

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

Setting the Context

Basildon District Council has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review of the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet area of the District, following receipt of a community governance petition.

In undertaking the review, the Council will be guided by Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972, Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and The Electoral Commission in April 2008, and the following regulations which guide, in particular, consequential matters arising from the Review: Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 (SI2008/625); Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008 (SI2008/626).

Section 81 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires the Council to publish its Terms of Reference in a Review. These Terms of Reference will be published by placing a copy on public deposit at the main offices of Basildon District Council, The Basildon Centre, St. Martin's Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL and on the Council's website at www.basildon.gov.uk.

The matter on which the Community Governance Review is to focus are set out later in these Terms of Reference

Why is the Council undertaking the Review?

The Council is undertaking this Community Governance Review in response to a petition which was submitted to Basildon District Council, as detailed below: -

PETITION FOR A COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW TO BE UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT (Part 4, Chapter 3)

To Basildon District Council:

We the undersigned, each being a local government elector for the area of the following proposed new parish council, in pursuance of the rights conferred upon us by the above Act of Parliament, hereby recommend you to undertake a community governance review which should consider;

- A) the creation of a new local government parish council for the neighbourhood of Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet;*

- B) that the area of which shall be the same as that outlined on the attached map, part of the electoral ward/wards of Pitsea South East.*
- C) that the new parish council should be called Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council.*

A copy of the map showing the area referred to in the petition is attached as Appendix A to these Terms of Reference.

The petition was signed by the requisite number of local government electors for the area, as required by Section 80(3) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and was deemed to be a valid petition. Therefore, the Council must undertake a Community Governance Review in accordance with Section 83(2) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review is a review of the whole or part of the district area to consider one or more of the following:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding), and
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

Parish Governance in the Basildon District

The Council believes that parish councils play an important role in terms of community empowerment at the local level as reflected in its Corporate Strategic Improvement Plan 2008-2011.

The Government also made a commitment to parish council's in 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (Local Government White Paper, October 2006) in which it emphasises: "Ultimately, the recommendations made in a community governance review ought to bring about improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services"

One of the overarching aims of these Terms of Reference is that it endeavours to lay out clear policies (for example, with regard to councillor numbers), which will ensure that electors will be treated equitably and fairly.

Who undertakes the Review?

The Council's Cabinet will approve the terms of reference for this review and deal with all matters in connection with this review, however the Cabinet will make final recommendations to full Council following the review for their consideration and making of any necessary Reorganisation Order. The naming of parishes is specifically reserved to the Full Council.

The lead officer with regard to this review is Mr. Paul Burkinshaw, Democratic Services Manager, Basildon District Council.

CONSULTATION

How the Council proposes to conduct consultations during the Review?

The Council has drawn up and now publishes this Terms of Reference document. This document lays out the aims of the review, the legislation that guides it and some of the policies that the Council considers important in the review.

In coming to its recommendations in the review, the Council will need to take account of the views of local people. The Act requires the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the review and to take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

As set out in the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy "the different views and opinions of those consulted will be respected and valued throughout the consultation and engagement process", the information provided "will be clear, concise, in plain language and available in appropriate formats" and will be "open and meaningful".

The Council intends to write to all households in the area proposed for a Parish Council and facilitate a drop in session, both when inviting initial submissions and seeking views on the draft proposals. The Council will use information from the Local Land and Property Gazetteer as the source of properties in the area. Drop in sessions will also be held in the proposed area of the Parish Council.

The Council will also identify any other person or body who it feels may have an interest in the review and write to them inviting them to submit their views at both stages of consultation during the review and will be pleased to receive comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representations; any such person that makes representation during the initial invitation to submit proposals will be invited to make comments in respect of the draft proposals.

The Council intends to clearly publish all decisions taken in the review and the reasons for taking those decisions and will work towards the Government's view in undertaking the review that "Community Governance Reviews should be conducted transparently so that local people and other local stakeholders who may have an interest are made aware of the outcome of the decisions taken on them and the reasons behind these decisions".

In accordance with the Act, representations received in connection with the review will be taken into account, and steps will be taken to notify consultees of the outcome of the review by publishing them on the Council's website at www.basildon.gov.uk, through general press releases, placing key documents on public deposit at The Basildon Centre and at libraries and will communicate the final outcome of the review by writing to all households in the area concerned by the review.

As required by Section 93 (8) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the District Council will notify Essex County Council that a review is to be undertaken, provide them with a copy of the terms of reference for the review and will consult them on the matters under review.

Ho to contact us?

Any queries regarding this review should be directed to:

Mr. Paul Burkinshaw
Democratic Services Manager
Basildon District Council,
The Basildon Centre,
St. Martin's Square,
Basildon,
Essex,
SS14 1DL
Tel: (01268) 294422
E-Mail: paul.burkinshaw@basildon.gov.uk

A timetable for the Review

Publication of these Terms of Reference formally begins the review, which must be completed with twelve months.

The table below details indicative timescales for the review.

Action	Timetable	Date
Publication of Terms of Reference	-	19 March 2009 (following approval by the Cabinet)
Introductory Stage – Invite initial submissions	2 months	1 April – 31 May 2009
Preparation of Draft Proposals	1 month	1 – 30 June 2009
Publication of Draft Proposals	-	July 2009 (following approval by the Cabinet)
Consultation on Draft Proposals	2 months	1 August 2009 – 30 September 2009
Preparation of Final Proposals	1 month	1 October – 31 October 2009
Publication of Final Proposals	-	November 2009
Publication of Recommendations	-	November/December 2009
Publication of any Reorganisation Order by full Council	Thereafter	December 2009

ELECTORATE FORECASTS

The electorate forecasts for the district

The Council has used the Register of Electors as at 1 January 2009 in providing the existing parish electorate figures. The number of electors in the polling district of Bowers Gifford which covers the same area as that proposed in the petition was 1609 as at 1 January 2009.

When the Council comes to consider the electoral arrangements of the parishes in its area, it is required to consider any change in the number or distribution of the electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant increases in the number of electors in the area of the proposed parish over the next 5 years, other than the general average increase in the ward, which has occurred over recent years. There has been little increase in the estimated population of the Pitsea South East Ward since the Census 2001, as detailed in the ward profile attached at Appendix B.

Demographic trends and influences in our area

A detail of the profile of the Pitsea South East produced by the Council using information from the Census 2001 is attached at Appendix B. There has not been any significant development in the proposed area of the Parish Council since 2001, which would have had any major effect on the demographics of the area. Furthermore, as it is not anticipated that there will be any significant increases in development and subsequently the number of electors in the area over the next five years, it is thereby not anticipated that there will be any significant change in the demographics of the area.

THE PRESENT STRUCTURE OF PARISHES AND THEIR ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Present structures of parish governance in our area

There are currently seven town/parish council's in the district as set out in the table below:

Town/Parish Council	Wards	Ward Representation	Overall Representation	Ratio of Electors to Councillors	Council Ward
Billericay Town Council	East Ward	8	20	1104.1	Billericay East, Billericay West and Burstead
	West Ward	9			
	South East Ward	3			
Great Burstead and South Green Parish Council	N/A	N/A	8	581	Burstead
Little Burstead Parish Council	N/A	N/A	5	63.2	Burstead

Noak Bridge Parish Council	N/A	N/A	7	303.85	Crouch
Ramsden Crays Parish Council	N/A	N/A	5	189.2	Crouch
Ramsden Bellhouse Parish Council	N/A	N/A	5	226	Crouch
Shotgate Parish Council	N/A	N/A	7	388.57	Wickford North

Guidance in connection with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act requires the consent of the Electoral Commission to be obtained if the Council may wish to alter the electorate arrangements for a parish whose existing arrangements were put in place within the previous five years by an order made either by the Secretary of State or the Electoral Commission. It is not anticipated that any such consent will be required following this review.

Previously unparished areas

The Council is required by law to consider other forms of community governance as alternatives or stages towards establishing parish councils. There may be other arrangements for community representation or community engagement in an area, including area committees, neighbourhood management programmes, tenant management organisations, area or community forums, residents' and tenants' associations or community associations, which may be more appropriate to some areas than parish councils, or may provide stages building towards the creation of a parish council, which are already successfully creating opportunities for engagement, empowerment and co-ordination in local communities.

Within the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet area of the district, there is only currently the Pitsea South East Community Panel formally established.

The Council will be mindful of such other forms of community governance in its consideration of whether parish governance is most appropriate in certain areas. However, the Council also notes that what sets parish councils apart from other kinds of governance is the fact that they are a democratically elected tier of local government with directly elected representatives, independent of other council tiers and budgets, and possessing specific powers for which they are democratically accountable.

PARISH AREAS

Introduction

This review considers the creation of a new parish.

The legislation requires that the council must have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review:

- Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
- Is effective and convenient, and
- Takes into account any other arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area.

Parishes

- The Council is anxious to ensure that electors should be able to identify clearly with the parish in which they are resident because it considers that this sense of identity and community lends strength and legitimacy to the parish structure, creates a common interest in parish affairs, encourages participation in elections to the parish council, leads to representative and accountable government, engenders visionary leadership and generates a strong, inclusive community with a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.
- The Council considers that parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest, with their own sense of identity; the feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are primary considerations in this review.
- The Council notes the government's Guidance that community cohesion should be taken into account in this review. The Council's Opportunities for All Scheme details the Council's commitment to "creating a cohesive community in which people of different backgrounds get on well together and share a 'sense of place'" and "providing strong leadership, both as a Council and via the Local Strategic Partnership, to create a strong, inclusive and cohesive Basildon".

Boundaries

- The Council considers that the boundaries between parishes will normally reflect the 'no-man's land' between communities and represented by areas of low population or pronounced physical barriers. These barriers will be either natural or man-made; they might include coastal features, rivers, marshland, moorland and mountain or man-made features such as parks, canals, railways, major roads and motorways – those barriers that oblige the residents of an affected area to have little in common with the remainder of the parish to which they may have been allotted.
- The Council considers that 'natural' settlements or settlements as they are defined in the Local Development Framework/Local Plan should not in normal circumstances be partitioned by parish boundaries.
- The Council will endeavour to select boundaries that are and are likely to remain easily identifiable.

The pattern of community representation and community engagement

In some areas of the authority there are local residents' associations, community forums etc. that make a distinct contribution to the community. The Council will be mindful of these local forums for community representation and engagement and will consider them as foundations for / stages towards the creation of parishes within democratically elected councils.

Viability

- The Council is anxious to ensure that parishes should be viable and should possess a precept that enables them to actively and effectively promote the well-being of their residents and to contribute to the real provision of services in their areas in an economic and efficient manner.
- Some parishes are anxious to take on the new power of well-being provided in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; others hold Quality Parish status, while others are anxious to enter into charters with principal councils for the provision of local services. The Council sees these initiatives as important measures of effective and convenient local government and will respect them in this review.
- The Council recognises that, in its more rural areas, a strong sense of community can prevail over an extensive but otherwise sparsely populated area. Parishes in these areas may have limited capacity to facilitate service provision and effective local government; even so, arrangements in these areas, when they accord with the wishes of the inhabitants of the parish, will at least represent convenient local government.

The Council is committed to ensure that the review leads to parishes that are based on areas, which reflect community identity and interest and which are viable as an administrative unit.

THE GROUPING OF PARISHES

Introduction

A grouping order is permitted under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1972. It may be best considered as a working alliance of parishes that have come together under a common parish council, with the electors of each of the grouped parishes electing a designated number of councillors to the Council. It has found to be an effective way of ensuring parish government for small parishes that might otherwise be unviable as separate units, while otherwise guaranteeing their separate community identity.

General Principles

Under the Act, smaller new parishes of less than 150 electors will be unable to establish their own parish council. The government has stated that, "in some cases, it may be preferable to group together parishes so as to allow a common parish council to be formed...such proposals are worth considering and may avoid the need for substantive changes to parish boundaries, the creation of new parishes or the abolition of very small parishes where, despite their size, they still reflect community identity".

This guidance is noted by the Council, however, it is not anticipated that this review will be required to consider grouping of parishes.

NAMES AND STYLES

The naming of parishes

With regard to the naming of parishes, the Council will endeavour to reflect existing local or historic place-names, and will give a strong presumption in favour of names proposed by local interested parties.

The Council notes that Government considers that composite names of parishes are rarely in the interests of effective and convenient local government and encourages avoidance of composite names other than in exceptional circumstances where the demands of history, local connections or the preservation of local ties make a pressing case for the retention of distinctive traditional names. The Council will consider this when making any proposals regarding naming of parishes.

There are legal requirements (as defined in Section 76 of the Local Government Act 1972), particularly with regard to subsequent notification, with regard to the naming of parishes, and the Council will be mindful of these.

Alternative Styles

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 has introduced 'alternative styles' for parishes. If adopted, the 'alternative style' would replace the style "parish". However, only one of the three prescribed styles can be adopted: "community", "neighbourhood" or "village".

The implications of a change of style can be illustrated as follows: The Community of Greenfield; Whitewell Neighbourhood Council, or The Village Councillors for the Village of Redstone. In addition, it should be noted that the style of "town" is still available to a parish. However, for as long as the parish has an 'alternative style', it will not be able to have the status of a town and vice versa.

Where a new parish is created, the Council will make recommendations as to the geographical name of the new parish and as to whether or not it should have one of the alternative styles.

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

What does 'Electoral Arrangements' mean?

An important part of the Council's review will comprise giving consideration to 'Electoral Arrangements'. The term covers the way in which a council is constituted for the parish. It covers:

- The ordinary year in which elections are held;
- The number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- The division (or not) of the parish into wards for the purposes of electing councillors;
- The number and boundaries of any such wards;
- The number of councillors to be elected for any such ward
- The name of any such ward.

Ordinary year of election

The Local Government Act 1972 states that ordinary election of parish councillors shall take place in 1976, 1979 and every fourth year thereafter (i.e. 2007, 2011, 2015 etc.). However, the government has indicated that it would want the parish electoral cycle to coincide with the cycle for the district/borough council, so that the costs of elections can be shared. If the review finds that it will be appropriate to hold an election for parish councillors, for example to a newly formed parish, at an earlier date than the next scheduled ordinary elections, the terms of office of any newly elected parish councillors will be so reduced as to enable the electoral cycle to revert to the normal cycle in the district / borough / London borough at the next ordinary elections.

The Council will consider this guidance as part of its review, however the District Council elects by thirds i.e. elections are held every 3 years in 4 with the next elections due to be held in May 2010. The establishment of any Parish Council arising from this review, which it is expected would take effect from 1 April 2010, with the first elections in May, would therefore accord with the normal cycle of elections in the district. The Council will though take into consideration the cycle of elections of existing parish councils in the district.

A council for a parish

The legislation lays down the different duties that the Council has with regard to the creation of a council for a parish:

- Where the number of electors is 1,000 or more – a parish council must be created;
- Where the number of electors is 151-999 – a parish council may be created, with a parish meeting being the alternative form of parish governance;
- Where the number of electors is 150 or fewer – a parish council is not created.

What considerations cover the number of parish councillors?

The government has advised, and this Council concurs that “it is an important democratic principle that each person’s vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimated competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors”. Likewise, the Council notes that the number of parish councillors for each parish council shall be not less than five. There is no maximum number. There are no rules relating to the allocation of councillors. However, each parish grouped under a common parish council must have at least one parish councillor.

The Aston Business School found the following levels of representation

Electorate	Councillor Allocation
Less than 500	5 - 8
501 – 2,500	6 – 12
2,501 – 10,000	9 – 16
10,001 – 20,000	13 – 27
Greater than 20,000	13 - 31

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) suggested that the minimum number of councillors should be seven and the maximum 25.

The government's guidance is that "each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and pattern of communities".

This Council is prepared to pay particular attention to its existing levels of representation, the broad pattern of existing council sizes, which have stood the test of time and the take-up of seats at elections in its consideration of the matter.

The present levels of representation on town/parish councils in the district are set out earlier in these terms of reference.

The number of parish council seats that have required co-option over the past two ordinary elections has been 22.

It is recognised that the conduct of parish council business does not usually require a large body of councillors.

By law, the Council in this review must have regard to the following factors when considering the number of councillors to be elected for the parish:

- The number of local government electors for the parish;
- Any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.

The Council will also take into account the following considerations:

- To ensure that the allocation of councillors to parishes is equitable across the district/borough, while acknowledging that local circumstances may occasionally merit variation.
- To appreciate that there are different demands and consequently different levels of representation are appropriate between urban and more rural parishes in the district.

The Council also acknowledges that there may be exceptions to the above, where some weight will be given to the following considerations in forming the proposals:

- A high precept and high levels of service provision;
- Where representation may be required to meet the challenges of population sparsity;
- Supporting a warding arrangement in a particular parish and achieving a good parity of representation between wards.

Parish warding

The Act requires that in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards for the purposes of elections for the parish council the Council should consider the following:

- Whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish council would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient;
- Whether it is desirable that any areas of the parish should be separately represented on the council.

The government's guidance is that "the warding of parishes in largely rural areas that are based predominantly on a single centrally located village may not be justified. Conversely, warding may be appropriate where the parish encompasses a number of villages with separate identities, a village with a large rural hinterland or where, on the edges of towns, there has been some urban overspill into the parish"

With regard to urban parishes, the government has suggested, "there is likely to be a stronger case for the warding of urban parishes..."In urban area community identity tends to focus on a locality, whether this be a housing estate, a shopping centre or community facilities. Each locality is likely to have its own sense of identity".

The Council will be mindful of this guidance, noting further that "each case should be considered on its merits and on the basis of the information and evidence provided during the course of the review."

The Council also wishes to emphasise that warding arrangements should be clearly and readily understood by and should have relevance for the electorate in a parish; they should reflect clear physical and social differences within a parish: one parish but comprising different parts. Furthermore, ward elections should have merit; not only should they meet the two tests laid down in the Act, but they should also be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. They should not be wasteful of a parish's resources.

The number and boundaries of parish wards

In reaching conclusions on the boundaries between parish wards, the Council will take into account community identity and interests in an area and will consider whether any particular ties or linkages might be broken by the drawing of particular ward boundaries. Equally, the Council, during its consultations in this review is mindful that proposals which are intended to reflect community identity and local linkages should be justified in terms of sound and demonstrable evidence of those identities and linkages.

The Council has noted the desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as taking into account any local ties which might be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries. The Council also emphasises that ward boundaries should be clearly understood; they should represent the most appropriate parting of local attachments within a parish that comprises different parts.

The Electoral Commission has suggested that a relevant consideration for the Council when undertaking a review is that the district wards should not split an unwarded parish and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary. The relevant legal provisions do not apply to reviews of parish electoral arrangements, but the Commission has requested the Council to bear this in mind, which the Council will do.

The number of councillors to be elected for parish wards

The Council has noted that it is required to have regard to the following when considering the size and boundaries of the wards and the number of councillors to be elected for each ward;

- The number of local government electors for the parish;
- Any change in the number, or distribution, of the local government electors, which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when this review starts.

The government has advised, and this Council concurs that “it is an important democratic principle that each person’s vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimated factors, when it comes to the elections of councillors.” While there is no provision in legislation that each parish councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors, the Council considers that it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards.

The Council is likewise anxious to avoid the risk that, where one or more wards of a parish are over represented by councillors, the residents of those wards (and their councillors) could be perceived as having more influence than others on the council. During the review process and in its consultations, the Council is committed to consistently showing the ratios of electors to councillors that would result from its proposals.

The foregoing consideration of being equitable will also guide the Council when it considers the number of councillors to be elected to a common council by each parish within a grouping arrangement.

Naming of parish wards

With regard to the names of parish wards, the Council will endeavour to reflect existing local or historic place names, and will give a strong presumption in favour of ward names proposed by local interested parties.

REORGANISATION OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ORDERS AND COMMENCEMENT

The review will be completed when the Council adopts the Reorganisation of Community Governance Order. Copies of this order, the map(s) that show the effects of that order in detail, and the document(s) which set out the reasons for the decisions that the Council has taken (including where it has decided to make no change following a review) will be deposited at the Council’s officers, on its website and at local libraries.

In accordance with the Guidance issued by the government, the Council will issue maps to illustrate each recommendation at a scale that will not normally be smaller than 1:10,000. These maps will be deposited with the Secretary of State at the Department of Communities and Local Government and at the Council’s Offices at The Basildon Centre, St. Martin’s Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL. Prints will also be supplied, in accordance with the regulations, to Ordnance Survey, the Registrar General, the Land Registry, the Valuation Office Agency, the Boundary Commission for England and the Electoral Commission.

The provisions of the Order would take effect, for financial and administrative purposes, from 1 April in the designated year.

The electoral arrangements for a new parish or existing parish council will come into force at the next elections to the parish council. These might be the next ordinary local elections. However, where the next ordinary elections are not for some time, the Council might have resolved to modify or exclude the application of sections 16(3) and 90 of the Local Government Act 1972 to provide for the first election to be held in an earlier year, with councillors serving a shortened first term to allow the parish electoral cycle to return to that of the district.

CONSEQUENTIAL MATTERS

General Principles

The Council notes that a Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the Order. These may include:

- The transfer and management or custody of property;
- The setting of precepts for new parishes;
- Provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities;
- Provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters.

In these matters, the Council will be guided by Regulations that have been issued following the 2007 Act.

In particular, the Council notes that the Regulations regarding the transfer of property, rights and liabilities require that any apportionments shall use the population of the area as estimated by the proper officer of the Council as an appropriate proportion.

Furthermore, the Council notes that the Regulations regarding the establishment of a precept for a new parish require the Council to calculate the first anticipated precept for a newly constituted parish council and for the amount of that precept to be included in the Reorganisation Order.

District ward boundaries

The Council is mindful that it may be necessary, although it is not anticipated, for it to recommend the Electoral Commission to make alterations to the boundaries of district wards or county electoral divisions to reflect the changes made at parish level. The Council notes that it will be for the Electoral Commission to decide if related alterations should be made and when they should be implemented, and that the Commission may find it appropriate to direct the Boundary Committee for England to conduct an electoral review of affected areas.

The Council notes that the Electoral Commission will require evidence that the Council has consulted on any such recommendations for the alterations to the boundaries of district wards to County electoral divisions as part of the review. Of course, such recommendations for alterations may only become apparent during the course of the review. Even so, the Council will endeavour to include any such draft recommendations for alterations at the earliest possible opportunity for consultation that will arise after they become apparent.

Where any such consequential matters affect Essex County Council, the Council will also seek the views of that council with regard to alterations to electoral division boundaries in accordance with the government's guidance.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These terms of reference were formally published on 19 March 2009. Any modifications will be published as soon as practicable after they have been made.



CORPORATE PROPERTY
SERVICES,
BASILDON DISTRICT
COUNCIL,
THE BASILDON CENTRE,
BASILDON,
ESSEX, SS14 1DL.

Drawing No. EST00562/A

Scale: 1 = 25,000

Title:-
Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Ward Boundary



This product includes mapping data licensed from
Ordnance Survey with the permission of the
Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office.
© Crown copyright and/or database right 2007.
All rights reserved. Licence Number DBAS200.

Cities Revealed Aerial Photography Copyright
© The GeoInformation Group, 2005

Population

Latest population estimate for the ward is 11681. This shows 0.3% growth in overall population since the 2001 Census. The wards demographic profile is in line with that of the District. Below is a the breakdown of the population derived from Census 2001 data

	All Population	Aged 0 – 4	Aged 5 – 15	Aged 16 – 19	Aged 20 – 44	Aged 45 – 64	Aged 65 +
Male	5696	362	876	321	2047	1469	621
Female	5954	307	795	320	2038	1611	883
Pitsea South	11681	6%	14%	6%	35%	26%	13%
District	169800	6%	15%	5%	36%	24%	15%

**2007 figure taken from ONS. All age breakdowns derived from 2001 Census*

Health

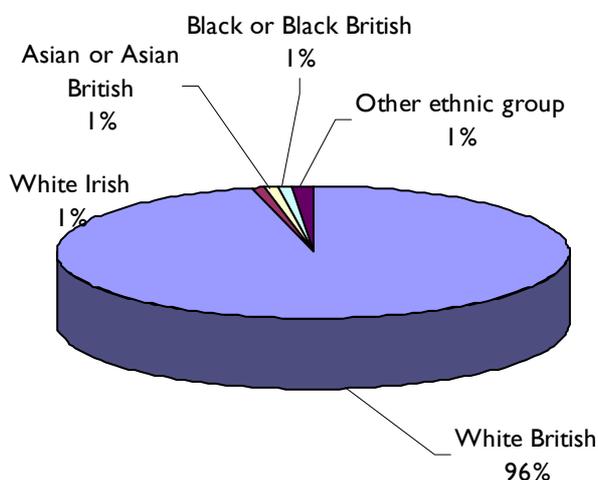
As of August 2008 there were 705 people of working age claiming incapacity benefit in the ward*. Below is an extract from the 2001 Census, which shows the residents within the ward consider themselves to be healthy, compared to the responses across the whole district.

	People with limiting long term illness	People who state their health is good	People who state their health is fairly good	People who state their health is not good
Pitsea South	19.0%	66.4	24.2%	9.4%
District	16.9%	69.5%	22.2%	8.3%

**Nomis*

Ethnic background inc. Religion

The ward demographic is predominately comprised of people who consider them selves to be White British. The majority (73%) of respondents consider themselves to be Christian. **Source 2001 Census**



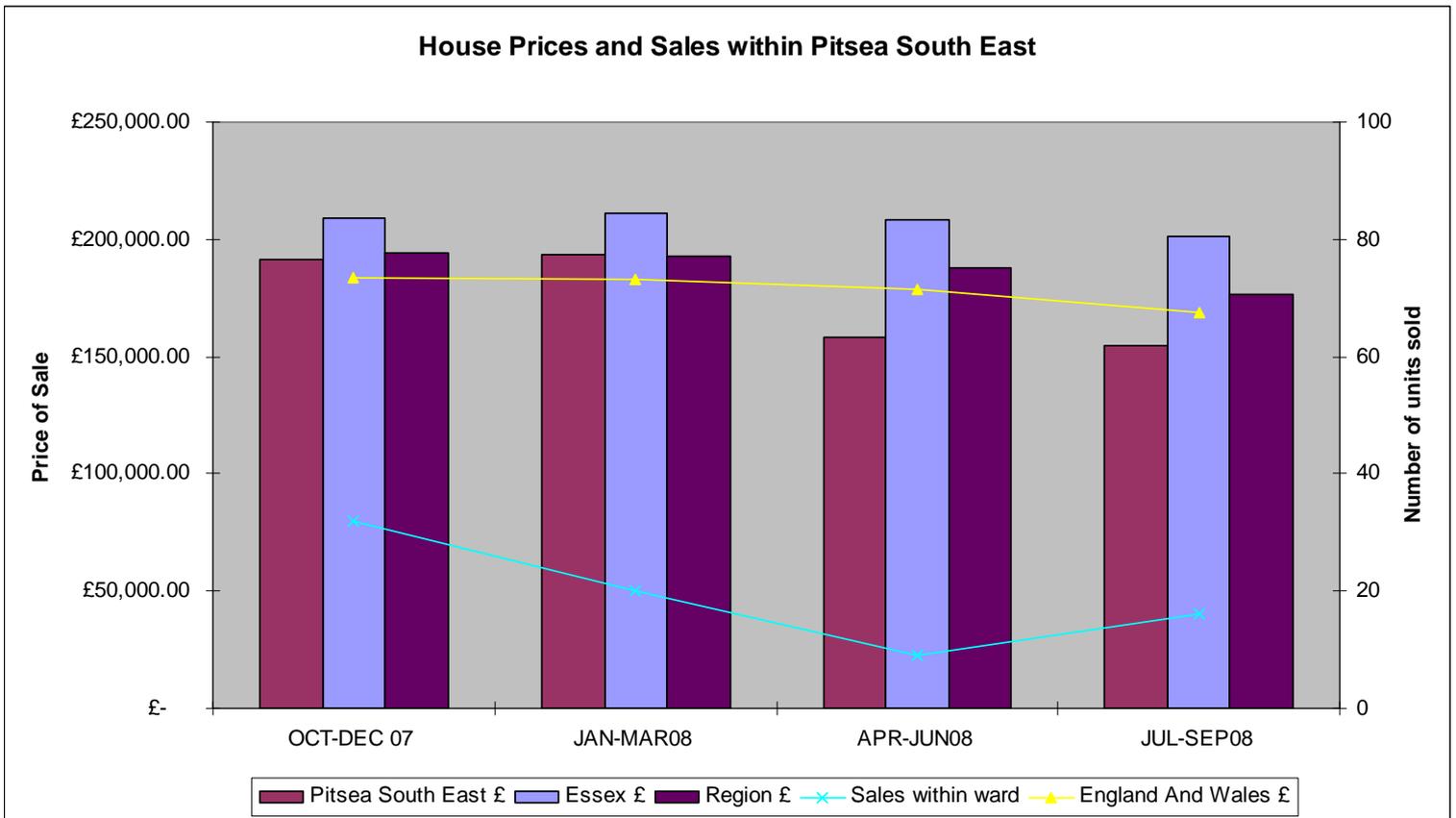
Basildon District Profiles 2008

Pitsea South East

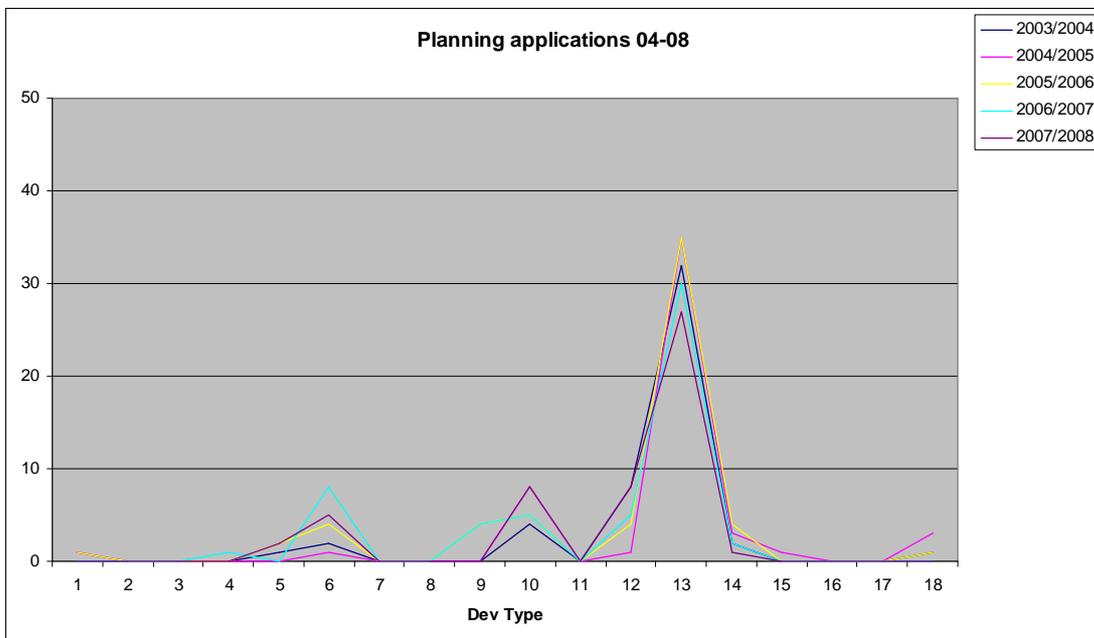
Housing and Planning Applications

The market has slowed in recent months in line with the national housing market crash. The average price for a house in the ward is currently around £154,499. A semi-detached house in the area will cost around £170,799, whilst flats are currently valued at around £137,166.

Source: Basildon DC Planning department

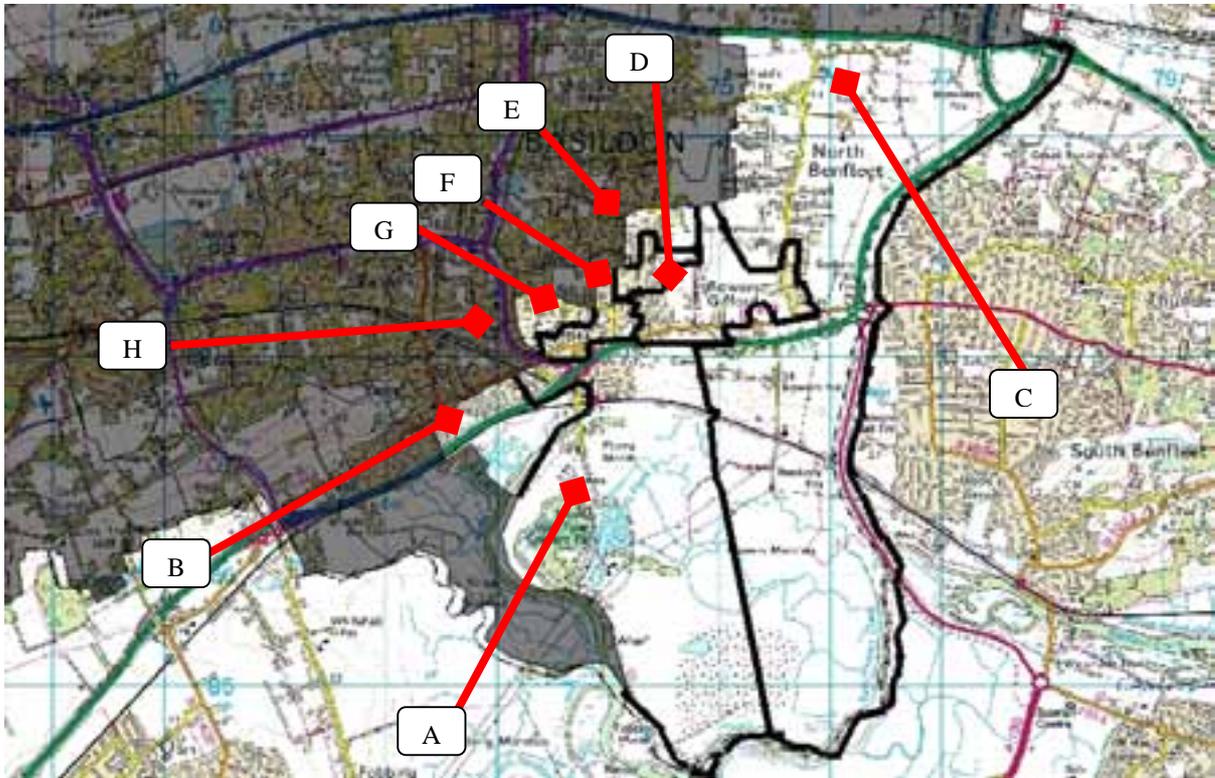


Planning applications in the ward have remained steady over the last 4 years, with the vast majority of applications being for residential (13) improvements, which include extensions and new windows.



Deprivation

Using a set of data called the Index of Multiple Deprivation, we can analyse small areas within wards and identify deprivation that may be restricted to a few streets or a single estate.



Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007									
Map Key	LSOA	Overall	Income	Employment	Health	Education	Crime	Barriers to housing	Living environment
A	E01021310	61%	73%	67%	59%	37%	35%	36%	66%
B	E01021311	21%	23%	15%	25%	9%	17%	53%	78%
C	E01021312	36%	48%	40%	53%	23%	56%	5%	53%
D	E01021313	58%	72%	53%	60%	26%	38%	45%	88%
E	E01021314	18%	14%	22%	17%	6%	20%	52%	71%
F	E01021315	23%	20%	21%	29%	7%	26%	72%	81%
G	E01021316	19%	13%	16%	20%	10%	25%	83%	60%
H	E01021317	21%	22%	30%	23%	9%	7%	56%	59%

Worst in England =1%
Average in England =50%
Best in England = 100%

Summary

- More than 50% of this ward falls within the worst 25% on the IMD rank domain
- There is serious educational deprivation within the ward with areas B, E, F, G and H all within the worst 10% nationally
- The ward also suffers from poor scores relating to crime with almost all areas falling below the national average. Area H is within the worst 10% nationally.