

Moreton on Lugg – Community Governance Review

Phase 1 Consultation Response

From 1 February to the 6 April, Herefordshire Council conducted a parish wide consultation with the community of Moreton on Lugg in connection with their community governance review. The community were asked to provide their views on a perceived border anomaly where it was proposed that a small number of local properties may be better represented in the neighbouring parish of Wellington.

The consultation was made available on-line for anyone to respond to via the Herefordshire Council website. Hard copies were made available on request. The consultation was also promoted using social media, local newsletters and the parish council web-site.

Consultation response:

No responses to the consultation were received. While this does not indicate positive support for this proposal, it also indicates that there is not strong opposition to the proposals. It is important to note that the parish council has indicated its support for the perceived boundary anomaly to be addressed.

Parishioners in Moreton-on-Lugg should also note that the neighbouring parish of Wellington is supportive of the boundary anomaly being addressed. Wellington is also conducting a community governance review and has asked its local community to consider the same perceived boundary anomaly. Wellington received one response to its consultation indicating support for the proposal.

The effect of this change would mean that the area and houses marked 'A' on the map would transfer from Moreton-on-Lugg's parish governance over to Wellington parish governance arrangements.

National government guidance notes that 'A review of parish boundaries is an opportunity to put in place strong boundaries, tied to firm ground detail, and remove anomalous parish boundaries. Since the new boundaries are likely to be used to provide the building blocks for district ward, London borough ward, county division and parliamentary constituency boundaries in future reviews for such councils, it is important that principal councils seek to address parish boundary issues at regular intervals'.

Recommendation: The balance of evidence indicates that there are sufficient grounds to progress to formally proposing that the boundary anomaly affecting a small number of properties adjacent to the A49 near Marsh House farm and Westfields be reviewed and addressed. This will necessitate a minor ward boundary change between the Sutton Walls and Queenswood ward.

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Phase 2 Consultation Response

From 11 May to 29 June, Herefordshire Council conducted a parish wide consultation with the community in the Moreton on Lugg parish on their community governance review proposals. This followed a first wave of consultation where the community were asked to provide their views on proposals to move a small number of local properties, currently located in Moreton on Lugg, to the neighbouring parish of Wellington.

Following the first phase of consultation consultees were supportive of this proposal and the following recommendation was made:

Recommendation: The balance of evidence indicates that there are sufficient grounds to progress to formally proposing that the boundary anomaly affecting a small number of properties adjacent to the A49 near Marsh House farm and Westfields be reviewed and addressed. This will necessitate a minor ward boundary change between the Sutton Walls and Queenswood ward.

Based upon the above recommendation, a phase 2 consultation was undertaken to test levels of community support or opposition for merging the group parish into a single parish. The consultation was open to anyone to respond to on-line via Herefordshire Council website. Hard copies were made available on request. The consultation was also targeted and promoted using social media, local newsletters and the parish council web-site.

The metrics from the social media campaigns indicate that 9,054 people received details of the Moreton on Lugg community governance review consultations and fact sheets. This generated 159 'clicked links' through to the consultation pages.

In addition, fact sheets and maps were made available alongside the consultation so that those responding to the consultation could review further information on the changes being proposed. This included the existing boundary lines between the adjacent lying parishes/wards and the new boundary lines that would result from the community supporting such a change. In addition, the fact sheets provided local information on local population figures, projected growth, information on the local neighbourhood plan and consequential changes to local council tax for any homes directly affected by a possible ward boundary change.

Consultation response:

No responses to the phase 2 consultation were received. While this does not indicate positive support for this proposal, it also indicates that there is not strong opposition to it. It is important to note that Moreton on Lugg parish council has indicated its support to address the perceived boundary anomaly.

However, the houses that are in scope of this review, Aylus Cottages, did respond directly to the Wellington community governance review noting their support for the proposed changes. In their response they noted that *'We live at Aylus Hill Cottages and feel more affinity to Wellington parish'*.

National government guidance notes that 'A review of parish boundaries is an opportunity to put in place strong boundaries, tied to firm ground detail, and remove anomalous parish boundaries. Since the new boundaries are likely to be used to provide the building blocks for district ward, London borough ward, county division and parliamentary constituency boundaries in future reviews for such councils, it is important that principal councils seek to address parish boundary issues at regular intervals'.

Triangulation:

Parishioners in Moreton-on-Lugg should also note that the neighbouring parish of Wellington is supportive of the same boundary anomaly being addressed. Wellington is also conducting a community governance review and has asked its local community to consider the same perceived boundary anomaly. Wellington received two responses to their consultation both of which indicated support for the proposal.

Recommendation: *That the parish boundary in the Moreton on Lugg parish and the parish of Wellington be moved between Queenswood and Sutton Walls to enable two properties, namely Aylus Cottages, to move from the parish of Moreton on Lugg into the parish of Wellington and that this proposal does not require other changes to the existing governance arrangements for the parishes affected*

The effect of this change would mean that the area and houses marked 'A' on the map would transfer from Moreton-on-Lugg's parish governance over to Wellington parish governance arrangements. This will necessitate a minor ward boundary change between the Sutton Walls and Queenswood ward.

Resource implications: No financial implications, a small amount of staff time will be required to update the electoral register following the boundary realignment.

