

Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No. 125

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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To the Rt Hon Roy Jenkins, MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department

PROPOSALS FOR REVISED ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT
OF MENDIP IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

1. We, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, having carried out our initial review of the electoral arrangements for the district of Mendip in accordance with the requirements of section 63 of, and Schedule 9 to, the Local Government Act 1972, present our proposals for the future electoral arrangements for that district.
2. In accordance with the procedure laid down in section 60(1) and (2) of the 1972 Act, notice was given on 10 June 1974 that we were to undertake this review. This was incorporated in a consultation letter addressed to the Mendip District Council, copies of which were circulated to the Somerset County Council, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in the district, the Members of Parliament for the constituencies concerned and the headquarters of the main political parties. Copies were also sent to the editors of local newspapers circulating in the area and to the local government press. Notices inserted in the local press announced the start of the review and invited comments from members of the public and from any interested bodies.
3. Mendip District Council were invited to prepare a draft scheme of representation for our consideration. In doing so, they were asked to observe the rules laid down in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 and the guidelines which we set out in our Report No 6 about the proposed size of the council and the proposed number of councillors for each ward. They were asked also to take into account any views expressed to them following their consultation with local interests. We therefore asked that they should publish details of their provisional proposals about a month before they submitted their draft scheme to us, thus allowing an opportunity for local comment.

4. In accordance with section 7(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council had exercised an option for whole council elections.
5. On 31 October 1974 the Mendip District Council informed us that they wished to retain the existing electoral arrangements, which they said had worked extremely well.
6. We noted that this existing scheme included a seven-, a five- and two four-member wards and that, therefore, it did not comply with the guideline in our Report No 6 that no district ward should return more than three councillors. Accordingly, we asked the District Council to reconsider their proposal and to submit a scheme which complied with our guidelines and the rules in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act.
7. In due course, Mendip District Council presented their draft scheme of representation. The Council proposed to divide the area into thirty-two wards each returning one, two or three members to form a council of forty-four councillors.
8. We received no objections following the publication of the District Council's provisional draft scheme. The Council received two letters making alternative suggestions which they had not felt able to accept. One of the letters, from a local political party, proposed that the parish of Wells should be divided into one three-member ward and one two-member ward instead of two two-member wards and one single-member ward as the District Council had proposed. The other letter, from a local civic society, objected to the proposal to divide the parish of Frome into wards. They preferred to retain the existing electoral arrangements, which provided for one ward returning seven councillors. They also considered that the wards which had been proposed were unsatisfactory.
9. We considered the draft scheme together with the comments which had been made. We concluded that we should not accept the suggested modifications

since we thought the District Council's proposals for the areas concerned were preferable.

10. We considered whether the draft scheme might be modified in some respects to produce a more even standard of representation. We noted that, as a whole, the more rural areas of the District would enjoy a better standard of representation than the larger towns and, in particular, that the proposed two-member Coleford and Kilmersdon ward would be over-represented. We decided, therefore, to regroup the two parishes in the ward with the adjacent proposed Holcombe and Stratton and Mells wards, so as to form two new wards, namely Coleford and Mells returning two members and Stratton returning one - a combined representation of three councillors instead of four. This reduced the total size of the council to forty-three.

11. Subject to the changes referred to in paragraph 10 above we decided that the District Council's draft scheme provided a reasonable basis for the future electoral arrangements for the district in compliance with the rules in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act and our guidelines, and we formulated our draft proposals accordingly.

12. On 29 August 1975, we issued our draft proposals and these were sent to all who had received our consultation letter. The Council were asked to make these draft proposals, and the accompanying map which defined the proposed ward boundaries, available for inspection at their main offices. Representations on our draft proposals were invited from those to whom they were circulated and, by public notices, from other members of the public and interested bodies. We asked that any comments should reach us by 31 October 1975.

13. Mendip District Council wrote to us objecting to our proposed Coleford and Mells and Stratton wards. If we were not prepared to revert to their original proposals for the parishes involved, they suggested that the two-member Coleford and Mells ward should be divided, with the parish of Coleford forming a ward returning one councillor, leaving the remaining parishes

14. Mells Parish Council also objected to our proposals for these wards, but were prepared to support the District Council's revised proposal. Coleford Parish Council, Great Elm Parish Council, Leigh-on-Mendip Parish Council and Whatley Parish Council all informed us that they opposed the wards and asked that we should revert to the District Council's original proposals for three wards returning a total of four councillors.

15. We also received a copy of a letter from a local district councillor who was concerned about the suggestion by Mendip District Council that Coleford should form a single-member ward.

16. We considered the draft proposals together with the comments which had been made. We noted that the District Council's revised proposals preserved the overall reduction in councillors which we had proposed, thus retaining a more even balance of representation between the larger towns in the district and the more rural areas. On the evidence it was clear to us that Coleford had different interests from those of the remaining parishes in our proposed Coleford and Mells ward and, accordingly, we decided to adopt the District Council's revised proposal.

17. Subject to the modification referred to in paragraph 16 above, we resolved to confirm our draft proposals as our final proposals.

18. Details of these final proposals are set out in Schedules 1 and 2 to this report. Schedule 1 defines the areas of the new wards and Schedule 2 gives the names of the wards and the number of councillors to be returned by each. The boundaries of the new wards are illustrated on the map.

PUBLICATION

19. In accordance with Section 60(5)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, a copy of this report and a copy of the map are being sent to Mendip District

Council and will be available for public inspection at the Council's main offices. Copies of this report are also being sent to those who received the consultation letter.

L.S.

Signed

EDMUND COMPTON (CHAIRMAN)

JOHN M RANKIN (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN)

DIANA ALBEMARLE

T C BENFIELD

MICHAEL CHISHOLM

ANDREW WHEATLEY

F B YOUNG

DAVID R SMITH (Secretary)

27 November 1975

DISTRICT OF MENDIP: DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES

GLASTONBURY ST EDMUND'S

The Glastonbury St Edmund's Ward of the Parish of Glastonbury.

GLASTONBURY ST JOHN'S

The Glastonbury St John's Ward of the Parish of Glastonbury.

GLASTONBURY ST BENEDICT'S

The Glastonbury St Benedict's Ward of the Parish of Glastonbury.

GLASTONBURY ST MARY'S

The Glastonbury St Mary's Ward of the Parish of Glastonbury.

WELLS ST THOMAS

The Wells St Thomas Ward of the Parish of Wells.

WELLS CENTRAL

The Wells Central Ward of the Parish of Wells.

WELLS ST CUTHBERT'S

The Wells St Cuthbert's Ward of the Parish of Wells.

FROME BADCOX

The Frome Badcox Ward of the Parish of Frome.

FROME FROMEFIELD

The Frome Fromefield Ward of the Parish of Frome.

FROME KEYFORD

The Frome Keyford Ward of the Parish of Frome.

STREET NORTH

The Street North Ward of the Parish of Street.

STREET SOUTH

The Street South Ward of the Parish of Street.

SHEPTON MALLET

The Parish of Shepton Mallet.

SELWOOD AND BERKLEY

The Parishes of Selwood and Berkley.

BECKINGTON AND RODE

The Parishes of Beckington, Rode and Tellisford.

NORDINTON

The Parishes of Norton St Philip, Hemington, Jullington and Buckland Dinham.

MELLS

The Parishes of Mells, Elm, Whatley and Leigh-on-Mendip.

COLEFORD

The Parish of Coleford.

POSTLEBURY

The Parishes of Nunney, Trudoxhill, Upton Noble, Wanstrow and Witham Friary.

ASHWICK

The Parishes of Ashwick, Binegar and Emborough.

CHILCOMPTON AND STON EASTON

The Parishes of Chilcompton and Ston Easton.

STRATTON

The Parishes of Stratton on the Fosse, Holcombe and Kilmersdon.

BEACON

The Parishes of Doultling, Cranmore, Downhead and Stoke St Michael.

PYLCOMBE

The Parishes of Croscombe, Pilton and Pylle.

CRREECH

The Parishes of Batcombe, Evercreech and Milton Clevedon.

VALE

The Parishes of West Bradley, Lydford-on-Fosse, East Pennard, Ditchat
and Lamyat.

RODNEY

The Parishes of Rodney Stoke and Westbury.

MOOR

The Parishes of Godney, Meare, Sharpham and Walton.

AVALON

The Parishes of North Wootton, West Pennard, Baltonsborough and Butleigh.

EBBOR

The Parish of Priddy and the North Ward of the Parish of St Cuthbert Out.

SHEPPEY

The Parish of Wookey and the West Ward of the Parish of St Cuthbert Out.

NEDGE

The Parishes of Chewton Mendip, Dinder, Litton and the East and South
Wards of the Parish of St Cuthbert Out.

DISTRICT OF MENDIP: NAMES OF PROPOSED WARDS AND NUMBERS OF COUNCILLORS

<u>WARD</u>	<u>NO OF COUNCILLORS</u>
ASHWICK	1
AVALON	1
BACON	1
BECKINGTON AND RODE	1
CHILCOMPTON AND STON EASTON	1
COLEFORD	1
CREECH	1
EBBOR	1
FROME BADCOX	2
FROME FROMEFIELD	3
FROME KEYFORD	2
GLASTONBURY ST BENEDICT'S	1
GLASTONBURY ST EDMUND'S	1
GLASTONBURY ST JOHN'S	1
GLASTONBURY ST MARY'S	1
MILLS	1
MOOR	1
NEDGE	1
NORDINTON	1
POSTLEBURY	1
PYLCOMBE	1
RODNEY	1
SELWOOD AND BERKLEY	2
SHEPPEY	1
SHEPTON MALLETT	3
STRATTON	1
STREET NORTH	2
STREET SOUTH	2
VALE	1
WELLS CENTRAL	1
WELLS ST CUTHBERT'S	2
WELLS ST THOMAS	2