

District Ward and Parish Changes

The last couple of years have been busy ones involving reviews which have led to changes to the electoral landscape of Stratford-on-Avon District.

In December 2012 after consultation the District Council decided to move from electing in thirds to all out elections commencing in 2015. In addition the District Council requested the Local Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to take a Further Electoral Review (FER) of the District with a view to reducing the number of councillors. The LGBCE are an external organisation responsible for reviewing and deciding on district council electoral arrangements.

In July 2013 the District Council concluded its Community Governance Review of all Parishes in the area, which ended with a number of changes to parishes including name and number changes, some boundary changes and the abolition of one. These changes were fed into the FER process to help the LGBCE with their deliberations.

The LGBCE carried out consultations regarding council size and the warding of the District taking into account the District Council's preference for single member wards. Analysis has now been completed and the LGBCE have published their final recommendations and an Order will now be laid in Parliament for new electoral arrangements, which will come into force at the local elections in May 2015. Some of their recommendations impact on individual parish councils.

What has changed?

The Commission's final recommendations propose that Stratford-on-Avon should be represented by 36 councillors in the future: seventeen fewer than the current arrangements. The recommendations also propose that those councillors should represent 36 single-member wards across the District.

In creating the new wards the fundamental democratic principle of electoral fairness was applied by the LGBCE, which means as far as it is practicable each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors.

In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, the LGBCE calculated the average number of electors per councillor. The District average was calculated by dividing the total electorate of the District (97,855 in 2013 and 104,082 by 2019) by the total number of councillors returning them on the council – 36 under the final recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 2,718 in 2013 and 2,891 by 2019.

Under the final recommendations, only two of the 36 wards will have an electoral variance of greater than 10% from the average for Stratford-on-Avon by 2019.

This does mean many parishes will now be in different wards to their current position.

The full report of the LGBCE can be found at http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/21772/Stratford-on-Avon-final-recommendations-2014-03-25.pdf



Does the FER change Parishes?

The LGBCE bases their review on parishes and cannot change external parish boundaries, but where new District wards are created that divide a parish the parish must also be divided into wards.

This situation has happened in a number of areas within the District and are as follows:

Alcester Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, representing three wards: Alcester West (returning five members), Oversley (returning 10 members) and Oversley Green (returning one member).

Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, representing three wards: Bidford East (returning six members), Bidford West (returning three members) and Broom (returning one member).

Luddington Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, representing two wards: Luddington East (returning three members) and Luddington West (returning four members).

Shipston-on-Stour Town Council should comprise 13 councillors, representing two wards: Shipston North (returning four members) and Shipston South (returning nine members).

Sambourne Parish Council should comprise five councillors, representing two wards: Sambourne North (returning two members) and Sambourne South (returning three members).

Southam Town Council should comprise 14 councillors, representing four wards: Browns Bridge (returning four members), Merestone (returning two members), Mill Hill (returning five members) and Southam Fields (returning three members).

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, representing nine wards: Avenue (returning two members), Bishopton (returning two members), Bridgetown (returning two members), Clopton (returning two members), Guildhall (returning two members), Hathaway (returning two members), Shoterly (returning two members), Tiddington (returning two members) and Welcombe (returning two members).

Studley Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, representing two wards: Studley North (returning six members) and Studley South (returning six members).

Wellesbourne Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, representing three wards: Hastings (returning five members), Mountford (returning five members) and Walton (returning one member).

The ward boundaries can be viewed on the LGBCE website at <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/796>

Further Information

For further information please see the LGBCE website or contact the District Council electoral section at elections@stratford-dc.gov.uk

