

Community Governance Review Note – June 2026 – Laverstock & Ford, and Idmiston

What is a Community Governance Review?

1. A Community Governance Review (CGR) is a process to provide opportunity to review and make changes to governance arrangements for town and parish councils and parish areas.
2. This is to ensure that they continue to be a) reflective of the identity and interest of local communities, and b) that they are as efficient and effective in their governance as can be. These are the statutory criteria on which any review is based.
3. CGRs are undertaken in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

What can a CGR change?

4. A CGR can make a number of changes to parish governance when there is clear evidence to do so:
 - it can make changes to parish areas - including changes to boundaries between parishes, mergers of two or more parishes, creating a new parish out of part of one or more existing parishes
 - it can make changes to electoral arrangements within parish areas - including changes to the number of parish councillors, introducing or changing parish warding arrangements
 - it can accommodate changing the name of a parish (though this can also be undertaken through a process under S75 of the Local Government Act 1972)
 - it can accommodate the grouping together of parishes under a common parish council.
5. A CGR cannot directly change Electoral Division boundaries (ie, Divisions of Wiltshire Council). However, in some circumstances it can request changes to those Divisions by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) as a result of parish changes.

Who carries out a CGR?

6. Principal councils (district councils or unitary councils) have the power to carry out community governance reviews and put in place or make changes to local community (parish) governance arrangements.
7. Wiltshire Council has established an Electoral Review Committee to oversee CGRs. The Committee will make recommendations relating to any review to Full Council, who

make the final decision. Any decisions made must have been subject to public consultation.

Why and when is a CGR carried out?

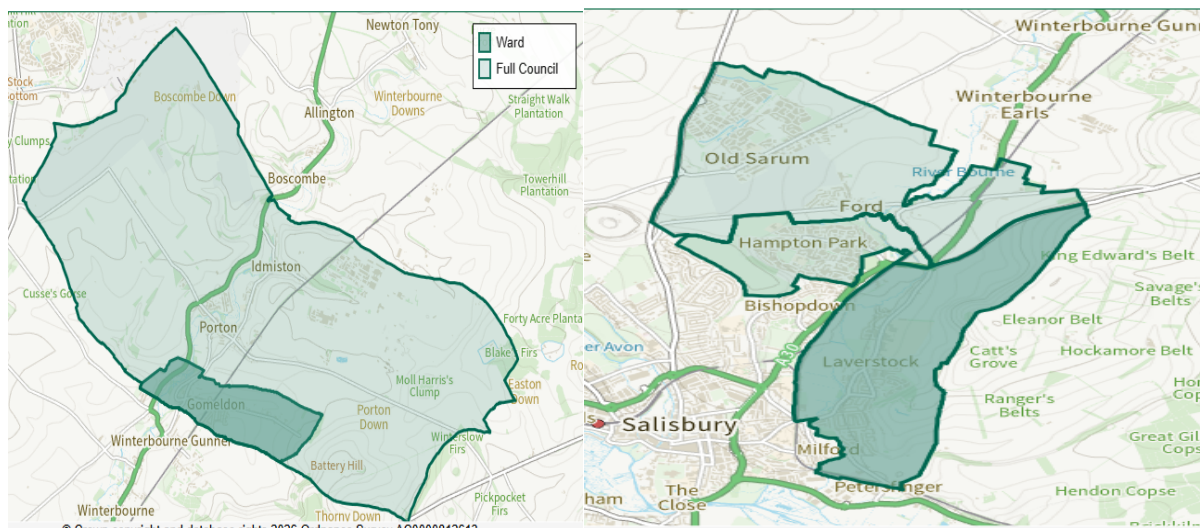
8. As principal authority Wiltshire Council may schedule a review in response to a reasonable request from an individual, group or parish when it considers it practicable to do so, except those that are the result of a petition containing sufficient signatures which must be reviewed once the petition has been verified. Wiltshire Council may also suggest a review when it considers it appropriate to do so.
9. The Electoral Review Committee will be responsible for deciding when it is practicable to review requests which have been received.
10. Reasons for a Community Governance Review can include, but are not limited to:
 - changes in population
 - housing growth
 - anomalous boundaries
 - periodic reviews
11. The process for a CGR takes approximately 10-12 months. Any changes arising from a CGR usually take effect at the next ordinary elections.

Potential CGR in Laverstock & Ford, and Idmiston

12. The Electoral Review Committee will decide areas to include in its next CGR at a meeting on 7 July 2026.
13. The Committee is to be recommended to launch a review of parishes within the Southern Wiltshire Area Board area, including Laverstock & Ford and Idmiston.

Background Information

14. The LGBCE conducted a review of Wiltshire Council Divisions in 2017-2019.
15. As part of that review they created the Divisions of Old Sarum and Lower Bourne Valley (comprising Winterbourne, and parts of the parish of Laverstock & Ford, and parts of Idmiston), Winterslow and Upper Bourne Valley (comprising the remainder of Idmiston, Allington, Newton Tony, Winterslow, and Firsdown), and Laverstock (comprising the remainder of the parish of Laverstock & Ford).
16. The present warding arrangements for Idmiston and Laverstock & Ford are a consequence of the Electoral Review conducted by the LGCBE. When they created Divisions which split a parish, they were required to create associated warding arrangements.



17. Notably, the LGBCE created the current Divisions in opposition to the submissions of Wiltshire Council, Idmiston Parish Council, and Laverstock & Ford Parish Council, who raised a number of concerns on electoral equality and community grounds.

Potential review

18. There are a number of potential issues around the arrangements which the Committee feels should be explored, now that they have been in place for a full electoral cycle. For example:
- Should Idmiston parish continue to be warded?
 - If it should, are the present two wards the most effective arrangement?
 - Laverstock & Ford is required to be warded due to its size, but do those wards reflect the local communities?
 - Should Ford be included in a ward with Laverstock village?
 - What is the impact of recent and incoming development (the Committee must take account of the projected situation 5 years from start of the review)?
 - Are there any other boundary or governance issues either council feels should be reviewed?
19. Wiltshire Council may not be able to enact all such changes, if they were desired, but the Committee intends to engage with the local parishes to explore options.
20. It is particularly interested in the warding around Old Sarum given increases in development, and that the Division has an extremely high electorate.

Further history

21. In 2015/16 a previous review looked at the boundary between Laverstock & Ford and Salisbury City, ultimately rejecting any proposed merger of the two parishes and transferring an area of land from Salisbury to Laverstock & Ford.

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22. As far as the Committee is aware, no one has suggested revisiting those issues. This could conceivably be raised during any CGR, and would be assessed taking account of any views and evidence at that time