4.2 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Dear Edward

Thank you for the message below.

Great Amwell Parish Council (GAPC), at a recent meeting, considered a proposal submitted under the aforementioned review to amalgamate the Parishes of Great Amwell, Stanstead Abbots and Stanstead St Margarets.

GAPC agreed that it does not wish to merge or be grouped with Stanstead Abbots and Stanstead St Margarets parishes.

GAPC is an active authority with a full complement of members. It represents the views of its parishioners on a range of matters concerning the identity and interests of the parish such as:

- (A) actively opposing inappropriate development, particularly in the Green Belt;
- (B) opposing proposals that would lead to settlement coalition;
- (C) providing community facilities
- (D) funding community activities and projects
- (E) acting as a focal point and conduit for parishioners' views on community services.

Great Amwell Parish and its Council are long established. The Parish Centre is the St John the Baptist Church. The Parish also encompasses housing estates and residential areas. The composition of its membership represents all areas of the parish.

Great Amwell is a distinct community with its own history and traditions and its own green spaces and visual amenities: such an "identity" would be put at risk if the village were to be merged with other settlements.

GAPC's precept is amongst the lowest in the District and reflects prudent financial management whilst still supporting the community's well-being and services.

For the foregoing reasons, GAPC strongly opposes any merger suggestion(s) submitted by other parties as part of the current review. It has a long history of successfully serving the needs of its parishioners and firmly believes that any amalgamation would dilute this effectiveness. In its view there is no justification for any amalgamation to take place and cannot imagine any persuasive arguments to support such a proposal.

Yours sincerely

Jeff

Appendix 5.0 ([Return to Main Document](#))



Community Governance Review formal request
for consideration

The Council agreed at its meeting on 24 July 2024, that a Community Governance Review working group will be formed to consider requests from Town and Parish Councils to be involved in a Community Governance Review. The group will review the requests and put forward recommendations to Council on 16 October 2024 on the review's terms of reference and timetable.

All town and parish councils were written to in May 2024 to ask for any informal requests. To help the working group form its recommendations to Council, any town/parish council that wishes to be involved in the review are asked to complete the form below.

Can you please complete this form even if you have already responded to the email sent in May.

Name of Town/ Parish Council(s):

A Community Governance Review can look at the following elements. Please tick which areas you'd like your review to cover and add the name of any other Town/ Parish Council(s) affected and if the proposals been disused with them.

Option	Please (✓)	Other Town/ Parish Council(s) Affected	Discussed with other Town/ Parish Council(s) (Yes/No)
Boundary alterations between existing parishes	✓	Stanstead St Margarets	No
Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes			
Electoral arrangements (wards, councillors)			
Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes			
The size of a council			

Changes proposed:

At a recent meeting, Great Amwell Parish Council agreed to investigate the possibility of a Community Governance Review to regularise its (southern) boundary with Stanstead St Margarets.

Currently, the boundary is the B181 up to a point short of the Amwell Roundabout where it veers north and then bisects the A1170 on an east west axis, following the old Hertford Road before joining the B1502.

It is suggested that the boundary should follow the entire length of the B181 to its junction with the Amwell Roundabout...then follow the northern (highway) part of that roundabout and then proceed along the B1502 until it reaches its current intersection with that highway from the old Hertford Road.

Reasons for changes:

Part of this boundary does not follow a clear geographical feature. The request seeks to regularise the boundary so that it follows a clearly defined geographical feature as defined.

If your request involves a boundary change, please provide a map (you can use the Ordnance Survey election maps [here](#))

<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/>

Names of the Roads or Geographical Features that will form any proposed boundaries

See above narrative

Appendix 7 ([Return to Main Document](#))

Community Governance Review formal request
for consideration



The Council agreed at its meeting on 24 July 2024, that a Community Governance Review working group will be formed to consider requests from Town and Parish Councils to be involved in a Community Governance Review. The group will review the requests and put forward recommendations to Council on 16 October 2024 on the review's terms of reference and timetable.

All town and parish councils were written to in May 2024 to ask for any informal requests. To help the working group form its recommendations to Council, any town/parish council that wishes to be involved in the review are asked to complete the form below.

Can you please complete this form even if you have already responded to the email sent in May.

Name of Town/ Parish Council(s): Aston Parish Council

A Community Governance Review can look at the following elements. Please tick which areas you'd like your review to cover and add the name of any other Town/ Parish Council(s) affected and if the proposals been disused with them.

Option	Please (✓)	Other Town/ Parish Council(s) Affected	Discussed with other Town/ Parish Council(s) (Yes/No)
Boundary alterations between existing parishes	No		
Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes	Yes	Walkern	No
Electoral arrangements (wards, councillors)	?		
Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes	No		
The size of a council	Aston currently 7 cllrs.		

Changes proposed: For Hazel Park, currently in Aston Parish with a tiny bit in Walkern, to have its own Community Council

Reasons for changes: Hazel Park will have more voters than than the current Aston Parish and can therefore dominate Aston. Also Hazel Park is urban, an extension of Stevenage, while Aston is rural. Therefore culturally very different.

If your request involves a boundary change, please provide a map (you can use the Ordnance Survey election maps [here](#))

There will be no boundary change for Aston with other existing parishes. It is simply part of Aston divided into the existing and a new community Council

Names of the Roads or Geographical Features that will form any proposed boundaries

The only named road in Hazel Park so far is Robins Hill Road.

Hi Edward,

Thank you for this email. As people have now started to move into the first of the 610 houses in Hazel Park, Aston Parish, which will more than double the number of voters in this Parish, my Council would like Aston Parish to urgently be placed on the first batch to be looked at. It is the wish of this Parish that Hazel Park has its own Community Council. At our April 2024 Annual Parish Meeting, this subject was debated and put to the vote. 91 voters asked for it to be a separate Community Council, with 1 abstention and 0 against. Dist.Cllr.Stowe was present at this meeting. Yours ever R.Falder, clerk.

Hi Edward,

I have put the notice you sent up on all our noticeboards and it is on our website.

I think I have made our case clear for a community Council for Hazel Park but would add that it is a question of culture. Aston is a rural parish with rural views and works closely with neighbouring parishes and EHDC. The residents at Hazel Park will have an urban outlook and see themselves as an extension of Stevenage - which is exactly what they are. As such their views will differ greatly from that of Aston. Our main concern is the 2027 Parish Council election and by that time there will be far more of them on the voting register than the rest of the Parish which numbers just about 700.

Yours ever, clerk

On Sun, Nov 10, 2024 at 2:34 PM Roy Falder <astonpcclerk@gmail.com> wrote:

Appendix 7.1 ([Return to Main Document](#))



Parish Clerk – Abigail Brown
T: 07584 679526
E: clerk@walkernparishcouncil.gov.uk

Electoral Services

Legal and Democratic Services

East Herts Council

Wallfields

Pegs Lane

Hertford

SG13 8EQ

9th December 2024 To whom it may concern

Re: Community Governance Review (CGR)2024

Walkern Parish Council support our neighbouring parish of Aston in recommending the creation of a new parish to encompass the entire area of the land east of Stevenage being developed as Hazel Park.

The size of this new mixed-use development warrants the creation of a separate authority. The retention of this area would overwhelm the existing parish structure. A new parish would help ensure:

· the electors of Hazel Park are effectively represented at parish level · the parish precept is spent for the benefit of that community

While the major part of this new development is in the parish of Aston a small portion at the most northern tip designated as a possible location for a travelling show people site does extend into Walkern parish. This small area of land is separate and distinct from the main village of Walkern. The B1037 provides a clearly defined boundary line as do the existing tree line and green belt fields which separate the development from the village. Walkern Parish Council therefore recommend that this piece of land is also transferred into a new parish.

Serving the people of Walkern



Parish Clerk – Abigail Brown
T: 07584 679526
E: clerk@walkernparishcouncil.gov.uk

The original masterplan for the land east of Stevenage did clearly emphasise that the new development would be well screened from the wider landscape by the surrounding woodland belts and a ridgeline to the east of the site would shield it from the wider Beane Valley. This would enable the site to be developed without encroachment into the wider countryside and without giving rise to any perception of 'sprawl'. The scheme also makes provision for a vibrant new community hub that will provide a high-quality meeting place at the heart of the development, focussed around a new Primary School, community facilities and a central park. The masterplan clearly shows the site as separate neighbourhood on the edge of Stevenage which is best served by having its own local government arrangements

Yours sincerely,

ABrown

Abigail Brown

Walkern Parish Council Clerk on behalf of Walkern Parish Council

[Appendix 8 \(Return to Main Document\)](#)

Hi Edward,

Thank you for highlighting that the town council prefers to remain unwarded. Could you please clarify if any additional information is required from my end, as the final sentence seems a bit unclear?

Kind Regards

Chris

Christopher Hunt CiLCA, Dip. CSMP®

Sawbridgeworth Town Clerk
Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Sayesbury Manor
Bell Street
Sawbridgeworth
Herts
CM21 9AN
(01279) 724537
<http://sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk>

On 19 Aug 2024, at 11:35, Chris Hunt <chris.hunt@sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear District Councillors,

On Monday 31st July 2023, Sawbridgeworth Town Council resolved not to enter into the Community Governance Review for boundary changes etc.

Are you happy for me to respond that this is still the case?

Kind Regards

Chris

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The matter was debated and the view from Councillors was that to move to different wards would be divisive rather than encouraging to incorporate new community members and areas into the Town.

Resolved for the town to remain unwarded and for District Councillors to raise representation at East Herts Council.

[prop Cllr A Parsad-Wyatt; secd Cllr J Rider]

Christopher Hunt CiLCA, Dip. CSMP

<image006.jpg>

Sawbridgeworth Town Clerk
Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Sayesbury Manor
Bell Street
Sawbridgeworth
Herts
CM21 9AN
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<http://sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk>

Appendix 9 ([Return to Main Document](#))

From: Jill Jones <clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2024 12:20 PM

To: Legal & Democratic Services - Electors <Electors@eastherts.gov.uk>

Subject: [External] Community Governance Review

Dear Sirs,

Community Governance Review.

Reference the current Community Governance Review. This matter was discussed at Committee yesterday evening and I have been asked to respond as follows:

We note your comments that it's premature to discuss the Buntingford Parish Boundary at this time with several speculative planning applications that if granted, could result in a request to change the parish boundary, which would not be necessary if the applications did not succeed.

With regard to the option of parish warding. Members felt that in Buntingford a better and more efficient service is achievable without warding. Therefore it's felt that parish warding would not be beneficial in Buntingford at this time.

Kind regards

Jill Jones PSLCC, Cert HE. Town Clerk

Buntingford Town Council, The Manor House, Buntingford, SG9 9AB.

01763 272222. www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk

Follow us on Twitter @buntingfordtc

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 East Hertfordshire District Council ('the Council') has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review ('the review') in accordance with Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the 2007 Act'), the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972 and associated regulations.
- 1.2 The Council is required to have regard to the guidance on Community Governance Reviews published by the government. These terms of reference set out the aims of the review, the matters on which it will focus and policies that the Council considers relevant to the review. The terms of reference will be published on the Council's website and will be made available at the District Council offices and at other venues within the area under review.

Reasons for the review

- 1.5 The Council is undertaking the review at this time in response to suggestions from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).
- 1.6 The Council has also received a request from Ware Town Council.
- 1.7 Following these suggestions and requests, the Council wrote to all town and parish councils to ask if they would like to be included in the review.
- 1.8 Government guidance states that it is good practice to conduct a full Community Governance Review at least every 10 to 15 years. The Council therefore wishes to review the suggestions from the LGBCE, Ware Town Council and take the opportunity to consult all town and parish councils in East Hertfordshire to ensure that the electoral arrangements of the parishes are appropriate, equitable and understood by the electorate.

Community Governance Reviews

- 1.9 A Community Governance Review is a review of the whole or part of the district to consider one or more of the following:
- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
 - The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
 - The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding), and/or

- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

The aims of the review

- 1.10 In accordance with the 2007 Act the Council will have regard to the need to secure community governance within the area under review which:-
- Is reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area;
 - Provides for effective and convenient local government; and
 - Takes into account any other arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area.
- 1.11 When considering the above criteria, Government guidance states that the Council should take into account:-
- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
 - The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.
- 1.12 The guidance emphasises that ‘the recommendations made in a community governance review ought to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services’.

Areas under review

- 1.12 The whole of the East Hertfordshire District Council area will be included in the Community Governance Review. However, a number of parish councils have expressed an interest during the informal consultation to be included in the review. These town and parish councils are as follows:
- Aston Parish Council
 - Bishop’s Stortford Town Council
 - Buntingford Town Council
 - Great Amwell Parish Council
 - Hertford Town Council
 - Hertingfordbury Parish Council
 - Stanstead Abbots Parish Council
 - Thorley Parish Council

The Review will not automatically mean there will be changes but it will examine whether there is a case for change.

- 1.13 The Council had previously received representations from Ware Town Council to consider reviewing the boundary between Ware, Wareside and Thundridge parish councils. There is also an officer suggestion to un-ward Tewin Parish Council and that there may be a benefit to warding Sawbridgeworth Town Council.

- 1.14 The review will consider the bigger-picture across the entire District to ensure that small changes in one area, do not impact others disproportionately. By taking a wider view of the bigger picture, it is hoped that any proposals ensure effective representation at Town and Parish levels across the entire District.

Who will undertake the review?

- 1.15 As the principal authority, East Hertfordshire District Council is responsible for undertaking CGRs within its area. Full Council has established a Community Governance Review working group to consider the responses from the consultation and propose draft and final recommendations to Council.

- 1.16 The primary contacts for the review are:

- The Interim Chief Executive
- The Head of Legal and Democratic Services
- The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
- The Deputy Elections Manager

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 In coming to its recommendations in the review, the Council will take account of the views of local people and stakeholders. Legislation requires the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the review, and to take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the criteria in the 2007 Act.

- 2.2 The Council wishes to promote community engagement and transparency in decision-making. In relation to the review the Council will:

- Publish these terms of reference and accept submissions by post or via e-mail or the Council's website;
- Publicise the review by providing information to the relevant town and parish councils and by other printed and electronic means;
- Consult residents, local organisations and elected representatives in the areas under review.
- Make key documents available at the District Council offices and at other venues in the parishes affected;
- Consider all submissions received; and
- Publicise the outcome of the review.

- 2.3 The Council will notify Hertfordshire County Council that a review is to be undertaken; the County Council is a formal consultee of this process.

- 2.4 The Council will consider each case on its merits and on the basis of the information and evidence provided during the course of the review. The Council is mindful that proposals which are intended to reflect community

identity and local linkages should be justified in terms of sound and demonstrable evidence of those identities and linkages.

3. THE TIMETABLE FOR THE REVIEW

3.1 Publication of these terms of reference formally begins the review.

Timetable for Community Governance Review	
Stage of process	Proposed dates
Publication of terms of reference	16 October 2024
Initial submissions	
Initial submissions invited/ publicity campaign	28 October to 6 January 2025
Deadline for initial submissions	6 January 2025
Consideration of submissions/ preparation of draft recommendations	January/February 2025 (report to Council meeting 26 February 2025)
Consultation on draft recommendations	
Publication of draft recommendations	3 March 2025
Consultation on draft recommendations/publicity campaign	3 March to 12 May 2025
Deadline for consultation responses	12 May 2025
Consideration of responses/ preparation of final recommendations	May/June 2025 (report to Council meeting July 2025)
Decisions & implementation	
Publication of final recommendations	July 2025
Council meeting to make any Reorganisation Order	July 2025
Effective date for any revised electoral arrangements	6 May 2027 (next ordinary town/parish council elections)

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE REVIEW

- 4.1 The review will consider current and projected patterns of population, development, community identify and linkages in the area under review; and whether these give rise to the need for any changes to town/parish boundaries and/or electoral arrangements.
- 4.2 In reviewing the community governance arrangements of any town/parish in its area, the Council is required to consider the number of local government electors in the area under review, and any change in that number or the distribution of the electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.
- 4.3 Electorate forecasts for September 2028, taking into account information on developments underway or planned based on planning permissions granted

and the draft District Plan will be published to inform the consultation process during the review and provided to the town and parish councils concerned.

- 4.4 As part of the consultation process the Council will also make available information on the Council Tax precept (Band D equivalent) currently applicable in each of the parishes under review.

5. POLICIES THAT WILL GUIDE THE REVIEW

Parishes

- 5.1 The Council considers that towns/parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest, with their own sense of identity and that electors should be able to identify clearly with the town/parish in which they are resident. The feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are therefore important considerations in the review.
- 5.2 The Council will give careful consideration both to traditional community identities and historic town/parish arrangements; and to any changes that have happened over time, for example population movements or new development, that may have led to a different community identity in an area.
- 5.3 The Council wishes to ensure that towns/parishes should be viable as an administrative unit and should possess a precept that enables them effectively to promote the well-being of their residents and contribute to the provision of services in their areas.

Boundaries

- 5.4 The Council considers that the boundaries between towns/parishes will normally reflect the distinct community identities of the respective areas. Boundaries will often follow areas of low population between settlements or pronounced physical barriers (either natural or built) such as watercourses, marshland or moorland; parks, canals, railways or major roads.
- 5.5 The Council considers that 'natural' settlements or settlements as they are defined in the District Plan should not in normal circumstances be partitioned by town/parish boundaries.
- 5.6 Should a reorganisation of town/parish boundaries occur as a result of the review, the Council will aim to select boundaries that are and are likely to remain easily identifiable.

6. ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Electoral cycle

- 6.1 Any changes to town/parish electoral arrangements will come into effect at the next scheduled ordinary town/parish elections. Town/parish elections will next take place in East Hertfordshire in May 2027 and every four years thereafter.

The number of parish councillors

- 6.2 Legislation provides that the number of councillors for each town/parish council shall not be fewer than five. There is no maximum number. Government guidance is that 'each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities.
- 6.3 When considering the number of councillors to be elected for a town/parish the Council will, as required by the 2007 Act, have regard to the number of local government electors for the town/parish; and any change in that number which is likely to occur in the next five years. The Council will also have regard to existing levels of representation, the broad pattern of existing council sizes which have stood the test of time and the take-up of seats at elections in its consideration of this matter.

Town/parish warding

- 6.4 The Council may also consider whether a town/parish should be, or should continue to be, divided into wards for the purposes of elections to the town/parish council and the number and boundaries of town/parish wards, taking account of population distribution and community identity and interests in the area.
- 6.5 Where a town/parish is warded and continues to be so, the Council will give consideration to the number of councillors to be elected from each ward and the number of electors they represent. The Council notes that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) believes it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation.

7. REORGANISATION OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ORDERS AND COMMENCEMENT

- 7.1 The review will be completed when the Council agrees its final recommendations. At the conclusion of the review the Council may make a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order. Copies of this order, the map(s) that show the effects of the order in detail, and the document(s) which set out the reasons for the Council's decisions (including where it has decided to make no change following a review) will be deposited at the Council's offices and copies provided to the clerk of each town or parish council affected. The information will also be published on the Council's website.
- 7.2 In accordance with Government guidance the Council will issue maps to illustrate each recommendation at a scale not smaller than 1:10,000. These maps will be deposited with the Secretary of State and prints will also be supplied in accordance with regulations to Ordnance Survey, the Registrar General, the Land Registry, the Valuation Office Agency, the Boundary

Commission for England, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and Hertfordshire County Council.

- 7.3 The provisions of any Order will take effect for financial and administrative purposes on 1 April of the year specified in the Order. Any revised electoral arrangements for a new or existing parish council will come into effect at the next ordinary parish council elections.

8. CONSEQUENTIAL MATTERS

- 8.1 A Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the order. These may include the transfer and management or custody of property, the setting of precepts for new parishes, provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities and/or provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters.
- 8.2 In these matters, the Council will be guided by the relevant regulations issued under the 2007 Act. In particular, the Council notes that the regulations regarding the transfer of property, rights and liabilities require that any apportionments shall use the population of the area as estimated by the proper officer of the Council as an appropriate portion.
- 8.3 In the event that the review results in proposals to alter the electoral arrangements for a parish whose existing electoral arrangements were put in place within the previous five years by an order made either by the Secretary of State, the Electoral Commission or the LGBCE, the consent of the LGBCE will be required.

Principal area boundaries

- 8.4 Any changes made to parish boundaries as a result of this review will not automatically change the corresponding district ward or county division boundaries. In the event of a Reorganisation Order making such a change the Council may recommend to the LGBCE that the district and county boundaries are realigned along the revised parish boundary and it would be for the LGBCE to decide if related alterations should be made.
- 8.5 The LGBCE would require evidence that the Council has consulted on the recommendations as part of the review. The Council will therefore seek to include any such draft recommendations for consultation at the earliest possible opportunity should they appear desirable.
- 8.6 Where such consequential matters affect Hertfordshire County Council, the Council will also seek the views of that council with regard to alterations to electoral division boundaries in accordance with Government guidance.

Date of publication of these terms of reference: (to insert)

How to contact us

Enquiries regarding the review process and/or comments on the matters set out in these terms of reference should be directed to:

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