

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW  
IN THE UTTLESFORD DISTRICT  
FINAL NOTICE OF DECISION FOR CHANGES TO THE PARISH  
BOUNDARY AT BIRCHANGER AND STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET  
(FORESTHALL PARK)  
AND FOR CHANGES TO ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE  
PARISHES OF BIRCHANGER, LITTLE CANFIELD, STANSTED  
MOUNTFITCHET AND TAKELEY**

The Council is today publishing proposals to change the boundary between the parishes of Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet so as to transfer to the parish of Stansted Mountfitchet the whole of the residential development known as Foresthall Park. The change of boundary will have the effect of transferring to Stansted all land presently in Birchanger parish lying to the north of Forest Hall Road, including Pines Hill. The new boundary (effective from 1 April 2012) will be aligned along the majority of the length of Forest Hall road thus transferring to Birchanger parish land (but no residential properties) south of Forest Hall Road and lying immediately to the west of Parsonage Lane.

Other changes will be made at the same time including new electoral arrangements in the parishes of Birchanger, Little Canfield, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley. However, the Council has decided not to make any change to the boundary between the parishes of Little Canfield and Takeley at the location of the Priors Green residential development. A further review of this area will be carried out in three years time when it is expected that development at this location will be substantially complete.

A further and more detailed explanation of the changes being made, or not being made, and the reasons for these changes, is included as an annex to this notice.

The Council decided in August 2010 to conduct a community governance review (CGR) under its powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the terms of reference and timetable of that review were published at that time.

As part of the CGR, the Council published draft proposals in November 2010 and conducted extensive consultation with local residents, parish councils, and other interested bodies as to those proposals.

After further consideration of the public responses received, the Council agreed final proposals in March 2011. Those proposals are now being published unaltered.

An Order, together with three final proposals maps, is being made on 21 July 2011 and this can be inspected at the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER during office hours from that date onwards. The proposals will be published, in full, on the Council's website at [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk) and can be viewed there from the date of this notice onwards.

The effect of the Order will be to:

- Create new parishes from the existing parishes of Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet by transferring areas of land between those parishes, as shown

in the Order, and as further described in the annex to this notice, with effect from 1 April 2012.

- Implement new electoral arrangements for both of these parishes with effect from the date of the next ordinary election of parish councillors in 2012 (expected to be on 3 May 2012).
- Implement new electoral arrangements for the parishes of Little Canfield and Takeley effective from the same date as above.

The reason for the changes summarised above is to secure that community governance in the parishes reviewed reflects the identities and interests of the communities concerned and is both effective and convenient. In taking these decisions, the Council has had regard to guidance issued jointly by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

Notice of decision published on 18 July 2011

John Mitchell

Chief Executive

Uttlesford District Council

Council Offices

London Road

Saffron Walden

CB11 4ER

(For further information about the proposals described in this notice please contact Peter Snow, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager, on 01799 510430, or at [psnow@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:psnow@uttlesford.gov.uk).)

## **Annex to CGR Decision Notice**

### **Foresthall Park**

The Council has confirmed the proposal to transfer the entire site of the Foresthall Park development into Stansted Mountfitchet parish by realigning the boundary between the parishes of Birchanger and Stansted. The new boundary will run from the existing boundary at Gipsy Lane in a north-easterly direction to the junction with Stansted Road, then in a southerly direction to the junction with Forest Hall Road, then following the centre of that road for nearly its entire length in a generally easterly direction nearly to the junction with Parsonage Lane, and then following the rear boundaries of the properties known as 1 and 2 Parsonage Farm Cottages in a southerly and then easterly direction to a point where it meets with the line of bridleway 27, and then continuing along the length of that bridleway in a generally south-westerly direction to a point on that bridleway where it meets the existing parish boundary south-west of Parsonage Farm. The effect of the change will be to transfer from Birchanger to Stansted Mountfitchet parish all land presently in Birchanger lying to the north of Forest Hall Road, including properties at Pines Hill; and transfer from Stansted Mountfitchet to Birchanger parish that area of land to the south of Forest Hall Road lying in between the new boundary line and the existing boundary.

The Council has decided that the boundary change above should be accompanied by the following revised electoral schemes for the two parishes concerned:

- Birchanger Parish Council will retain a parish council electing nine councillors with no division into wards.
- Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council will retain a parish council electing 15 councillors but the balance between the two wards will change so that the representation of Stansted North ward will reduce from seven to six councillors and the representation of Stansted South ward will increase from eight to nine councillors, thus better reflecting the balance between the number of electors in the two wards.
- The ordinary parish elections scheduled to take place in May 2011 were postponed by one year until the date of the ordinary election of parish councillors in 2012 (probably 3 May).

The justification for this proposal is that the unification of the whole of the Foresthall Park development will reflect the interests and identities of the local community, especially the residents of the new residential site, and lead to the more effective and convenient delivery of local services. It is considered that Foresthall Park is part of the natural extension of the limits of Stansted village south of Stoney Common Road, Stoney Common and Manor Road. A new boundary following the line of Forest Hall Road for most of its length will act as a suitable demarcation between the two communities of Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet and form a sustainable long term boundary.

### **Priors Green**

The Council has decided that there should be no change to the boundary between the parishes of Little Canfield and Takeley at Priors Green. The residential development at Priors Green overlaps the historic parish boundary so that roughly two thirds of the development lies in the parish of Takeley and the remaining one third in the parish of Little Canfield. This is compounded by the allocation of postal

addresses to the properties located at Priors Green, all of which have been allocated Little Canfield postcodes.

During the course of the review, the Council was unable to determine with any clarity the community of interest of residents living at Priors Green. This is in spite of the fact that the development appears to form a single cohesive residential area sharing a number of common community facilities. Many of the new residents have arrived from outside the Uttlesford area where there is no history or culture of parish administration. Discussion about the position of the parish boundary is not seen as necessarily relevant to the way that local services are provided.

It is undoubtedly true that the community of Priors Green is divided artificially by a boundary that no longer reflects the division between the two nearby village communities. However, the review concluded that none of the options on offer would satisfactorily bring about a boundary division that would better reflect community interests and identities.

Possible solutions examined during the review were the wholesale transfer of the Priors Green development site to either Little Canfield or Takeley, and the creation of a new parish of Priors Green (or other agreed name), entirely separate from the two existing parishes. All of these solutions gathered some support but, as explained above, none of them assembled enough support to justify any change being made to existing arrangements. It is hoped that the pause of three years will enable the process of integration between the new development and the established communities to gather pace and to enable a consensus view to emerge.

For all of the above reasons, the Council concluded that no change should be made to the existing boundary but that a further review should be conducted three years after the conclusion of this review when full occupation of the site is expected to have taken place.

However, it was decided to adopt new electoral schemes for the existing parishes of Little Canfield and Takeley as described below:

- Little Canfield will retain a parish council electing nine councillors (an increase from the present seven) with no division of the parish into wards.
- Takeley will retain a parish council electing 13 councillors (an increase from the present 11), again with no division of the parish into wards.
- The ordinary parish elections scheduled to take place in May 2011 will be postponed for one year until the date of the ordinary election of parish councillors in 2012 (expected to be on 3 May).

John Mitchell  
Chief Executive  
Uttlesford District Council  
Council Offices  
London Road  
Saffron Walden  
CB11 4ER  
18 July 2011