



The
**Local Government
Boundary Commission**
for England

23 August 2011

Dear Clerk,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF PURBECK

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has today commenced an information gathering stage for new electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the review, and to seek your views. Purbeck is being reviewed in order to improve the levels of electoral representation in the District, which have become imbalanced since the last review. Based on December 2010 figures, the number of electors represented by the councillors in 6 of the 14 wards varies by more than 10% from the average for the District.

The review aims to make sure, as far as possible, that every councillor in each ward of the District represents the same number of electors. The review will also take into account the identities and interests of local communities in the area.

We are now beginning an information gathering stage to develop a new pattern of warding arrangements for Purbeck. The Commission has undertaken preliminary discussions with Purbeck District Council and is currently minded to recommend a council size of 27 councillors. Proposals for warding arrangements should therefore be based on this council size. This stage of the review will run from 23 August 2011 to 14 November 2011.

After the closing date, the Commission will formulate draft recommendations, which we expect to publish in January 2012. An eight-week period of public consultation will follow this, during which time we would very much welcome your views on what is being proposed. Following this consultation period, the Commission will formulate final recommendations; we expect to publish these in Summer 2012.

Please note that in the interests of transparency, copies of all representations we receive during this review will be placed on the Commission's website, at www.lgbce.org.uk

The Commission will make recommendations for the number of councillors, the number and boundaries of wards, and the names of wards. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils. The Commission cannot, as part of this review, consider changes to the external boundaries of a parish, or create new parishes. Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, changes to external parish boundaries are the responsibility of local authorities.

Your council's views on any aspect of the review would be very welcome. There are two particular issues for parish and town councils in an electoral review:

First, we may make recommendations for parish electoral arrangements (i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish *wards* and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward). We cannot change the external boundaries of parishes, and will **only** make recommendations on the parish wards as a consequence of our electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council.

Second, your parish may wish to comment on the electoral arrangements for Purbeck and propose the location of ward boundaries. It is open to the Commission to put forward recommendations, for example in the interests of electoral equality or community identity, that parishes or parish wards be located in a specific electoral ward of the District. However, all decisions made by the Commission will be based on information gathering. Therefore it is important that any representations from parishes or residents take into account community identity and local interests, as well as convenient and effective local government and electoral equality.

As to community identity, we particularly want to develop our understanding on areas communities identify with and how and why. We are interested in all local information which enhances this understanding. In your submission, think about areas you identify to be your local community. For example, where do people in your area go to access local facilities such as shops and leisure activities?

I have enclosed a poster announcing the start of the review. It would be much appreciated if you could put it on display on a notice board or similar, and we invite you to take any other steps you consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of your residents and other interested parties.

A map of all areas in Purbeck, and the electorate figures for each area will be available on our website. This information may be useful when making any representations to us. Our guidance is also available on the *Guidance, policy and publications* page of our website.

Any representations should be made to the Commission by **14 November 2011** to the address below:

Review Officer (Purbeck)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London
EC1M 5LG

Submissions can also be made electronically by emailing the LGBCE at reviews@lgbce.org.uk.