



10 September, 2010

Dear

GRAVELEY PARISH REVIEW

North Herts District Council has asked the research department of Electoral Reform Services (ERS) to conduct a survey about proposed changes to the parish (see overleaf for details). Please complete the questionnaire overleaf, detach it from this letter and return it in the enclosed reply envelope to arrive at ERS no later than the 4th October 2010.

ERS Research is a member of the Market Research Society's Company Partner Scheme and abides by the MRS Code of Conduct so you can be sure that your responses will remain confidential.

Should you have any problems filling in and returning the questionnaire please call the ERS helpline on 0208 889 9203 or e-mail research@electoralreform.co.uk

Yours sincerely

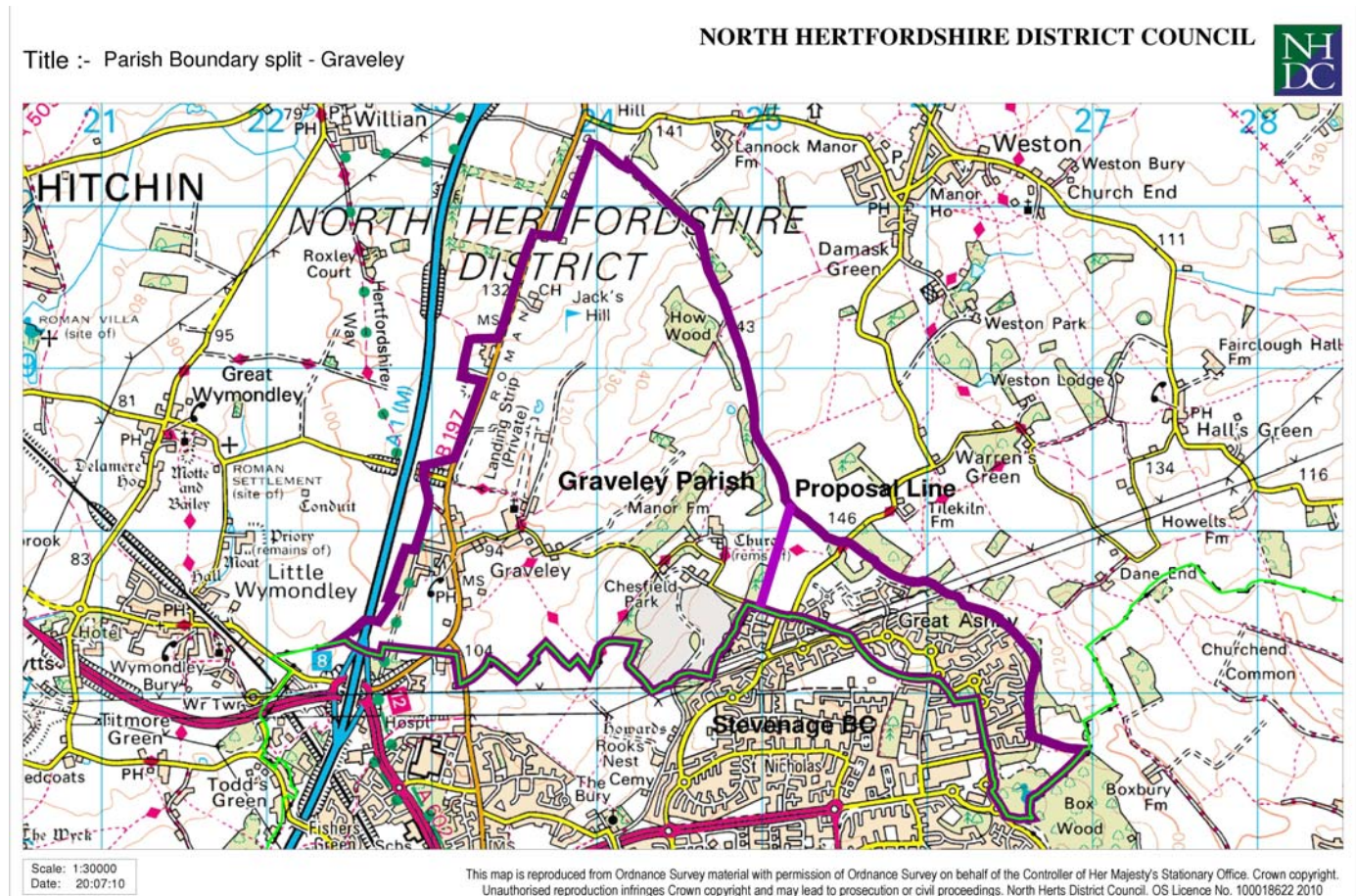
Cynthia Pinto
Director and Head of Research

ERS Research
Independence House, 33 Clarendon Road
London, N8 0NW



Proposed Changes

Two distinct communities have developed within the Parish of Graveley. One centred on Graveley Village and the other on Great Ashby. The Parish Council feels that because it is set up to manage community issues and provide services in the small rural village of Graveley it may not be suited to the needs of Great Ashby. Because of this, Graveley Parish Council has asked North Herts District Council to undertake a review of the parish and consider whether or not it would be worth splitting Graveley Parish in two to create a parish for the Great Ashby area and a parish for Graveley village area (see map below). There are also several other options set out in the questionnaire.



David Miley, Democratic Services Manager at North Herts District Council, and/or colleagues will be available to answer questions about the review at the following times:

between 3:00pm and 8:00pm on Monday 20 September at Great Ashby Community Centre
between 3:00pm and 8:00pm on Tuesday 28 September at the Village Hall in Graveley.

You may also e-mail David at david.miley@north-herts.gov.uk or call 01462 474208.

If you would like to learn more about parishes there is a FAQ on the back page of this leaflet or you can visit the website of the National Association of Local Councils www.nalc.gov.uk

Survey of Graveley Parish electors and associated organisations

Q1 The options for the future of Graveley Parish Council are summarised below. Which of them are you most in favour of? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- No change
- Rename the Parish Council to reflect the geographic area it covers such as "Graveley and Great Ashby"
- Rename the Parish Council to reflect the geographic area it covers such as "Graveley and Great Ashby" **AND** divide it into two wards: one for Graveley, one for Great Ashby
- Set up two parishes: one for Great Ashby and one for Graveley (see attached Map)
- Set up a new parish for Graveley Village area and leave the Great Ashby area as part of North Hertfordshire but without a parish (e.g. like Baldock)

Q2 Why did you choose that option? PLEASE WRITE IN

Q3 Is there any option which you would find completely unacceptable? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- No change
- Rename the parish Council to reflect the geographic area it covers such as "Graveley and Great Ashby"
- Rename the parish Council to reflect the geographic area it covers such as "Graveley and Great Ashby" **AND** divide it into two wards: one for Graveley, one for Great Ashby
- Set up two parishes: one for Great Ashby and one for Graveley (see attached Map)
- Set up a new parish for Graveley Village area and leave the Great Ashby area as part of North Hertfordshire but without a parish (e.g. like Baldock)

Q4 Are there any other options you feel we ought to be considering? PLEASE WRITE IN

Q5 Individual responses from individuals and organisations will remain anonymous. However if you are responding on behalf of an organisation, are you happy to be included on a list of contributors at the end of the report? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- Yes, happy for organisation to be included on list at the end of the report
- No, not happy for organisation to be included on list at the end of the report
- Not responding on behalf of an organisation

**Thank you for your co-operation.
PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IMMEDIATELY IN THE PRE-PAID ENVELOPE PROVIDED. Your completed questionnaire should be returned to reach ERS Market Research, Independence House, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW by 4th October 2010**



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a parish and what is a ward?

A parish is a basic building block of local government in England, separate from those set up by religious organisations. Add them together and you get the basis of a district council such as North Herts. Add districts together and you have a county. Besides helping you to get the best from your district and county councils your parish council can also make an important difference to your local area. What the parish does and how much money it raises to do it, is up to you. Sometimes parishes are split into wards where distinct communities exist. The relative size of each community largely determines the number of councillors to be elected from each ward.

Q. What money has Graveley Parish raised and what has it been spent on?

During the last financial year the parish raised £17,460 from you together with grants amounting to £4,320. The main items of expenditure were: Great Ashby Community Centre extension £5,500; staff (clerk, grass cutter, litter picker) £4,202; playground and church yard maintenance £2,842; grants and payments £2,546; play equipment £1,041; insurance £880; waste disposal £271; legal and audit £219; telephone and stationery £97.

Not obvious from the accounts is other work such as commenting on local planning applications, responding to consultations and sorting out a range of issues raised by residents. More information about the parish can be found at www.graveley.org.uk

Q Can I go to parish council meetings and be on the council?

All council meetings must be advertised, in advance, held in public and you are free to attend. The main qualification to be a parish councillor is that you are at least 18 and live either in the parish or within three miles of its boundary. You may also qualify in other ways. Ring David Miley on 01462 474208 if you would like to discuss becoming a councillor.

Q What does the Great Ashby Community Group do?

Great Ashby Community Group holds meetings every two months at the community centre to discuss matters affecting the community and aims to channel your views to appropriate bodies.

The Community Group has been involved in the issues surrounding the proposal to move the Thomas Alleyne School to Great Ashby and arranging a public meeting to inform all residents; the implications of the SNAP Proposals as they affect Great Ashby and making representations to the local authorities; arranging with Royal Mail to erect a post box outside the Community Centre; vetting planning applications; expressing concerns regarding parking in and around Great Ashby to the local authority; liaising with the Primary Care Trust regarding the proposed medical centre; youth club provision resulting in a new youth club starting up in September; arranging for dog bins to be installed and putting forward suggestions to NHDC for salt bins and generally informing the community of developments which could affect the daily lives of residents.

Q Is the Great Ashby Community Group like a parish council?

The important difference is that a parish council can raise council tax from residents to provide services.

Q What would happen if Great Ashby was not part of a parish?

The services currently provided by Graveley Parish may be provided by North Herts District Council or Hertfordshire County Council.