

9 Frequently Asked Questions

Is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England affiliated to any political party or Government department?

No. We are a completely independent body, and are not part of a Government department. Commission members are not permitted to conduct any political activity or have any party affiliation.

Will an electoral review affect my house value, council tax, insurance premium, stamp duty, postcode, school catchment area or hospital?

No. The review is concerned with electoral matters only; all the above factors are decided by other organisations or factors.

Will an electoral review affect who I can vote for?

Yes. The review will determine your ward or division and, in some cases, your parish ward and you can only vote for candidates who stand for election in those electoral areas. It is for the local political organisations, however, to decide who they want to stand as their candidate in any particular ward or for individuals to stand as independent candidates.

Will an electoral review affect the polling station I can vote at?

It may do. Following the making of our order, your council will need to redefine its polling districts, then identify the most appropriate polling station for each polling district. Councils are already under a statutory obligation to review polling districts and places at regular intervals.

Will an electoral review affect the dates or years of elections?

We can only implement new electoral arrangements in the authority's normal year of election. However, we can make necessary changes to the years in which parish and town council elections take place to ensure that they do so in the same years as district elections in associated district wards. The Secretary of State has separate powers to alter when local elections take place.

My ward is not changing so why do we need an election? Can we not just make the change at a by-election?

We believe that a fresh mandate is necessary for a council that has had an electoral review. Also, even if a new ward has the same boundaries as an old ward, the new ward may return a different share of the total number of councillors on the council. Therefore, we will abolish all of the existing wards and establish new ones that will come into force at a whole-council election.

When the wards are changed what happens to the county division and parliamentary constituency boundaries?

Each review will be of one local authority and we will only look at the electoral arrangements of that authority. Consequently, if we are reviewing a district we will not be altering any county division boundaries, and vice versa. We have no involvement with parliamentary constituency boundaries, which are reviewed by the Boundary Commission for England – a separate body.

When will the changes to district or county electoral arrangements, i.e. wards or divisions and numbers of councillors, come into force?

As soon as practicable at an election of the whole district or county council. If the district normally elects by halves or by thirds there will be a whole-council election to bring the new wards into force, but they will return the district council to elections by halves or by thirds, as soon as practicable afterwards.

When will the changes to parish electoral arrangements, i.e. parish wards and numbers of parish councillors, come into force?

At the next scheduled whole-council elections in the relevant parishes, unless we decide that there can be whole-council elections in those parishes before those scheduled elections. Parish electoral arrangements come into force at the same time as county or district electoral arrangements only if the parish elections take place at the same time as the county or district elections.

Can the external boundaries of the parish, district or county change?

Not as part of an electoral review. For parish boundary changes, the local district council can conduct a review and implement the recommendations, under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. We can conduct boundary reviews of district or county councils, either at the request of the Secretary of State, at the request of the relevant authority or if we identify boundary anomalies which in our view warrant a review.

Can I see the boundaries proposed in your mapping more clearly?

We suggest that you view them on the webpage for your review at:

<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node>

This site enables you to zoom in on the maps to see more detail than you can see on the printed versions. You may find it helpful to compare our draft and final recommendations maps with the current electoral boundaries. We will provide councils with mapping data files for use with Geographic Information Systems (GIS). We will also provide these files on request to other organisations which are party to the Public Sector Mapping Agreement (PSMA).