

Proposed Boundary changes for Herefordshire

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England

News Release 20 June 2012

Have your say on new ward boundaries for Herefordshire

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is asking local people for their help to draw up a new pattern of wards for Herefordshire Council.

At the same time, the Commission has announced that it is minded to accept a proposal to reduce the total number of councillors representing Herefordshire to 54, four fewer than the current arrangements.

The Commission now needs information from people and groups across Herefordshire to help it to produce a new pattern of wards to accommodate 54 councillors.

In drawing up new boundaries, the Commission aims to deliver electoral equality for voters in council elections so that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters. The review also aims to ensure that the new council wards reflect, as far as possible, the interests and identities of communities across the Herefordshire.

Max Caller, Chair of the Commission, said: *“The starting point of an electoral review is for the Commission to take a view on the number of councillors who should represent the authority in future. On the evidence presented to the Commission, we are minded to recommend that Herefordshire should have 54 councillors in future.*

“We’re now asking local people and organisations to help us draw up new wards for Herefordshire. As we develop the recommendations, we’ll take into account local community identities as well as ensuring electoral equality for voters.

“Your views will make a difference.

“We will carefully consider all evidence that is provided during this phase of the review whoever it is from and whether it applies to the whole of Herefordshire or just a small part of it.

“We will publish all the submissions on our website so that local people can see all the various proposals we receive. Residents will then have a further chance to have their say after we publish our draft recommendations in November 2012.”

Local people have until 28 August to submit their views. Further information on the review is available on the LGBCE website at: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/herefordshire-unitary-authority/herefordshire-fer

Additional information

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, defining boundaries for local

elections and the number of councillors to be elected, as well as conducting reviews of local government external boundaries and structures.

2. The aim of an electoral review is to provide for 'electoral equality'; that means each councillor representing approximately the same number of electors. The Commission must also have regard to community identity and interests and providing effective and convenient local government.
3. The types of questions the Commission is asking residents at this stage are: Do you have suggestions about where your ward boundaries should be? Which areas do you identify as your local community? Where do people in your area go to access local facilities such as shops and leisure activities?
4. Residents have from 20 June to 28 August 2012 to have their say about where ward boundaries for Herefordshire's 54 councillors should be drawn. The Commission will then publish its draft recommendations in November 2012 and open a further phase of consultation with local people. New wards are scheduled to come into effect at the 2015 local elections.
5. The Commission's decision on council size means it is 'minded' to recommend 54 councillors for Herefordshire but is not legally bound by that number in its final recommendations and depending on the evidence submitted to it during consultation.
6. Members of the public can have their say on the new ward arrangements by writing to: The Review Officer (Herefordshire) Layden House 76-86 Turnmill Street London EC1M 5LG Or by emailing: reviews@lgbce.org.uk
7. The electoral review of Herefordshire Council is a separate undertaking from the current review of parliamentary constituency boundaries which is being carried out by a separate body (Boundary Commission for England) under different rules and legislation.