

1. On the 31st March 2009, six councils ceased to exist, and were replaced on 1st April 2009 by one Unitary Council, Shropshire Council.
2. In the following couple of years, Shropshire Council did undertake some relatively minor changes to parish council boundaries and parish council ward boundaries. Although technically Community Governance Reviews, these were 'tidying-up' exercises.
3. Most towns within the Shropshire Council area have a problem with housing estates being built on their boundaries, clearly intended as an extension of the town, but unfortunately located across the town boundary in the neighbouring rural parish council.
4. Following on from two above, over many years Shropshire Council has resisted undertaking any Community Governance Reviews. Shropshire Council's stated intention was to eventually undertake a county wide series of Community Governance Reviews, and that this would be undertaken within the four-year Council period commencing May 2021.
5. Unfortunately, Shropshire Council subsequently changed its mind, and requested a LGBCE review of its ward boundaries. Yes, there is a valid reason for such a Review, with some existing wards having significantly more or less electors than ideal for equality. I also have no problem with single councillor wards.
6. In my opinion, it would have been much better, and certainly more logical to have sorted out the boundaries of Town and Parish Councils before undertaking a Review of Shropshire Council's ward boundaries. But such a Review is underway, and my views as expressed above will have no bearing on their work. Unfortunately, this Review could have significant adverse implications for the boundaries of towns in Shropshire for some years to come.

## **Bridgnorth**

7. Based on the current and near future number of electors, this Review will create three new single councillor wards for Bridgnorth. The main geographical feature in Bridgnorth is the river Severn, and looking at the number of electors, the river will logically form the boundary of one of the new Shropshire Council Wards.
8. It is suggested that this Ward would consist of all Bridgnorth Town electors resident on the east side of the river, and to include the nearby Stanmore area of Worfield and Rudge Parish Council.
9. Stanmore basically consists of the Hobbins and Russell Close Housing Estates, and Stanmore Industrial Estate, which is the largest industrial estate in the area. The housing estates and industrial area are similar to other parts of Bridgnorth Town, and appear to have no relationship with the rest of Worfield and Rudge Parish which is very rural. There are no facilities such as shopping in this area; the nearest facilities are very close in Bridgnorth.
10. Almost all the land in this Ward is designated as Green Belt; it is on the extreme edge of the Green Belt around the West Midlands urban area. It is unlikely that there will be any significant residential developments occurring in the near future so the number of electors will be static for many years.
11. The other two new Shropshire Council wards will be on the West side of the river, and presumably will include all the electorate who are resident in this area within Bridgnorth Town.
12. It should also include residents of Tasley Parish. Almost all the electorate of Tasley live adjacent to the Bridgnorth Town boundary, with no obvious boundary between the two areas. Houses built next to each other are in different local authority areas. At the present time, residents of Tasley go into town, Bridgnorth Town, for their shopping and other needs.

13. Principal Councils responsible for planning decisions in and around Bridgnorth, initially Bridgnorth District Council and since April 2009 Shropshire Council, have openly stated that any developments they have approved in Tasley is an extension of Bridgnorth Town.

14. Astley Abbots is a rural parish, with a clear geographical boundary with Bridgnorth, the Cantern Brook. There is no reason why Astley Abbots should be joined with Bridgnorth.