

**Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
For England  
Report No. 570**

**Principal Area Boundary Review**

DISTRICT OF CHILTERN

AND SOUTH BUCKS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. 570

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**

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THE RIGHT HON NICHOLAS RIDLEY MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

PRINCIPAL AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW: THE DISTRICTS OF CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS IN THE  
COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

BACKGROUND

1. In a letter dated 19 December 1986 you notified us of your decision not to give effect to our proposals, contained in our Report No 503, for changes to the boundary between the districts of Chiltern and South Bucks where the parish of Penn adjoins the town of Beaconsfield. The area in question is known as Knotty Green and Forty Green.

2. You commented that our proposals involved the transfer of a greater area than had been suggested at one stage by South Bucks District Council and that even those more limited suggestions had been criticised by Chiltern District Council on the grounds that local government services to the area would be adversely affected by the change. You remarked that our report, whilst noting these criticisms, did not explain how our final, more extensive, proposals would avoid the problems which Chiltern District Council had appeared to identify.

3. You also referred to the guidelines issued by your Department in relation to parish changes which stress, "inter alia," the importance of community at parish level, the relevance of size of parishes for urban areas, and the need to reflect smaller communities in discontinuous, fringe urban development." In this context, you noted the strong sense of community evident in Knotty Green and Forty Green, and considered that our proposals appeared to divide the Knotty Green community, as perceived locally, by leaving a number of dwellings in Penn. You further noted that the population of Beaconsfield is relatively large, and that, in consequence, the communities of Knotty Green and Forty Green might be overwhelmed in this larger area.

4. In view of the considerable opposition to our proposed changes expressed by residents of the area affected, which had been maintained over a period of years, you considered that a strong case was necessary to justify the inclusion of the two communities in Beaconsfield. You were not convinced that, on the evidence available, the proposed transfer of these areas would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. Nevertheless, you noted that the existing boundary between Beaconsfield and Penn is unsatisfactory in that it runs through several properties and excludes from the town some areas of new housing whose occupiers you believed might well feel more affinity with the town than with Knotty Green and Forty Green. You did not therefore consider that the boundaries could be left unaltered.

5. Accordingly, in exercise of your powers under section 51(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, you directed us to undertake a further review of the boundary between the parishes of Beaconsfield and Penn and to make revised proposals to you by 31 December 1989.

#### OUR INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF THE DIRECTION AND THE FRESH SUBMISSIONS TO US

6. We decided that the most appropriate way to proceed with the review was to invite both district councils to prepare jointly a detailed scheme for the realignment of the district boundary in the area of Knotty Green and Forty Green. We wrote to them accordingly on 6 April 1987. Following discussion between the local authorities concerned it became evident that they could not agree on a joint scheme and, as a result, both district councils submitted separate suggestions for realigning the boundary. Chiltern District Council's scheme provided for a series of very minor changes designed to rectify anomalies in the immediate area of the present boundary; South Bucks District Council's scheme encompassed a wider area including properties south of Forty Green, west of Penn Road and, to the east of Penn Road, the estates opening off Knottocks Drive.

## OUR FURTHER DRAFT PROPOSALS

7. We reconsidered the boundary in the light of the two schemes, together with the views of the other local authorities and representative bodies involved. We also took into account the terms of your Direction. We noted that the local authorities were unable to produce an agreed scheme of changes. In an attempt to arrive at a revised boundary which would both be conducive to effective and convenient local government in the area, and meet the points made in connection with your Direction, we felt it necessary to look again at all of the boundary between Beaconsfield and Penn in the light of the information submitted to us since the initial request for a boundary change in 1978.

8. We still believed, as we said in paragraph 10 of our earlier report, that there was a case, in terms of service provision and community ties, for proposing a wider change than we had originally put forward. We felt that the most natural boundary in the area was that provided by the Green Belt boundary. A good deal of development has been allowed between the Green Belt and the present district boundary and we remained of the opinion that the whole area of Knotty Green and Forty Green, which is geographically separate from the village of Penn, naturally looks to Beaconsfield rather than to Amersham for most of its links and facilities. In this respect we noted the contention that Beaconsfield is the local centre for education, shopping, commerce and professional services (eg banking, estate agents, solicitors etc) and, as South Bucks District Council pointed out, that there are no professional services and very few shops in Penn village and none in the area under review. We further noted that, although neither Chiltern nor South Bucks is a major centre of employment, many residents were said to commute to London using Beaconsfield Station or work in Slough or High Wycombe, Access to the trunk road system was said to be similarly through Beaconsfield.

9. Considerable infilling took place in the area north of Beaconsfield in the late 1960's and 1970's and in considering our further draft proposals we felt that the residential areas that cut across the existing boundary are essentially developments and extensions of the residential areas adjacent to Penn Road and

Sandleswood End. Access to these estates appeared to us to be easier from the south than from the north. We therefore believed, from the information then available to us, that local authority services for these newer residential areas which straddle the existing boundary could be more efficiently provided from Beaconsfield, via Penn Road and Sandleswood End, than from Amersham. The fact that the local centre for social services, social security local offices and those offices concerned with the administration of justice are presently situated in Beaconsfield seemed to us to reinforce the links of these areas with Beaconsfield.

10. However, we were conscious of the strong sense of identity said to be felt by many residents of Forty Green and Knotty Green and their attachment to Chiltern, and especially to Penn. This was revealed both in the numerous representations made against our original final proposals and in the more recent submissions made in response to our fresh review. We recognised that detaching the whole area could weaken, though not endanger, the parish of Penn when it had recently lost part of its electorate and area following another district boundary alteration at Hazlemere. While the older parts of Knotty Green and Forty Green clearly have separate identities, it is evident that their precise boundaries are difficult to delineate. We believed, therefore that it was a question of balancing the sense of separate community expressed by local residents against their apparent practical links with Beaconsfield to which we have referred above, and of establishing a sensible boundary.

11. In the light of these considerations and the terms of your Direction we looked again at our original draft proposals. We did not consider, on the basis of the information then available, that changes on the small scale advocated by Chiltern District Council would bring about any significant improvement to effective and convenient local government, given the present pattern of development in the area. We were of the opinion that the fresh submission by South Bucks District Council, in the main, struck an appropriate balance in recognising the case, outlined above, for leaving the old parts of Knotty Green and Forty Green in Chiltern, thus preserving their historic links with the parish of Penn, while at the same time meeting the need to transfer the newer

residential areas, which are essentially developments of Beaconsfield, into the town. The South Bucks District Council scheme therefore formed the basis of our further draft proposals. However, we did not feel that there was a sufficient case, in terms of effective and convenient local government, for transferring either Hogback Wood or Netherlands Wood, which lie within the Green Belt, to South Bucks, nor could we see enough advantage, in service provision terms, in transferring those properties in Finch Lane to South Bucks. These areas were therefore excluded from the areas to be transferred under our further draft proposals.

12. Our further draft proposals were published on 20 June 1988 in a letter to both district councils. Copies were sent to all those persons and representative bodies who had received our earlier consultation letter and to those who had expressed an interest in the matter at any stage of the previous review. The district councils were asked to publish a notice giving information about our further draft proposals and to place copies of it on display at places where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our further draft proposals on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 12 August 1988.

#### RESPONSE TO OUR FURTHER PROPOSALS

13. In response to our further draft proposals we received representations from Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council, Beaconsfield Town Council and Penn Parish Council. We also received representations from Sir Ian Gilmour Bt. MP, the Chesham and Amersham Conservative Association, the South Bucks Area Social Democrat Party and the Thames Water Authority, as well as a number of bodies and organisations representing residents in the affected area and from over 120 private individuals. A list of those who wrote to us is attached at Schedule 1 to this report.

14. South Bucks District Council fully supported our proposed boundary changes, whilst Beaconsfield Town Council considered they struck an appropriate balance in leaving the old parts of Knotty Green and Forty Green in Chiltern, thus preserving their historic links with Penn, whilst transferring the newer residential areas, which they too held to be an extension of the town, to Beaconsfield. The Thames Water Authority also supported our further draft proposals, as did five residents who said that the area in question was effectively part of Beaconsfield and relied on the town for its amenities and schooling.

15. Chiltern District Council maintained that our proposed boundary divided Knotty Green and its traditional centre. It claimed that housing developments had taken place both to the north and south of our proposed line and all of these developments were perceived locally as forming part of the Knotty Green community. It also maintained that our further draft proposals would divide the community in precisely the way the District Council had striven to avoid. It stressed that the transfer of 1,544 people from Penn, taken with the recent loss of electors to the new parish of Hazlemere, would reduce Penn to less than half its previous population. Our further draft proposals were seen, therefore, as impoverishing the parish more seriously, in relative terms, than our earlier proposals at a time when it would be expected to finance recreational facilities for town residents. The District Council also took issue with the claim that local government services would be enhanced by the change. Chiltern District Council offices were held to be more accessible, and it pointed out that South Bucks now employed the same private refuse collection company as Chiltern which conducted operations from a single depot in Amersham. It stressed that County Council services (ie education, social services and highways) treated Chiltern and South Bucks as one unit and administered them, or shortly would do, from Amersham. The Health Authority for both districts was also the same. Many of the facilities we had mentioned in our further draft proposals as indicators of local ties, such as shopping, commerce, transport links and professional services, were not seen as relevant to the local authority boundary and it was claimed that there was no evidence that the efficiency or convenience of local

government service delivery would be improved by the boundary changes proposed. It was also claimed that our draft proposals were contrary to the wishes of the vast majority of residents affected. The District Council therefore commended its own, more limited, re-alignment which, it claimed, resolved the most glaring anomalies mentioned in your letter.

16. Penn Parish Council endorsed these arguments and maintained that the line we proposed would split Knotty Green and Forty Green, which had been linked together for many years. It saw no advantage in change and said the inhabitants are over-whelmingly against our further draft proposals. Similar views were expressed by Sir Ian Gilmour Bt MP and Chesham and Amersham Conservative Association, the South Bucks Area Social Democrat Party and the other organisations representing residents of the area affected. Many of those writers and the 115 private individuals who also made their views known to us also stressed the relative lack of facilities in Beaconsfield for a town of its size and expressed fears at the detrimental effect of our proposed changes on the civil and ecclesiastical parishes of Penn.

#### OUR FINAL PROPOSALS

17. We have re-assessed our further draft proposals in the light of the representations we have received and the terms of your Direction.

18. As has been pointed out, our original proposed transfer affected both district and civil parishes boundaries. We were directed in your letter to consider any further proposals we might make in the light not only of the guidelines for district boundary changes established in your Department's Circular 33/78 but also those for parish changes set out in Circular 121/77. These latter guidelines, as we have noted earlier, suggest that a major factor when considering any proposals should be the wishes of the local inhabitants. More particularly, we were enjoined in your letter of 19 December 1986 to look at the boundary between the two parishes with special regard to those parts

where it runs through properties and excludes from Beaconsfield some areas of new housing whose occupiers may well feel more affinity with the town than with Knotty Green and Forty Green. We have tested this premise in our further draft proposals. The response from local organisations representing residents in those areas and the many letters we received from individuals have indicated a solid attachment to Chiltern and, more particularly, to Penn, which seems to be at variance with the physical attachment of those parts of Knotty Green and Forty Green to Beaconsfield. In particular, we noted the rejection by many writers of the close association with the town we would have expected for everyday transactions such as shopping, banking and transport links which would have cemented a community of interest across the present boundary. Although we were surprised to learn this, we did not receive any significant confirmation of South Bucks' contention that the residents of the area had a close affinity with Beaconsfield. We considered, therefore, that we could only proceed with our further draft proposals if we could be satisfied that they would result in more effective and efficient local government services.

19. We still believed that our draft proposals would have provided a more satisfactory overall pattern of local government and would have better reflected the geography of the area. This would have had advantages in, for example, the exercise of planning control. There were, however contrary factors. First, following the privatisation of refuse services within South Bucks, the contractor had established his depot in Amersham, in Chiltern, from which he served both district councils. Second, we also noted that there were no recreational facilities provided by South Bucks in Beaconsfield and that residents were said to use those provided by Chiltern District Council.

20. In the light of all these considerations we concluded that we could not be satisfied that our further draft proposals would result in an improvement in effective and convenient local government sufficient to outweigh the wishes of the affected residents which, your Direction suggested, should be a major consideration in our further review. We have therefore decided not to proceed with our published further draft proposals.

21. However, your letter of 19 December 1986 indicated that the present boundary between Beaconsfield and Penn is unsatisfactory. In order to rectify the minor anomalies to which you referred we have decided to adopt the suggestions of Chiltern District Council as our final proposals, subject to one amendment. We noted that to the extreme east of the area in question access to the road called Copperfields, is only available via Beaconsfield, and that originally Chiltern District Council were prepared to cede this area to South Bucks. We believe the provision of services to these properties in particular could be more effectively provided if this area of relevant new development was incorporated in the town. We therefore propose that it should be included in the area to be transferred to South Bucks. The proposed new boundary is shown on the map attached as an Annex to this report. We consider that the changes we have proposed should meet the points raised in your letter of 19 December 1986.

#### PUBLICATION

22. Separate letters, enclosing copies of this report, are being sent to Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils asking them to place copies of this report on deposit at their main offices and to put notices to this effect on public notice boards and in the local press. The text of the notices will explain that the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role in the matter and it now falls to you, if you think fit, to make an Order implementing the proposals, though not earlier than six weeks from the date they are submitted to you. Copies of the report and Annex are also being sent to all those who received our draft proposals letter and to other interested parties including those members of the public and bodies who have written to us about this matter.

Signed

G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

G E CHERRY

K F J ENNALS

G R PRENTICE

HELEN SARKANY

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH

Secretary

24 November 1988

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF FURTHER DRAFT PROPOSALS

1. Chiltern District Council
2. South Bucks District Council
3. Beaconsfield Town Councils
4. Penn Parish Council
5. Sir Ian Gilmour, Bt, MP
6. The South Bucks Area Social Democratic Party
7. The Chesham and Amersham Conservative Association
8. The Knotty Green and Forty Green Society
9. The Penn and Tyler's Green Society
10. The Cherry Drive Residents' Association
11. The Forty Green Women's Institute
12. The Knotty Green Cricket Club
13. The Thames Water Authority
14. Messrs Marcus Lee and Co, Solicitors, representing twelve residents of Knotty Green and Forty Green
15. The Rev Oscar Muspratt, Chairman, Penn Parochial Church Council
16. One hundred and twenty-two private individuals

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

PRINCIPAL AREAS BOUNDARY REVIEW

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT/  
CHILTERN DISTRICT

FINAL PROPOSALS

Existing District boundary 

Proposed District boundary 

LOCATION DIAGRAM

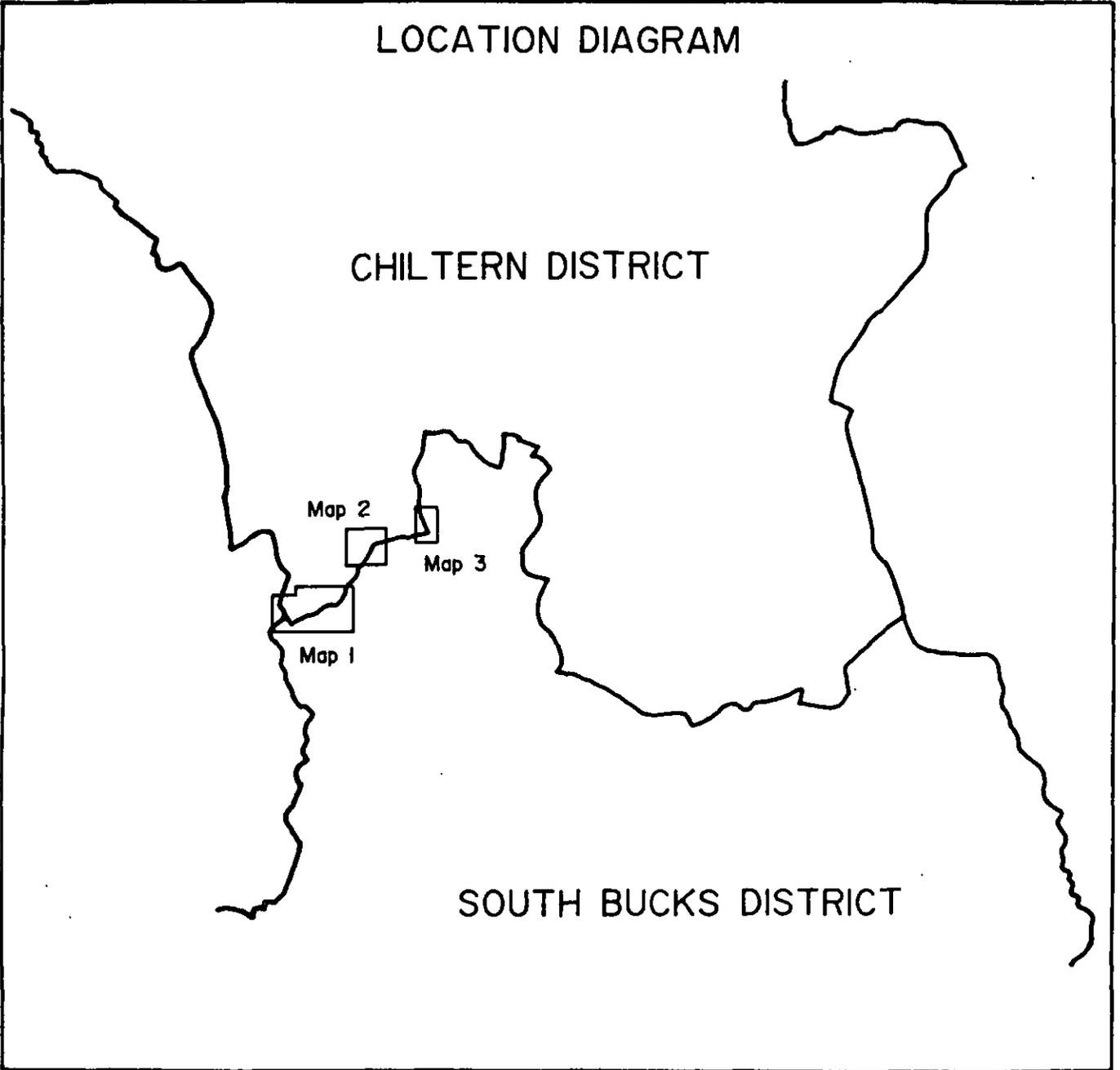
CHILTERN DISTRICT

Map 2

Map 3

Map 1

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT



## CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES

Map No.	Area Ref.	Existing Local Government Area	Proposed Local Government Area
1	A	Chiltern District Penn CP Penn Ward Amersham Town and Penn ED	South Bucks District Beaconsfield CP Beaconsfield West Ward Beaconsfield ED
2	A	South Bucks District Beaconsfield CP Beaconsfield North Ward Beaconsfield ED	Chiltern District Penn CP Penn Ward Amersham Town and Penn ED
	B	Chiltern District Penn CP Penn Ward Amersham Town and Penn ED	South Bucks District Beaconsfield CP Beaconsfield North Ward Beaconsfield ED
	C	Chiltern District Penn CP Penn Ward Amersham Town and Penn ED	South Bucks District Beaconsfield CP Beaconsfield North Ward Beaconsfield ED
3	A	Chiltern District Penn CP Penn Ward Amersham Town and Penn ED	South Bucks District Beaconsfield CP Beaconsfield North Ward Beaconsfield ED

Map 1

CHILTERN DISTRICT

Area A

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT

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