

Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No. 57

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 SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE IN THE COUNTY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

1. We, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, having carried out our initial review of the electoral arrangements for the district of South Bedfordshire in accordance with the requirements of section 63 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 13 May 1974 that we were to undertake this review. This was incorporated in a consultation letter addressed to the South Bedfordshire District Council, copies of which were circulated to the Bedfordshire County Council, Parish Councils in the district, the Member of Parliament for the constituency concerned and the headquarters of the main political parties. Copies were also sent to the editors of the 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. South Bedfordshire 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. On 6 November 1974 the South Bedfordshire District Council presented their draft scheme of representation. In accordance with section 7(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 they had exercised an option for elections by thirds and they proposed to divide the area into 25 wards each returning 1, 2 or 3 members to form a council of 54.

5. The only comment on the draft scheme which had been received had been sent to the District Council. This comment proposed that the parish of Billington should be combined to form a ward with the parish of Eaton Bray, with which there was said to be a close association, rather than with the parishes of Stanbridge and Tilsforth as provided by the draft scheme.

6. We considered the draft scheme submitted by the District Council. We noted that, in terms of electoral equality, a small number of wards had a very generous standard of representation on current electorates, but that the District Council predicted large increases in electorate which, if realised, would produce an acceptable standard in those wards by 1979. We reviewed these predicted increases in electorate and concluded in the case of the proposed Southcott ward that the forecast was probably over optimistic. Accordingly we decided to propose a reduction in the number of representatives assigned to this ward from three councillors to two.

7. We carefully considered the proposal in respect of the parish of Billington. We concluded that the arguments in terms of local ties were insufficient to justify the imbalance in electorates which would occur if the re-grouping were to be adopted.

8. After consulting Ordnance Survey, we made some minor adjustments to the alignment of some of the boundaries in order to secure boundary lines which were more readily identifiable on the ground.

9. We decided to adopt the ward names proposed by the District Council.

10. We then formulated our draft proposals accordingly.

11. On 28 January 1975 we issued our draft proposals and these were sent to all who had received our consultation letter. The District Council were asked to make these draft proposals, and the accompanying maps 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 21 March 1975.

12. The South Bedfordshire District Council and the Leighton Linlode Town Council wrote objecting to the Commission's proposal which allocated only two councillors, instead of three, to the proposed Southcott ward. In the Council's view the rate of growth in this ward would be such as to justify a 3-member ward by 1979.

If, however, we felt unable to recommend the allocation of more than two councillors the Councils asked to be assured that we would be prepared to carry out a special review in due course with a view to recommending the assignment of an additional councillor for this ward when the electorate reached an appropriate level.

We reviewed our earlier decision to allocate two councillors and concluded that it was an appropriate one in the circumstances.

We cannot give any assurances about a special review. If, at any time in the future, the electoral arrangements of the district become seriously out of balance the District Council can request a special review. Any such request would be carefully considered in the light of the Commission's workload and priorities at the time.

13. Two other comments were received. The parish council which had written previously re-iterated their objections to the proposal to link the parish of Billington with Stanbridge and Tilsforth, preferring that Billington be grouped with the parish of Eaton Bray. There was no new evidence in support of the suggested modification and, having considered the matter again, we concluded that our previous decision should not be altered. The other comment, from a private individual, put forward proposals for electoral arrangements within the area of Dunstable and the parish of Houghton Regis. We noted that these alternative proposals for the area of Dunstable took no account of the balance of representation between Dunstable and the rest of the South Bedfordshire district and that, with wards returning 6 and 9 members, they did not comply with our guideline which provides for a maximum of 3 councillors per ward. In these circumstances we felt unable to adopt the alternative wards.

14. We decided, therefore, to confirm our draft proposals as our final proposals.

15. Details of these final proposals are set out in Schedules 1 and 2 to this report and on the attached maps. Schedule 1 gives the names of the wards and the number of councillors to be returned by each ward. Schedule 2 shows our proposals for the order of retirement of councillors. The boundaries of the new wards are defined on the maps.

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 maps are being sent to South Bedfordshire 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. A detailed description of

the boundaries of the proposed wards as defined on the maps is set
cut in Schedule 3 to this report.

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)

15 MAY 1975.

SCHEDULE 1DISTRICT OF SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE: NAMES OF PROPOSED WARDS AND
NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS

NAME OF WARD	NO OF COUNCILLORS
Barton-le-Clay	2
Beaudesort	3
Brooklands	3
Caddington	2
Dunstable Central	3
Eaton Bray	1
Heath and Reach	1
Hockliffe	1
Houghton Central	3
Houghton East	3
Houghton South	3
Icknield	3
Kensworth	1
Linslade	3
Northfields	3
Plantation	3
Priory	3
Slip End	1
Southcott	2
Stanbridge	1
Streatley	1
Studham	1
Toddington	2
Totternhoe	1
Watling	3

SCHEDULE 2

DISTRICT OF SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE: ORDER OF RETIREMENT OF COUNCILLORS

NAME OF WARD	NO. OF COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING WARD	ORDER OF RETIREMENT		
		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR
BARTON-LE-CLAY	2		1 PE	1
BEAUDESERT	3	1	1 PE	1
BROCKLANDS	3	1	1 PE	1
CADDINGTON	2	1 PE	1	
DUNSTABLE CENTRAL	3	1	1	1
EATON BRAY	1	1 PE		
HEATH AND REACH	1		1 PE	
HOCKLIFFE	1	1 PE		
HOUGHTON CENTRAL	3	1	1 PE	1
HOUGHTON EAST	3	1	1 PE	1
HOUGHTON SOUTH	3	1	1 PE	1
ICKNIELD	3	1	1	1
KENSWORTH	1		1 PE	
LINSLADE	3	1	1 PE	1
NORTHFIELDS	3	1	1	1
PLANTATION	3	1	1 PE	1
PRIORY	3	1	1	1
SLIP END	1	1 PE		
SOUTHCOTT	2		1 PE	1
STANBRIDGE	1			1 PE
STREATLEY	1			1 PE
STUDHAM	1	1 PE		
TODDINGTON	2		1	1 PE
TOTTERNHOE	1			1 PE
WATLING	3	1	1	1
	53	17	18	18

PE = PARISH ELECTIONS

SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE DISTRICT: DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES

NORTHFIELDS WARD

Commencing at a point where Green Lane meets the eastern boundary of Totternhoe CP, thence northeastwards along said boundary and the Southern boundary of Houghton Regis CP to the southeastern boundaries of Nos 48 and 27 Olma Road, thence southwestwards along said boundaries and the southeastern boundaries of Nos 56 to 10 Capron Road and in continuation thereof to High Street North, thence southeastwards along said street to Chiltern Road thence southwestwards and following said Road to West Street, thence southwestwards along said Street to Green Lane, thence northwestwards along said Lane to the point of commencement.

DUNSTABLE CENTRAL WARD

Commencing at a point where the eastern boundary of Totternhoe CP meets the southern boundary of Northfields Ward, thence southeastwards and following said Ward boundary to the southern boundary of Houghton Regis CP, thence southeastwards and following said boundary to Dog Kennel Path, thence southwestwards along said Path to the southern boundary of the disused Railway, thence southeastwards along said boundary to Church Street, thence southwestwards along said Street to High Street South, thence southeastwards along said street to Friars Walk, thence southwestwards along said Walk and First Avenue to Langdale Road, thence southeastwards along said Road to Hilton Avenue, thence southwestwards along said Avenue to Ullswater Road thence northwestwards along said Road to the northwestern boundary of No 35 Ullswater Road thence southwestwards along said boundary to the northeastern boundary of No 5 Morland Close, thence southeastwards and following said boundary and in continuation thereof to the northern boundary of Kensworth CP, thence southeastwards and following said boundary and the eastern boundary of Totternhoe CP to the point of commencement.

ICKNIELD WARD

Commencing at a point on Dog Kennel Path where the northern boundary of Dunstable Central Ward meets the southern boundary of Houghton Regis CP, thence northeastwards and following said CP boundary to the Eastern Boundary of the District, thence southeastwards and following said boundary to the northwestern boundary of Caddington CP thence southwestwards and following said boundary to a point opposite the northeastern boundary fence of No 98 Jeans Way, thence northwestwards in a straight line to the northern property boundary of the Railway, thence southwestwards and following said boundary to Luton Road, thence southwestwards along said Road and Church Street to the northeastern boundary of Dunstable Central Ward, thence northwestwards and following said boundary to the point of commencement.

WATLING WARD

Commencing at a point where the eastern boundary of Dunstable Central Ward meets the northern boundary of Kensworth CP, thence generally northeastwards along said Ward Boundary to High Street South, thence southeastwards along said Street and London Road to the northern boundary of Kensworth CP, thence southwestwards, southeastwards and following said boundary to the point of commencement.

PRIORY WARD

Commencing at a point where the northeastern boundary of Watling Ward meets the northern boundary of Kensworth CP, thence northwestwards along said Ward boundary to the eastern boundary of Dunstable Central Ward, thence northwestwards and following said boundary to the southern boundary of Icknield Ward, thence eastwards and following said boundary to the northern boundary of Caddington CP, thence southeastwards and following said boundary and the

northern boundary of Kensworth CP to the point of commencement.

HEATH AND REACH WARD

The parish of Heath and Reach.

HOCKLIFFE WARD

The parishes of Eggington, Hockliffe and Chalgrave.

TODDINGTON WARD

The Toddington Ward of the parish of Toddington.

STREATLEY WARD

The parishes of Streatley, Sundon and the Chalton Ward of the Parish of Toddington.

BARTON-LE-CLAY WARD

The parish of Barton-le-Clay.

SOUTHCOTT WARD

The Southcott Ward of the parish of Leighton-Linslade.

LINSLADE WARD

The Linslade Ward of the parish of Leighton-Linslade.

PLANTATION WARD

The Plantation Ward of the parish of Leighton-Linslade

BROOKLANDS WARD

The Brooklands Ward of the parish of Leighton-Linslade.

BEAUDESERT WARD

The Beaudesert Ward of the parish of Leighton-Linslade.

STANBRIDGE WARD

The parishes of Billington, Stanbridge and Tilsworth.

HOUGHTON SOUTH WARD

The Houghton South Ward of the parish of Houghton Regis.

HOUGHTON CENTRAL WARD

The Houghton Central Ward of the parish of Houghton Regis.

HOUGHTON EAST WARD

The Houghton East Ward of the parish of Houghton Regis.

EATON BRAY WARD

The parish of Eaton Bray.

TOTTERNHOE WARD

The parish of Totternhoe.

STUDHAM WARD

The parishes of Studham and Whipsnade.

KENSWORTH WARD

The parish of Kensworth

CADDINGTON WARD

The Caddington Ward of the parish of Caddington

SLIP END WARD

The Slip End Ward of the parish of Caddington and the parish of Hyde.