

Governance Review Report – January 2011

Introduction

When Area Board boundaries were set up by the Unitary Implementation Executive, concerns were expressed by it that both Area Board boundaries and Unitary Division boundaries, upon which the Area Boards were based, did not reflect community identity in a number of areas. It was indicated in a report to the IE that support would be given to undertaking a Community Governance Review in some areas to see if improvements to community identity within Area Boards could be achieved. This suggestion was strongly supported by senior members of the Council.

A number of boundary anomalies were resolved in the North of the County at the same time as Wiltshire Council was established (April 2009), such as at Chippenham around Cepen Park and in Calne, resulting from a long standing parish boundary review undertaken under the old system. For some time Trowbridge Town Council has been concerned that there are similar anomalies in other parts of the Wiltshire Council Area, such as:

The area to the north of Bishopdown where the parish boundary between the City of Salisbury and the Parish of Laverstock cuts through the middle of a housing estate, leaving Laverstock Parish part in South Wilts Area Board and part in Salisbury Area Board. The report to the IE on 16th March 2009, in answer to an issue raised by Cllr Mary Douglas said; *'Confirmed that part of the Laverstock CP includes parts of Hampton Park housing estate which are within the Salisbury St Marks and Bishopdown ED in the Salisbury Area Board – suggested early electoral review of City boundary'*.

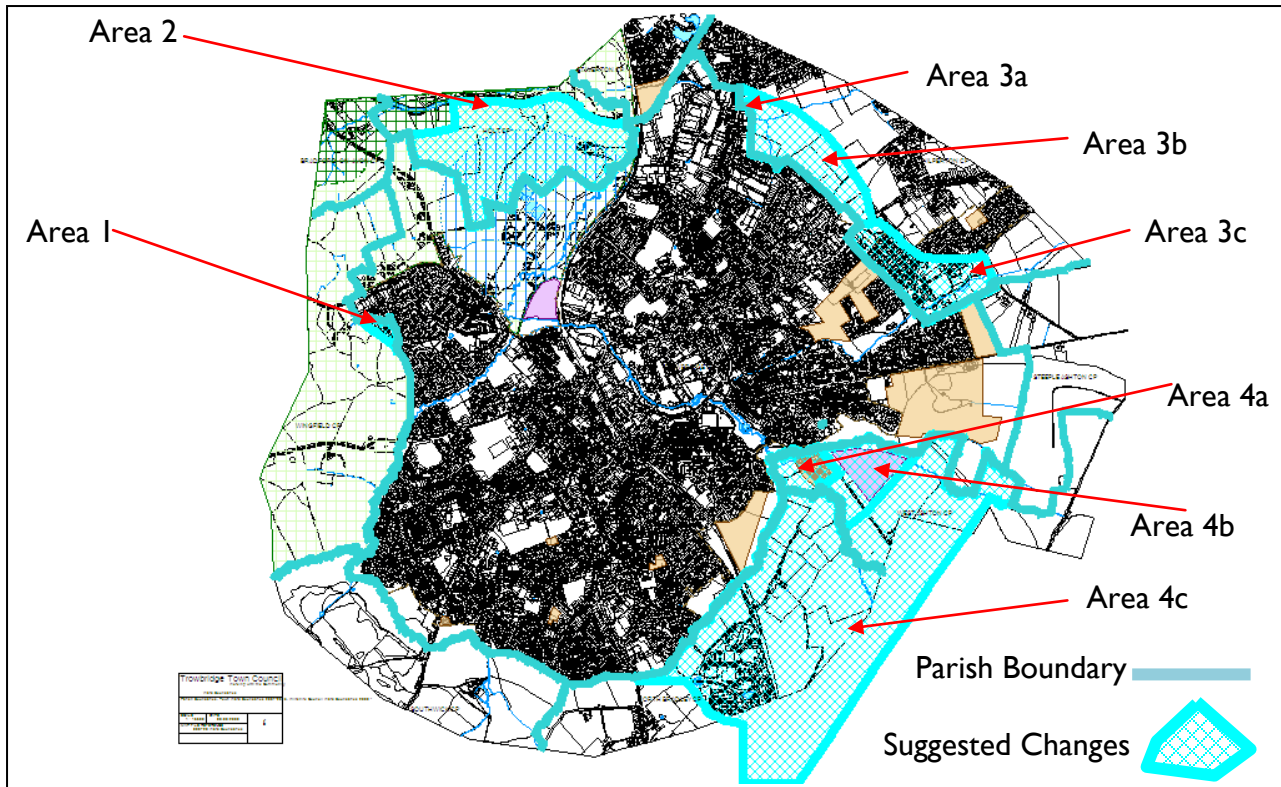
A number of areas around Trowbridge, are clearly part of the community of Trowbridge but attached to parishes in the Bradford-on-Avon Community Area. These include Shore Place, which is in Wingfield Parish but part of a Trowbridge housing estate and only accessible via Trowbridge. The report to the IE on 16th March in answer to representations from Trowbridge Town Council said; *'It is suggested that an electoral (governance) review of the Trowbridge area would be required to address the overlap of urban areas into neighbouring parishes.'*

In addition a Community Governance Review could resolve other community identity issues, not directly impacting upon Area Boards, around Salisbury, Westbury, Devizes, Melksham as well as at Trowbridge, where in Moyle Park and Walmesley Chase the parish boundary runs through the middle of houses. The Town Council would like to know:

1. Is Wiltshire Council committed to undertaking a Community Governance Review to address some of these anomalies?
2. Would the results of any review be implemented in time for the next Wiltshire Council and Parish Council elections in 2013?
3. Should any review also include changes to town boundaries to extend the area covered by the town to include areas likely to accommodate significant development in the next local plan period?
4. What would the next steps be in initiating any review?

Suggested changes around Trowbridge supported by the Town Council

The areas which Trowbridge Town Council considers need to be addressed as part of any Governance Review are detailed on the attached map highlighted in cyan cross hatching and described as follows:



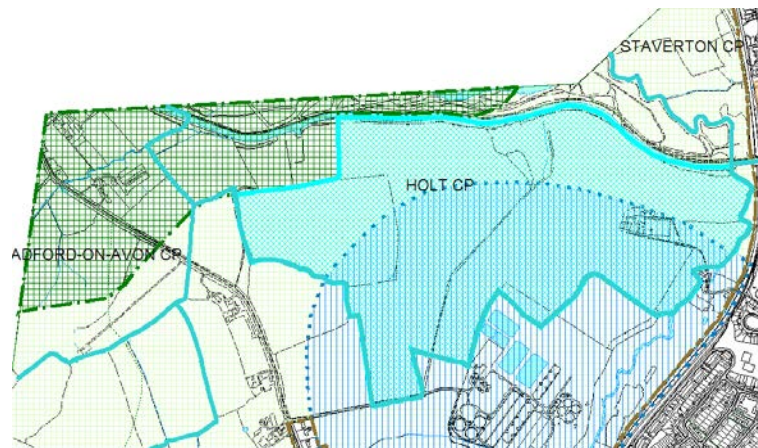
All of the suggested changes would involve revisions to the Unitary Division boundaries, but none result in an electorate with an unacceptable variation from the average. The following pages detail the suggested changes and provide an estimate of the changes in electorate for each Unitary Electoral Division affected.

Area 1 – Shore Place



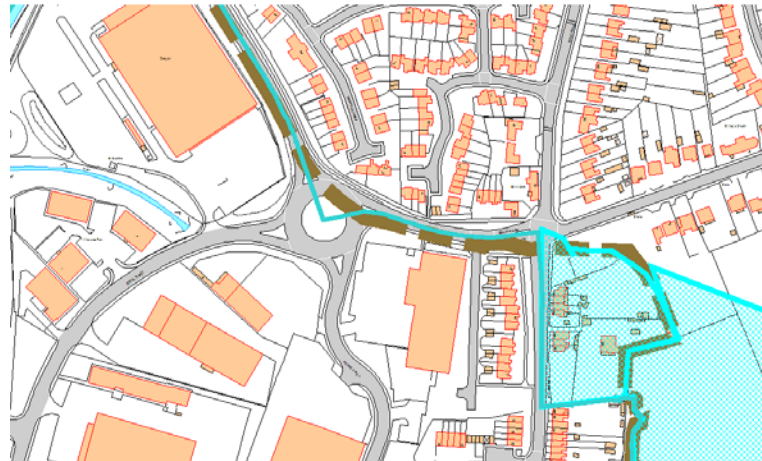
A small area to the West of the town which is part of the Broadmead Estate, but which is in Wingfield Parish (Winsley and Westwood ED), including addresses in Shore Place, Chepston Place and Kingsley Place. This area is only accessible from Trowbridge and is remote from the remaining population of Wingfield. Approximately 28 properties are affected. It is the only part of Wingfield not in the Green Belt. Assuming 59 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Winsley and Westwood ED to 3354 and would increase Trowbridge Lambrok ED to 3619.

Area 2 – Lady Down Farm



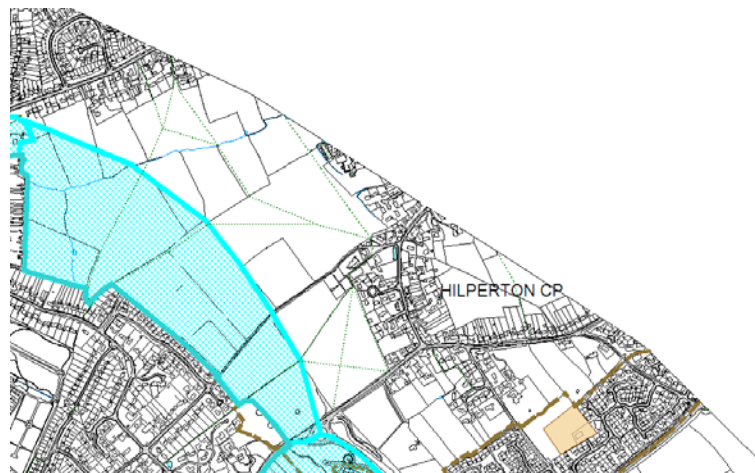
An area to the North West of the town, currently part of Holt Parish (Holt and Staverton ED), lying south of the Kennet and Avon Canal but outside the Bradford on Avon Landscape Protection Zone and including Lady Down Farm. Some of it lies within the Sewage Works Limit and all of it lies within the Green Belt. The Canal forms a good natural Boundary. The current boundary in a number of places is undefined by field boundaries. The area is not accessible from the remainder of Holt Parish. The only residence affected is only accessible from Trowbridge. Assuming 2 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of Holt and Staverton ED to 3428 and would further increase Trowbridge Lambrok to 3621.

Area 3a – Wyke Road



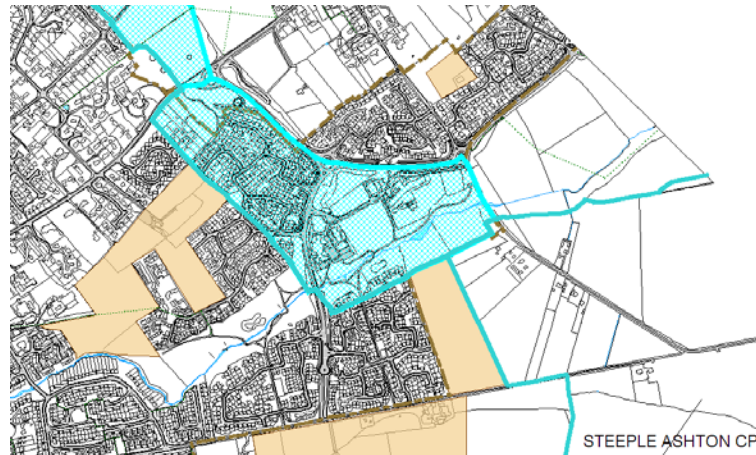
A small area of Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED) which was part of the town until the last review in 1991, including properties fronting onto Wyke Road. The nearest properties across the road and to the south fronting Wyke Road are all in Trowbridge. The area will lie to the south of the relief road when completed. Approximately 8 properties are affected. Assuming 17 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Hilperton ED to 3689 and would increase Trowbridge Adcroft ED to 3535.

Area 3b – Hilperton Gap Recreation Land



This is the remainder of the area lying to the South and West of the relief road, (currently being prepared for construction). This is part of Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED) but was part of Trowbridge until the last review on 1991. The area is currently allocated in the adopted local plan as an area for the provision of recreational land. No properties are affected. The relief road will form a good natural boundary when completed.

Area 3c Paxcroft Mead South of Hilperton Drive



All of the area of developed land in Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED) lying to the South of the existing Hilperton Drive, which forms a good natural boundary. It includes properties in: Hilperton Road, Halfway Close, Castley Road, Painters Mead, Faverole Way, Gibbs Leaze, Fairwood Close, Montague Court, Leap Gate, Hackett Place and Moyle Park. Approximately 210 properties are affected plus businesses, the Community Centre and Mead School at Hackett Place. It is not considered appropriate to extend the boundary North of Hilperton Drive as Hilperton Drive forms a natural boundary to Hilperton village. The current boundary runs through the middle of properties in Moyle Park and Walmesley Chase and a number of streets are split by the current boundary (Montague Court, Walmesley Chase, Painters Mead, Hilperton Road and Halfway Close). Assuming 445 electors would transfer this would further reduce the 2012 electorate of the Hilperton ED to 3244 and would increase Trowbridge Paxcroft ED to 3963.

Area 4a – Old Farm



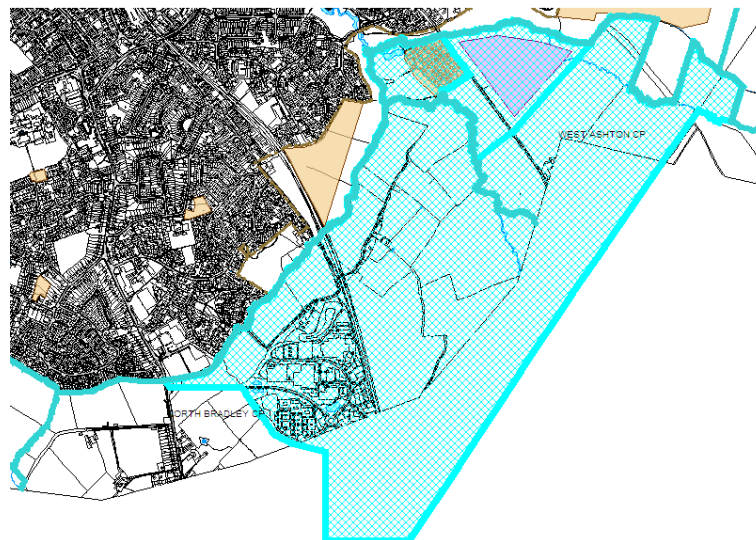
The area of developed land and adjacent floodplain at Old Farm, off the West Ashton Road, currently in West Ashton Parish (Southwick ED). This is within 100 metres of the main built up area of Trowbridge yet remote from the remainder of West Ashton village which is some 1600m away at the closest point near the A350 crossroads. Approximately 105 properties are affected. Assuming 223 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Southwick ED to 3197 and would increase Trowbridge Park ED to 3581.

Area 4b – West Ashton Road Employment Land



An area allocated as employment development land and the adjacent flood plain to the east of the West Ashton Road and south of Trowbridge Lodge Park which will be west of the link road between Leap Gate and West Ashton Road. No existing properties are affected.

Area 4c – Biss Farm and White Horse Business Park



Areas of West Ashton and North Bradley Parishes (Southwick ED) which are expected to be included in the 2026 Local Plan Core Strategy allocations for residential and employment land. The area is bounded to the south by the high voltage power lines between Biss Wood and the River Biss, and then the River Biss as far as the A363 and the railway line, including the whole of the existing White Horse Business Park continuing on the A363 to the Bradley Road Roundabout where it rejoins the existing town boundary at Woodmarsh. Approximately 6 residential properties are affected as well as farm buildings and a large number of commercial buildings. Assuming 13 electors would transfer this would further reduce the 2012 electorate of the Southwick ED to 3184 and would further increase Trowbridge Park ED to 3591 and would also increase Trowbridge Drynham ED to 3413.

Other Changes NOT Supported by the Town Council

A number of other changes could be made to further improve community identity, but the arguments for changes, such as those affecting parts of Staverton Parish to the north of the canal around the Marina and New Terrace and in Hilperton including parts of Paxcroft Mead to the North of Hilperton Drive and areas to the East of Hammond Way, are significantly less sound and therefore not supported by the Town Council:

Staverton Marina

It is argued that parts of Staverton Marina are part of the community of Trowbridge. This is based upon the boundary of the town policy limit, (West Wilts District Plan, first alteration), which includes areas of Staverton bounded by the canal, New Terrace and the railway line. There are a number of difficult issues related to a revision of the boundary in this area. The Canal and river form an excellent natural southern boundary for Staverton Parish, the only other natural boundary would be the railway line. Removing all of this area from Staverton parish would remove the vast majority of the population from the parish and would have an impact therefore on the Holt and Staverton Unitary Division, resulting in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate. Much of the area borders residential parts of Hilperton Parish. It does not border residential parts of Trowbridge, those areas of Trowbridge bordering this area are industrial.

Paxcroft Mead North of Hilperton Drive

It is argued that the remainder of Paxcroft Mead lying to the north of Hilperton Drive are part of the community of Trowbridge. This is based upon the boundary of the town policy limit, which includes this area. There are a number of difficult issues related to a further revision of the boundary on this area. Hilperton Drive (A361) forms a very good natural boundary between the urban area and the village of Hilperton. No other better natural boundaries exist in this area between the urban area and the village. This area, whilst within the town policy limit, is at a significantly greater distance from the centre of Trowbridge than other areas of existing or future residential development around the town. This change would have a very significant impact upon the electorate of the Hilperton ED and would result in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate.

East of Hammond Way

It is argued that parts of Hilperton lying to the east of Hammond Way and North of Canal Road, close to the northern end of Wyke Road, Horse Road and Marsh Road are part of the community of Trowbridge. Some of this area was part of Trowbridge prior to the previous revision implemented in 1991. There are a number of difficult issues related to a further revision of the boundary in this area. There is no better natural boundary than Canal Road between this area and Trowbridge, which forms the current boundary. The proposals 3a and 3b above further improve the use of natural boundaries in this area. This area is contiguous with the centre of the village of Hilperton, along Marsh Road and is throughout generally residential development. The area is wholly contained within the current Hilperton Village development boundary. This change would have a very significant impact upon the electorate of the Hilperton ED and would result in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate.

Summary of Supported Changes to Unitary Electoral Divisions:

Electoral Division	2012 electorate (estimate)	transfers	Revised 2012 electorate	Variance from average (3695)
Winsley & Westwood	3413	-59	3354	-9.2%
Holt and Staverton	3430	-2	3428	-7.2%
Hilperton	3706	-17-445	3244	-12.2%
Southwick	3420	-223-13	3184	-13.8%
Trowbridge Lambrok	3560	+59+2	3621	-2.0%
Trowbridge Adcroft	3518	+17	3535	-4.3%
Trowbridge Paxcroft	3518	+445	3963	+7.3%
Trowbridge Park	3358	+223+10	3591	-2.8%
Trowbridge Drynham	3410	+3	3413	-7.6%

The average of 3,695 electors is based upon the total WC electorate estimate for 2012 of 362,128 electors across the 98 Electoral Divisions (EDs). None of these supported suggestions affecting the Trowbridge area give a greater variance from average than already established EDs of +15% for Malmesbury and Warminster Broadway and -18% for Winterslow.

Lance Allan
Town Clerk

