

# East Hertfordshire and Stevenage – Principal Area Boundary Review: Final Recommendations, May 2012

## Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body which conducts principal area boundary reviews (PABRs). These are reviews which consider the boundaries between principal authority areas.

2 The LGBCE conducted a PABR of the district boundary in the area around Gresley Way following a formal request from East Hertfordshire District Council and Stevenage Borough Council. The review considered where the boundary should be between the two authorities in the area. Now we have completed our review, we have sent our final recommendations to the Secretary of State who will decide whether or not to implement them.

3 The existing district boundary cuts through 29 residential properties in Gordian Way, Neptune Gate and Trajan Gate in the area close to Gresley Way. Additionally, five properties are entirely within East Hertfordshire district. As a result of the current boundary position, 19 properties within these three cul-de-sacs are represented by East Hertfordshire District Council, while 15 are represented by Stevenage Borough Council. However, the existing boundary means that the access for all the East Hertfordshire residents in the affected properties is via Stevenage borough.

4 Moreover, many services for all affected properties, including refuse collection and other environmental services, are provided by Stevenage Borough Council. No recharge for these services is made to East Hertfordshire District Council.

**5 We are confirming our draft recommendations as final and are proposing to the Secretary of State that all properties in Gordian Way, Neptune Gate and Trajan Gate in the area around Gresley Way currently in East Hertfordshire district be transferred to Stevenage borough.**

6 We conducted the review within the time-frame outlined below:

Key dates	Description
24 January 2012	LGBCE publishes its draft recommendations
24 January 2012 to 6 March 2012	Six week consultation period on the draft recommendations
15 May 2012	Final recommendations published and sent to the Secretary of State

## Background and legislation

7 The aim of a PABR is to review the existing boundaries between local authority areas and to consider whether any changes would be desirable.

- 8 In undertaking a review, the legislation states that we must have regard to:
- the need to secure effective and convenient local government;
  - the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities

Any boundary changes we recommend should also be identifiable, clear and long-lasting.

### **Electoral Arrangements**

9 When making recommendations for a boundary change, we must also recommend to the Secretary of State what changes should be made to:

- the electoral arrangements of the area of a local authority; and
- the electoral arrangements of the area of a parish council

10 Electoral arrangements means:

- the total number of members to be elected to the council;
- the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions) for the purposes of the election of councillors;
- the number of councillors for any electoral area of a local authority; and
- the name of any electoral area

11 Our final recommendations for electoral arrangements are found on Table 1 on page 3 of this report.

### **The Secretary of State**

12 Following receipt of our recommendations for a change to the district boundary, the Secretary of State may:

- accept and implement the change we recommend;
- modify our recommendations and make an order to implement those modified changes;
- take no action; or
- request us to carry out another review.

### **Parish boundaries**

13 We cannot make recommendations to the Secretary of State about whether or not to change a parish boundary. However, when we make our recommendations about the principal authority boundary (in this case, the district boundary), we may comment on and make suggestions to the Secretary of State on any consequential parish boundary changes he might wish to consider in implementing our recommendations. Our consideration of Walkern parish is outlined in paragraph 22.

## Draft recommendations

14 On 24 January 2012 we published our draft recommendations for proposed changes to the boundary between East Hertfordshire District Council and Stevenage Borough Council. Our draft recommendations are outlined in Table 1 below:

**Table 1:**

<b>Draft Recommendations (confirmed as final):</b>						
<p>To re-align the district boundary between East Hertfordshire District Council and Stevenage Borough Council, as outlined below. Our recommendation is for the area in the shaded part (area A) of Map 1 to be transferred to Stevenage Borough Council.</p>						
<p>We also recommend that the ward and division boundaries are re-aligned so that they are coterminous with the revised district boundary.</p>						
<p>This will have the effect, if implemented, of all properties in Gordian Way, Neptune Gate and Trajan Gate being included in Stevenage borough, Manor borough ward and Chells county division. In total, 44 electors (based on the November 2011 electoral register) would be transferred from East Hertfordshire district to Stevenage borough.</p>						
Area	District from which omitted	Ward from which omitted	Division from which omitted	District to which added	Ward to which added	Division to which added
A	East Hertfordshire	Walkern	Hertford Rural	Stevenage	Manor	Chells

15 We consulted on our draft recommendations for six weeks between 24 January 2012 and 6 March 2012. At the beginning of the consultation period we sent copies of our draft recommendations report to East Hertfordshire District Council, Stevenage Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, local MPs, Walkern Parish Council and the district and county councillors in the wards and divisions affected.

16 We also sent a copy of our draft recommendations report to the residents of properties in Gordian Way, Neptune Gate and Trajan Gate who would be affected by the proposed boundary change, inviting them to comment on our recommendations. Included with the report was a comments form and stamped addressed envelope to assist residents to respond to the consultation. Details of the consultation were also published on our website [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

# Analysis and final recommendations

## Submissions received

17 During the consultation period we received 20 submissions on our draft recommendations. These came from East Hertfordshire District Council and Stevenage Borough Council, three district and county councillors, 12 residents directly affected by the boundary change, two members of the public and one anonymous representation.

18 All who responded were unanimous in their support of the proposed boundary change. It is clear that respondents considered the current boundary arrangement to be anomalous and residents informed us that they clearly related to Stevenage in terms of community identity.

## Final recommendations

19 We noted the unanimous support for our draft recommendations. We consider that residents should have direct access to the rest of the authority in which they live and that uniting the whole of the residential estate to the west of Gresley Way in Stevenage will better reflect community identities. Moreover, as services are already provided by Stevenage Borough Council, this change will provide for more effective and convenient local government.

20 Accordingly, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final and recommend them to the Secretary of State without amendment.

21 Our final recommendations are described in Table 1 and can be seen on Map 1 on Page 5 of this report. In our view, the scale of change we are recommending would have no adverse impact on either local authority's ability to deliver value for money services to local residents. Indeed, the impact on those directly affected by the boundary change is likely to be positive.

22 As noted in paragraph 13, we cannot make recommendations to change parish boundaries. However, we consider that changing the boundary of Walkern parish between East Hertfordshire district and Stevenage borough so that it is coterminous with the revised district boundary would provide for more effective and convenient local government. We are highlighting this to the Secretary of State, who has the power to change the parish boundary at the same time as he makes any changes to the district boundary.

## Equalities

23 These final recommendations have been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

# East Hertfordshire and Stevenage PABR Final Recommendations

The  
Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
for England

## East Hertfordshire District Council



Walkern Civil Parish  
Walkern District Ward  
Hertford Rural County Division

Box Wood

## Stevenage Borough Council

Manor District Ward  
Chells County Division

### KEY

-  EXISTING DISTRICT / BOROUGH WARD
-  AREA TO BE TRANSFERRED

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 2012. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England GD100049926 2012.

## What happens next?

24 The Commission has now completed its review. It is now up to the Secretary of State to take a decision on whether to:

- accept and implement the changes we recommend;
- modify our recommendations and make an order to implement those modified changes;
- take no action; or
- request us to carry out another review

25 Before taking his decisions there will be a four week period for representations to be made to the Secretary of State about the proposed boundary change. This period will run from 15 May 2012 until 12 June 2012.

26 You can make representations on the boundary change by emailing [LocalGovernmentBoundaries@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:LocalGovernmentBoundaries@communities.gsi.gov.uk) quoting 'East Hertfordshire and Stevenage PABR' in the subject box, or by writing to:

**East Hertfordshire and Stevenage Principal Area Boundary Review**

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London, SW1E 5DU

27 More details on principal area boundary reviews, including references to the legislation that we have to adhere to, can be found in our 'Principal Area Boundary Reviews: technical guidance', published in May 2011, available on our website, [www.lgbce.org.uk/guidance-policy-and-publications](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/guidance-policy-and-publications)