

Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No.154

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. 154

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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The Countess Of Albemarle, DBE.

Mr T C Benfield.

Professor Michael Chisholm.

Sir Andrew Wheatley, CBE.

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

PROPOSALS FOR REVISED ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE
DISTRICT OF BRIDGNORTH IN THE COUNTY OF SALOP

1. We, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, having carried out our initial review of the electoral arrangements for the district of Bridgnorth 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 19 August 1974 that we were to undertake this review. This was incorporated in a consultation letter addressed to the Bridgnorth District Council, copies of which were circulated to the Salop County Council, the Members of Parliament for the constituencies concerned, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in the district 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. Bridgnorth 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)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council

have exercised an option for a system of whole council elections.

5. On 27 January 1975, Bridgnorth District Council presented their draft scheme of representation. The Council proposed to divide the area into 20 wards each returning 1, 2 or 3 councillors to form a council of 33 members. The Council's submission included copies of the correspondence received by them during their local consultations.

6. The draft scheme had attracted a fair amount of local comment. Among the letters which we had received was a submission by the Bridgnorth Town Council in which they suggested that the town of Bridgnorth should be divided into five wards returning nine councillors instead of four wards represented by seven councillors as the district council had proposed. The Town Council's proposals included the parish of Tasley in their proposed Bridgnorth West ward and this had repercussions on the warding of the rest of the district. Accordingly the Town Council submitted to us proposals showing how the other parishes in the district might be grouped into suitable district wards. From the Shifnal Town Council we received a letter suggesting that the town should be divided into two wards in a different manner to that proposed by the District Council. There were also comments from the councils of a number of parishes in the more rural parts of the district dealing with the manner in which it was proposed to group those parishes into district wards. One parish council objected to the name suggested by the District Council for one of the proposed wards.

7. We considered all the modifications which had been suggested together with others producing a better standard of equality of representation in some localities. However, on the information then before us, we concluded that there were insufficient grounds for altering the Council's draft scheme which we thought represented a satisfactory basis for the future representation of the district in compliance with the requirements in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act and our guidelines. We decided to formulate our draft proposals accordingly.

8. On 2 July 1975, we issued our draft proposals and these were sent to all who had received our consultation letter or had commented on the Council's draft scheme. 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 5 September 1975.
9. The Bridgnorth District Council and Salop County Council both approved our draft proposals.
10. Bridgnorth Town Council reiterated their earlier proposals both for the town itself and for the remainder of the district. We heard from the Shifnal Town Council and the Neen Savage Parish Council who both objected to the draft proposals and reiterated their earlier proposals. Finally we received a letter from a resident of the village of Benthall who suggested that the village should be included in the proposed Broseley ward rather than in the proposed Much Wenlock ward.
11. In view of these comments we considered that we needed further information to enable us to reach a conclusion. Therefore, in accordance with Section 65(2) of the 1972 Act and at our request you appointed Mr W Isaac OBE as an Assistant Commissioner to hold a local meeting and to report to us.
12. The Assistant Commissioner held a meeting at the Council Chamber, Westgate, Bridgnorth on 9 December 1975. A copy (without enclosures) of his report to us of the meeting is attached at Schedule 1 to this report.
13. The Assistant Commissioner recommended that our draft proposals should be confirmed except in Shifnal where it was recommended that the proposals of the Shifnal Town Council should be adopted.

14. We considered again our draft proposals in the light of the comments which we had received and of the Assistant Commissioner's report. We concluded that the modification recommended by the Assistant Commissioner should be adopted and that we should formulate our final proposals accordingly. However, we noted that before we could do so it would be necessary, in view of the provisions of paragraph 3(2)(b) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, to ask the District Council to finalise their orders under section 50(4) of the Act to establish parish wards in Bridgnorth and Shifnal which would be compatible with the district wards which we intended to recommend. In inviting the District Council to make the orders we drew their attention to the Assistant Commissioner's recommendations as to the two proposed wards in Shifnal which it was suggested should be named "Idsall" and "Manor". In due course the District Council sent us copies of the orders which they had made. We noted that the District Council had accepted the Assistant Commissioner's recommendations for Shifnal and created parish wards accordingly. We then formulated our final proposals.

15. Details of these final proposals are set out in Schedules 2 and 3 to this report and on the attached map. Schedule 2 gives the names of the wards and defines their areas. Schedule 3 shows the number of councillors to be returned by each ward. The boundaries of the new wards are illustrated on the map.

PUBLICATION

16. 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 Bridgnorth 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 and to those who made comments.

L.S.

Signed

EDMUND COMPTON (CHAIRMAN)

JOHN M RANKIN (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN)

DIANA ALBEMARLE

T C BENFIELD

MICHAEL CHISHOLM

ANDREW WHEATLEY

N DIGNEY (SECRETARY)

10 June 1976

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND
REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS: BRIDGNORTH DISTRICT
REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

To the Chairman and Members of the Commission

Mr Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen.

1. I was appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by letter dated 5 November 1975 (attached 'A').

2. Having received and studied the papers relative to the questions to be considered at Bridgnorth, I visited Bridgnorth on the 17 November in order to inspect and familiarise myself with the areas the subjects of such questions.

3. I then decided that in order to minimise the time of persons desiring to be heard at the meeting which had been fixed for 9 December, I would deal with the representations

a. of Mr Mason referring to Benthall and

b. with respect to the Shifnal area

at the opening of the meeting at 11 am and would not take the remainder relating to Bridgnorth Town and Neen Savage etc parishes until after the lunch adjournment, thus saving the attendance of those concerned only with the latter, during the morning session. I directed that notice be given accordingly by addition of a short paragraph to the local press notices.

4. I therefore opened the meeting at 11 am on 9 December at the Council Offices and attached hereto ('B') is a list of those persons who attended the meeting.

5. The Chief Executive confirmed that Notices of the meeting had been published as directed throughout the area in accord with the Commission's request.

6. As indicated above (para 3) I heard Mr Mason's representation in amplification of his written observations to the Commission by letter dated 15 August 1975.

7. Mr Mason confirmed

- a. that in the scattered parish of Barrow most of the population live within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of Broseley, upon which village virtually the whole of Benthall's social and sporting life is centred;
- b. That two Broseley councillors support his representation;
- c. he requested me to visit the area which I did during the adjournment; and
- d. handed in the petition attached ('C').

8. Mr Wyke of the Barrow Parish Council, of which three members live in Benthall, stated that having given the matter careful consideration his Parish Council were of opinion that although Benthall and Broseley had for many years worked together through Barrow PC they could not see any benefit in Mr Mason's suggestion so far as District Council affairs were concerned and would oppose his suggestion.

9. Messrs Hill and Whiteman confirmed that though not the subject of elections for many years the Barrow PC was both keen and interested and they did not want the parish split up.

10. Mr Wainwright of Salop CC said that Mr Mason's suggestion would slightly unbalance the County Council's proposed electoral divisions as at present in draft.

11. The Chief Executive gave the District Council's observations as per attached 'D'.

12. Having inspected the area and considered carefully the foregoing representations, I am of opinion that so far as the District is concerned, the District Council's view having regard particularly to the 1979 situation, should be accepted. (See para A of my recommendations post at paragraph 40).

13. I next considered the representations relating to the Shifnal parish in respect of which the Chief Executive submitted the statement "E" attached, and the Clerk of the Shifnal Parish Council the statement "F" also attached. The map "G" attached shows in large scale the Commission's draft boundary in blue and the Parish Council's proposal in red. Also marked are the new Village Hall and the present number of electors in the eastern and western disputed areas between the two sets of boundaries.

14. The Chief Executive agreed that once the ward boundaries are settled, there would be no real difficulty in improving the number of polling stations, under either boundary arrangement, for the benefit and convenience of electors. I have therefore disregarded the observations by both sides referring to Polling places as affecting the settling of boundaries of the wards.

15. Mr Law, Chairman of the Parish Council and Dr Thomas, a District and Parish councillor both made sincere and convincing statements in support of the Parish proposals inter alia as follows

- a. The three District Councillors from Shifnal opposed the District Council's boundary which ties in with the current division of the Register.
- b. That of 677 council owned dwellings in Shifnal only 12 are in the District Council's South ward; and
- c. That four convenient polling places can be provided in either case.

16. The District Council's proposals would produce the following situation:

<u>Ward</u>	<u>No. of Cllrs</u>	<u>1974</u>		<u>1979</u>	
		<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>	<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>
Shifnal North	2	1,939	1.88	2,203	2.01
Shifnal South	2	2,105	2.04	2,340	2.14

The Parish Council's proposals would produce a broadly similar situation:

<u>Ward</u>	<u>No.of Cllrs</u>	1974		1979	
		<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>	<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>
Idsall	2	2,214	2.15	2,465	2.25
Manor	2	1,830	1.78	2,078	1.90

17. The Parish Council's proposed boundary is set forth in the second part of paragraph 3 of statement "F" and is shown in red on Map "G".

18. The Salop representative, Mr Wainwright, was of opinion that the Parish Council's boundary would make only slight difference to the County's thoughts on electoral areas for the County Council.

19. I am of opinion that the District Council's view in statement "E" attached (para 3; first 3 lines and para 4; first 3 lines) over emphasises the matter of severance of communities and is, looking ahead, much outweighed by the Parish Council's desire NOT to perpetuate a division of the parish but rather to weld it into a single whole, which would be made much less difficult under their own proposal than it would be by adopting the District Council's suggested boundary.

20. I therefore, having made an inspection of the Parish area and the suggested boundary, am of opinion that the Parish Council's boundary should be approved and that the District Council should make the necessary warding order. (See para B of my recommendations post at para 40). Any consequential recommendation on the ward names is also at the same point.

21. Having heard the above mentioned representations, the meeting was adjourned for a lunch recess of one hour and resumed at 2 pm.

22. At the resumption, I heard the representations with respect to Farlow Parish made by Neen Savage Parish Council.

23. The Chief Executive submitted the statement "H" attached.

24. Mr Hayward for the Parish Council referred to his clerk's letter to the Commission dated 15 January 1975 and added the following observations:-

- a. Distance from Farlow to Kinlet is twice that of Farlow to Stottesdon, where the school is situated which is used by Farlow people for social events.
- b. Farlow to Kinlet necessitates going through Stottesdon.
- c. Farlow playing field is used by Stottesdon people.
- d. Difficult for one councillor to look after an area 1/13 of the whole District.
- e. Prior to reorganisation, 3 councillors represented Neen Savage and Kinlet, now it is suggested that one should cover an even wider area.
- f. He disputes District Council figures of electorate.

25. Mr Remington of Farlow alleged that their population is increasing.

26. Mr Smith of Kinlet submitted the statement "I" attached. With respect to his challenge of the figures of population etc used by the District Council, see my later note of the evidence given by the Chief Planning Officer.

27. I also received the written statement "J" attached from Dr Wells. The note attached thereto explains his absence and, of course, my inability to test his evidence.

28. Mr Lowe and Col Hadoke asked that Ditton Priors should remain grouped as at present.

29. Mr Page, Chief Planning Officer of the District explained

how the 1979 electorate was arrived at and that as a result over the whole district the estimated 1979 figure of 1.93 electors per dwelling was obtained.

He also explained that he had included all dwellings in his calculation, whereas

the census, to which some persons referred, only included dwellings actually occupied on census day. This would make for some of the discrepancies referred to in the representations. He had also allowed a constraint due to lack of sewerage in parts of the district, when estimating the rate of development.

30. The map "K" covers the whole district in small scale.

31. I consider the representation of the District Council to be well founded over the district as a whole. Therefore my recommendation on this item is at para C of para 40 post.

32. I then heard the representations with respect to Bridgnorth Town and so far as relevant the Parishes concerned therewith.

33. The Chief Executive submitted statement "L", attached, which I accept as a reasonable summary of the basis of the District Council's analysis of the situation in the Town area. He also submitted "L₂" referring to polling places.

34. Mr Page, Chief Planning Officer, submitted statements M₁ and M₂ and Map M₃, which I also accepted as a fair basis for such analysis.

35. Mr Wright, for the Town Council in submitting statement "N" made, inter alia, the following observations:-

- a. He welcomed the hearing as the first opportunity for the Town Council to be heard.
- b. There was not much difference between the two authorities as to future development.

Here it should be noted that he had duplicated a site in his statement "N" and was in my opinion over-optimistic as to the rate of future development in the Town area as well as of the number of electors per dwelling in that area.

- c. There would be a large amount of development in West ward in the next five years.

36. The Mayor of Bridgnorth endorsed Mr Wright's statement.

37. In his final submission, the Chief Executive stated that the Town Council's view of the increase of electorate over the next five years and in particular that if in Castle ward 84 dwellings were built it could not produce an additional 950 electors even at the Town Council's excessive numbers per dwelling.

With respect to Tasley Parish in which there are 158 electors, about 90 were in the peripheral area of the Town but an adjustment here could well wait until the general Parish review rather than now bringing a large rural area of the parish now into a Town ward.

38. With respect to the last paragraph of statement "L", the internal adjustments of boundaries upon which there is agreement are shown on map "O" and lie between the present ward boundaries (blue) and proposed boundaries (red) viz

	Electors
a. from East to West Part I	
The Hookfield and Greenfields Road	63
b. East to West Part II	
Victoria Road East Side	101
c. from Castle to East	
The South Side of Listley Street	8
d. from West to Castle	8

39. To cover the foregoing alterations the new boundary for alterations a. and b. above (para 38) would be as follows:-

commencing at the junction of the old ward boundary in Victoria Rd opposite the first house on the east side of the road proceeding easterly along the southern boundary of that house and then north westerly along the rear boundaries of the houses on the east side of Victoria Road to the point where the rear boundaries of those houses meet the rear boundaries of the houses in Orchard Drive and The Hookfield; thence north easterly along the common boundary of the

dwellings in The Hookfield and Orchard Drive to join the old Polling District boundary at Innage Lane.

for c. above the new boundary would be as follows:-

commencing at the junction of St Mary's Street and Listley Street, proceeding in an easterly direction at the rear of the dwellings on the South side of Listley Street (along the top of the escarpment) to the junction with the old ward boundary at High Street; and

for d. above as follows:-

commencing at the same point as for c., proceeding at the rear of buildings fronting the A458 road due south to the old ward boundary.

40. Having regard to the rules required to be observed under the Local Government Act 1972, to the information obtained from the Commission and at the hearing and to my inspections of the areas in question, my recommendations are as follows:-

A. That with respect to Mr Mason's representation concerning Benthall no alteration should be made to the District Council's proposal already accepted by the Commission;

B. That the representations of the Shifnal Parish Council be accepted both as to ward boundaries and names;

C. That with respect to Farlow Parish the District Council's proposal should be approved;

D. That with respect to Bridgnorth Town the proposals of the District Council, as set out above in paragraphs 38 and 39 and already agreed, be accepted.

41. It appeared to me that persons attending the hearing were satisfied that their views had been heard and I wish to express my thanks to the officers of the authorities involved for their helpfulness throughout the hearing.

I am Mr Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen.

WALTER ISAAC
Assistant Commissioner

16 December 1975

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT OF BRIDGNORTH

LOCAL HEARING - 9 DECEMBER 1975 - AM

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
H F Smith	Kinlet Parish Council
Alan Thomas	Shifnal Parish and Bridgnorth District Councils
D Mason	Pen y Bryn, Benthall, Salop
A M Smith	Shropshire Star (Evening newspaper)
D N Hill	Much Wenlock CC and District Councillor
J W Rodenhurst	Farlow Parish Council
R E J Yeomans	Chelmarsh and Secretary of Bridgnorth and Shifnal Area Committee of Parish and Town Councils
N A Wyke	Barrow Parish Council
S E Wyke	
G C Nutley	Bridgnorth District Council
I R Gibson	Bridgnorth District Council
H S Wainwright	Salop County Council
P M Whiteman	Bridgnorth District Council
T A Jeffrey	Shifnal Parish Council
R W Law	Shifnal Parish Council
John R Riding	Shifnal Parish Council (Clerk)
E B Higgs	Much Wenlock Town Council

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT OF BRIDGNORTH

LOCAL HEARING - 9 DECEMBER 1975 - PM

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
George Haywood	Neen Savage Parish Council
H F Smith	Kinlet Parish Council
S G Remmington	Farlow
J W Rodenhurst	Farlow Parish Council
R G Sutton	Farlow Parish Council
J A T Walker	Bridgnorth Town Council
D B Wright	Bridgnorth Town Council
D F Hadoke	Bridgnorth District Council
E W Surman	Bridgnorth District Council
W E Lowe	Ditton Priors Parish Council
Ernest G Dorrell	Ditton Priors Parish Council
H S Wainwright	Salop County Council
J L Page	Chief Planning Officer, Bridgnorth District Council
G A Park	Easthope, Shipton and Stanton Long
P Rogers	Easthope, Shipton and Stanton Long
J D Williams	Easthope, Shipton and Stanton Long

DISTRICT OF BRIDGNORTH : DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES

SHERIFFHALES WARD

The parishes of Sheriffhales, Tong, Boscobel and Donington.

IDSALL WARD

The Idsall ward of the parish of Shifnal.

MANOR WARD

The Manor ward of the parish of Shifnal.

ALBRIGHTON WARD

The parishes of Albrighton and Boningale.

MUCH WENLOCK WARD

The parishes of Much Wenlock and Barrow.

BROSELEY WARD

The parish of Broseley.

HARRINGTON WARD

The parishes of Kemberton, Sutton Maddock, Ryton, Stockton, Beckbury and Badger.

DITTON PRIORS WARD

The parishes of Easthope, Shipton, Stanton Long, Monkhopton and Ditton Priors.

MORVILLE WARD

The parishes of Acton Round, Aston Eyre, Upton Cressett, Morville, Tasley and Astley Abbotts.

WORFIELD WARD

The parishes of Worfield and Rudge.

CLAVERLEY WARD

The parish of Claverley.

STOTTESDON WARD

The parishes of Cleobury North, Neenton, Burwarton, Aston Botterell, Stottesdon and Sidbury.

GLAZELEY WARD

The parishes of Chetton, Eardington, Middleton Scriven, Deuxhill, Glazeley, Chelmarsh and Billingsley.

BRIDGNORTH WEST WARD

The Bridgnorth West ward of the parish of Bridgnorth.

BRIDGNORTH EAST WARD

The Bridgnorth East ward of the parish of Bridgnorth.

BRIDGNORTH CASTLE WARD

The Bridgnorth Castle ward of the parish of Bridgnorth.

BRIDGNORTH MORFEWARD

The Bridgnorth Morfe ward of the parish of Bridgnorth.

ALVELEY WARD

The parishes of Quatt Malver, Alveley and Romsley.

KINLET WARD

The parishes of Farlow, Neen Savage and Kinlet.

HIGHLEY WARD

The parish of Highley.

SCHEDULE 3

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

<u>NAME OF WARD</u>	<u>NO OF COUNCILLORS</u>
ALBRIGHTON	3
ALVELEY	2
BRIDGNORTH CASTLE	1
BRIDGNORTH EAST	1
BRIDGNORTH MORFE	2
BRIDGNORTH WEST	3
BROSELEY	3
CLAVERLEY	1
DITTON PRIORS	1
GLAZELEY	1
HARRINGTON	1
HIGHLEY	2
IDSALL	2
KINLET	1
MANOR	2
MORVILLE	1
MUCH WENLOCK	2
SHERIFFHALES	2
STOTTESDON	1
WORFIELD	1

