

July 2018 report for Hawstead Parish Council.

Local issues

Boundary Changes

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published their draft recommendations for the West Suffolk Council ward boundaries. They will be consulting on their ward boundaries between now and 27 August 2018.

You can view the draft recommendations at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk>. The page includes interactive maps, a report detailing the recommendations and details of how to respond to their consultation.

For ease, I have attached the report which outlines the draft recommendations and included a direct link to the interactive consultation page: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/13251>

It's important to note that this is the last opportunity to influence the Commission's recommendations before they are finalised. They will consider every representation with equal weight, whether it is submitted by an individual, a local group or an organisation. It's very important that people and organisations respond to tell the Commission what they like about the ward proposals and how they can be improved.

Representations should be made through the Commission's interactive consultation portal, by email to reviews@lgbce.org.uk or in writing to:

Review Officer (West Suffolk)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor, Windsor House,
50 Victoria Street,
London,
SW1H 0TL

Extract from <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk> featuring the proposal for Horringer and Rougham .

The Councils proposed two options in this area. The option we are adopting is for two single-councillor wards: a single-councillor Horringer ward comprising the parishes of Great Whelnetham, Little Whelnetham, Hawstead, Horringer, Ickworth and Nowton, and a single-councillor Rougham ward comprising the parishes of Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield, Bradfield St Clare and Bradfield St George, and the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish that lies to the south of the A14. The Councils proposed including the area to the north of the parish in a Bury St Edmunds ward in this option, and as outlined above, we consider that this warding

pattern would provide for the best adherence to the Commission's statutory criteria. The Councils' second option here combined a number of different parishes into a two-councillor ward, but we did not consider that this ward used strong boundaries, and it would have significant knock-on effects elsewhere, and as such we are not proposing to adopt it.

Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council made a submission both to the Council and to the LGBCE outlining an alternative proposal for their parish, as the Parish Council stated that the entire parish should be included in one ward. The Parish Council's proposal stated that their preferred pattern of wards would have all of Rushbrooke with Rougham included with Bradfield St George and Bradfield St Clare parishes. Whilst this arrangement would provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality in the proposed

Rougham ward (3%), the parish of Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield would need to be placed in the proposed Horringer ward, which would then have a variance of 24%. To retain Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield in the Parish Council's proposed Rougham ward would result in that ward having a variance of 19%. We acknowledge the strength of feeling in the area regarding the parish of Rushbrooke with Rougham, and that the Parish Council's proposed ward reflects the community identity of the area, but the proposal would have significant knock-on effects to the surrounding areas; we would have to make significant changes across the district to accommodate the alterations in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality.

We are proposing to make an alteration to the Councils' proposed Rougham ward, partly in response to Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council's submission. The Councils' proposals included the entirety of the parish to the north of A14 in a ward with areas of Bury St Edmunds. However, on our visit to the area, we noted that the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish to the east of Sow Lane was significantly more rural in character than the area undergoing development in the north-west of the parish. We are therefore proposing to include the area of the parish to the east of Sow Lane in the proposed Rougham ward. Subject to this amendment, we are proposing to adopt the Councils' Rougham ward, which would be represented by one councillor and would have a variance of 10% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

A number of responses were received by the Councils regarding the proposed Horringer ward, which were supportive of the single-councillor ward proposed here. The Councils had also proposed another option here which involved combining Rougham and Horringer wards together, but submissions received did not support this option and we are not proposing to adopt it. We consider that the single-32 councillor Horringer ward follows strong boundaries and the submissions suggest that it reflects the communities in the area. We are therefore proposing to include the Councils' proposed Horringer ward, which would be represented by one councillor and have a variance of 1% by 2023, as part of our draft recommendations.

The Councils' proposed Chedburgh & Chevington ward comprises the parishes of Chedburgh, Chevington, Dalham, Depden, Hargrave, Lidgate and Ousden. Depden Parish Council responded to the Councils' consultation and stated that the parish had closer community links with Wickhambrook and should be in a ward with that parish; however, to include Wickhambrook in this ward would result in a variance of 47%, and to move Depden parish into the neighbouring Hundon & Wickhambrook ward would result in a variance of 18% in that ward. We do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify such high variances, or the knock-on effects of attempting to mitigate these variances.

We are therefore proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed single-councillor Chedburgh & Chevington ward, which is forecast to have a variance of -3% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

Locality Budget. Defibrillator- costings needed.

Borough

Bury St Edmunds is used as the backdrop of a major movie the town hosted the makers of the film 'The Personal History of David Copperfield' between Monday 2 and Thursday 5 July, with filming taking place across several areas of Bury St Edmunds.

The film is set in period and transformed a small area of the town. There was some disruption, including reduced parking and a road closure.

There have been recent discussions between Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Councils regarding the future arrangements for Barley Homes and the best way to implement our shared ambitions for housing in West Suffolk.

These discussions are continuing and there is agreement that the company remains a good way for West Suffolk to deliver much needed homes for the social and financial benefit of the councils and our communities.

We are working with the County Council, including looking at the current governance, current sites and the future pipeline to ensure Barley Homes remains a viable company and delivers the benefits we want for the council and our communities.

The Civic Service for the last Mayor of St Edmundsbury, Cllr Margaret Marks was held on Sunday June 24th at St Mary's Church, Haverhill. Residents are being urged to have a say on what civic leadership should look like for the new West Suffolk Council.

Public exhibition for town centre site

A public exhibition of designs for the former Post Office site in Bury St Edmunds is now closed.

St Edmundsbury Borough Council moved swiftly to secure first refusal on 17-18 Cornhill after the Post Office announced in 2016 that it was relocating for commercial reasons. The Council completed the purchase for £1.68m in late 2017 and in April, Full Council approved the investment of up to £6.72m to redevelop the site while retaining the historic front.

Leader of the Council, Cllr John Griffiths said: "This is a major investment in the heart of Bury St Edmunds town centre and the future of our local economy. We hope residents and businesses will be just as excited as we are when they see what we are looking to achieve.

"We see this as a landmark development, something which will ignite the imaginations of other landowners and investors particularly in St Andrews Street South where we will create a new shop front. It will also achieve our long term ambition to widen Market Thoroughfare for the good of the town – something that we were previously unable to deliver as we didn't own any of the buildings. These things would be very much less likely to happen had the Council not taken the initiative when it did."

Cllr Alaric Pugh, Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth said: "These designs have already been shaped by what the public had to say during our town centre masterplan engagement last year. We have also been working alongside an advisory group which includes the representatives of businesses and other key town centre partners, and their input has been invaluable.

"This is the first project to come forward from the masterplan. It is also the first one announced under our Growth Investment Strategy which enables us to occasionally to look at schemes such as this, that won't deliver great financial returns to the Council, investments that no commercial investor would consider, but one where we can focus on the wider social and economic benefits that can be achieved on behalf of our local residents and businesses."

The designs also include much needed town centre housing to help toward increasing demand.

To view design images and read further how this directly relates to both the town centre masterplan and the Council's Growth Investment Strategy. Visit

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/cornhill.

The historic Guildhall, in Bury St Edmunds, which has been transformed following a £2million restoration project is now open for business. Follow this link <https://burystedmundsguildhall.org.uk/>

Abbey study finds everything from wolf skulls to air raid shelter

The first of two studies that will shape the future understanding and conservation of the 1000 year old Abbey in Bury St Edmunds has uncovered everything from a wolf's head to an air raid shelter.

The Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership commissioned a heritage assessment late last year with funding from Historic England and St Edmundsbury Borough Council. That study aimed for the first time to bring together all of the historical and archaeological information about the Abbey.

It has gathered together evidence that shows that several other churches had stood on the site before the Abbey. The footings of the Church of St Denis were discovered in an area by the West Front during excavation work in 1957.

The study also found evidence that much of the structure of the Abbey site had survived beyond the dissolution ordered by Henry VIII in 1539. It shows that many of the ruins lie under a deep lay of demolition rubble. It also explains that the cloisters and domestic buildings of the monastery are to the north, unlike most Benedictine foundations, because of the direction of flow of the river.

"There are a number of sketches by artists who visited the site in the 1700s. They provide us with a considerable insight into what has survived - there were considerably more of the abbey ruins than have survived to the present day" said Dr Richard Hoggett the heritage consultant who carried out the study.

The Abbey was founded in 1020 AD by King Cnut in tribute to St Edmund. The former King of East Anglia was slain by invading Danes in 869AD. According to legend he refused to yield to the Danes and so was shot full of arrows and beheaded, a wolf then laying guard to his head.

In the early 10th Century his remains were brought to Bury St Edmunds and with the foundation of the Abbey of St Edmund, the site became a place of national and international pilgrimage.

Such was its importance that it was the chosen for a clandestine meeting of a group of barons in 1214. They met in secret at the Abbey to swear an oath that they would force King John to accept a Charter of Liberties – the Magna Carta. That document is celebrated as playing a key role in the foundation of human rights and democracy, particularly the American Bill of Rights written in 1791 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948

Mike Chester

Borough Councillor -Hawstead, Whepstead, Rede, Chedburgh and Chevington