

**Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
For England  
Report No. 513**

**Parish Review**

**BOROUGH OF BASINGSTOKE**

**AND DEANE**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. **513**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

CHAIRMAN                      Mr G J Ellerton CMG MBE

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN              Mr J G Powell FRICS FSVA

MEMBERS                        Lady Ackner

Mr T Brockbank DL

Professor G E Cherry

Mr K J L Newell

Mr B Scholes OBE

THE RIGHT HON. KENNETH BAKER MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND

1. In a letter dated 20 December 1984 we were informed of your predecessor's decision not to give effect to our proposals to transfer part of the parish of Monk Sherborne, at Charter Alley, to the parish of Wootton St. Lawrence. He felt that in the light of representations subsequently made to him this element of our proposals warranted further consideration. Accordingly, in exercise of his powers under section 51(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 he directed us to undertake a further review of the parishes of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence, and to make such revised proposals as we saw fit before 31 December 1985.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT PROPOSALS

2. In preparing our draft proposals we considered a number of possible alternative approaches to uniting Charter Alley within one parish, bearing in mind the representations made to the Secretary of State.

3. The first was to create a new parish consisting of the northern parts of the existing parishes of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence and bounded in the south by the A339. One difficulty with this approach was that whilst Monk Sherborne Parish Council would have welcomed the idea, Wootton St. Lawrence Parish Council had stated they would oppose it. Secondly, had we adopted this approach, the remainder of Wootton St. Lawrence could have been left too small to be viable (even though it would not have been quite the smallest Parish in the District) and might have needed to be amalgamated with another parish. Geographically, Oakley and Deane Parish appeared the only real candidate but it appeared doubtful if there was a sufficient community of interest between the two.

4. Another variant, suggested by Monk Sherborne Parish Council, was to create a new parish comprising Monk Sherborne Parish, Charter Alley and Ramsdell, the remainder of Wootton St. Lawrence being amalgamated with the new parish of Hannington. Monk Sherborne Parish Council admitted that this approach was not wholly satisfactory but they suggested it was no less logical than incorporating Charter Alley into Wootton St. Lawrence. However, such an approach would have produced in the case of Wootton St. Lawrence and Hannington an unwieldy unit of local government as Hannington is remote from Wootton St. Lawrence.

5. A further option was to leave the boundaries of the two parishes unchanged on the grounds that there was no majority view for anyone solution so far advanced. This would have left Charter Alley divided.

6. We therefore considered the amalgamation of the two parishes of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence. It appeared to us that this would satisfy the preferences of the greatest number of people; Monk Sherborne would be united with Charter Alley and Ramsdell; and Wootton St. Lawrence would maintain its connection with Ramsdell. Wootton St. Lawrence had stated that this suggestion would be acceptable but Monk Sherborne had not expressed a view. We decided that we would explore this approach.

7. We felt that before publishing draft proposals for the amalgamation of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence we should first seek the views of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. We wrote to the Borough Council on 26 February 1984 and, bearing in mind the timescale prescribed by the Secretary of State, asked them to ensure that any comments they wished to make reached us within four weeks. The Borough Council did not however reply to that letter.

8. We decided, therefore, in order to make progress, to publish draft proposals for the amalgamation of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence Parishes. We wrote to the

Borough Council on 16 May 1985 announcing our draft proposals and asked that the letter be placed on deposit for a period of six weeks and advertised locally. Copies of the letter were also sent to the County Council, the two parishes involved and the Member of Parliament for the constituency concerned.

#### RESPONSE TO DRAFT PROPOSALS

9. We received seven letters in response to our draft proposals, six of which were opposed to the amalgamation of the two parishes. Four of those making representations expressed the view that the village of Charter Alley should be united within the parish of Monk Sherborne, and the remaining two correspondents, including the Borough Council, felt that the boundary should remain as at present. Hampshire County Council did not wish to comment.

#### FINAL PROPOSALS

10. We have reconsidered our draft proposals in the light of the representations we have received, including other approaches canvassed by the Borough Council who, in preparing their response to us, carried out a survey of the views of the residents of Charter Alley.

11. We considered placing Charter Alley wholly in Monk Sherborne Parish. To place Charter Alley wholly within that parish would have met the wishes of more of the residents who had expressed a view in the Borough Council's survey. However, like your predecessor we have observed that Charter Alley is very closely linked to Ramsdell, and are of the view that the two villages should be included within the same parish. To place them both in Monk Sherborne would be tantamount to reverting to our earlier option of using the A339 as the boundary with Wootton St. Lawrence. Further, to avoid creating a detached part of Wootton St. Lawrence Parish it would be necessary to transfer the village of West Heath to Monk Sherborne. West Heath has however only just been transferred from the parish of Baughurst, as a result of the Basingstoke

and Deane (Parishes) Order 1985 which would mean two changes in two years or so. Such a change could also affect the viability of Wootton St. Lawrence Parish, which was why we had decided not to explore that option further when considering our draft proposals. Furthermore, no solution on these lines has been canvassed locally; in particular, the views of the inhabitants of Ramsdell, or of West Heath, have not been sought. We feel unable to propose such a solution without consulting those affected and the time available to us does not permit that.

12. We have therefore reconsidered the amalgamation of Monk Sherborne and Wootton St. Lawrence. The response to the Borough Council's survey shows that our proposal commanded very little local support, amongst the residents of Charter Alley anyway. Although the amalgamation of the parishes has much to commend it, we are reluctant to go against the wishes of the inhabitants most closely affected, particularly as the Borough Council have suggested that the issue of the boundary has now become a contentious one locally, which is in danger of souring relations between local communities.

13. Finally, we have looked again at the possibility of incorporating Charter Alley within Wootton St. Lawrence, as originally (but not now) recommended by the District Council and proposed by us to your predecessor in December 1982. In our view however this remains a far from ideal solution since there are undoubtedly stronger links between Charter Alley and Monk Sherborne than with the village of Wootton St. Lawrence and more of the inhabitants of Charter Alley have expressed a preference to remain in, or be transferred to, Monk Sherborne than the Parish of Wootton St. Lawrence. It would also break the links between Charter Alley and Monk Sherborne. We do not therefore feel able to recommend it.

14. After much deliberation we have therefore reluctantly come to the conclusion that the best option now is to retain the status quo. We acknowledge that this will do nothing to overcome the problem of the division of Charter Alley, to which you have drawn our particular attention. However, we believe for reasons set out in this

report that any solution which would overcome that problem would be more likely to lessen effective and convenient local government than it would to enhance it. Retaining the status quo would have the merit of coinciding with the present views of the Borough Council. It would also make easier a fresh review of the parish pattern in the next few years, when the implications of likely major development in the area as a whole will be clearer. We therefore make no proposals.

15. A letter is being sent to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council with copies of this report asking them, in accordance with section 60(5)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, to place the copies on deposit at their main offices together with a copy of the parish review report, and to put notices to this effect on public notice boards and in the local press. The text of the notices will suggest that any comments on the Commission's decision to make no proposals for the district should be addressed to the Secretary of State in writing preferably within six weeks of the date of this letter. Copies of this report are also being sent to those who received the consultation letter and those who made comments.

LS

Signed: G J ELLEERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

JOAN ACKNER

TYRRELL BROCKBANK

G E CHERRY

K J L NEWELL

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH  
Secretary

SCHEDULE A

THE FOLLOWING BODIES/INDIVIDUALS WROTE TO THE COMMISSION FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE COMMISSION WERE TO UNDERTAKE A FURTHER REVIEW, AND THE PUBLICATION OF DRAFT PROPOSALS.

Hampshire County Council

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Monk Sherborne Parish Council

Mrs J Shelley, Borough Councillor

Mr & Mrs J Cottrell

Mr W Gibson

Mr & Mrs W Simpson

