



COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS – GODSHILL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Committee on 15 January agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) in Godshill to examine:
- (a) the parish boundary with Fordingbridge, with a view to establishing whether the development known as Crystal Hollow should more appropriately be located in Godshill rather than Fordingbridge;
 - (b) the parish boundary with Breamore, with a view to establishing whether the triangular piece of land to the west of the River Avon, should transfer to Breamore Parish.
- 1.2 The reviews are being undertaken in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 1.3 The Committee is reminded that, in undertaking a CGR, a principal authority should aim to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:
- (a) reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
 - (b) is effective and convenient
- 1.4 Guidance on what constitutes a “community” includes:
- “.....it is desirable that a parish should reflect a distinctive and recognisable community of place, with its own sense of identity. The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance.”
- “Community cohesion is about local communities where people should feel they have a stake in the society, and in the local area where they live by having the opportunity to influence decisions affecting their lives.”

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that Godshill Parish Council requested the adjustment of its boundaries as set out in 1.1 (a) and (b) above. The two boundaries in question are shown on Maps A and B attached to this report.
- 2.2 Fordingbridge Town Council initially said that it would not wish to lose Crystal Hollow to Godshill, in view of the fact that it is part of a small area of the Town Council’s that is within the New Forest National Park. The area within the

National Park extends from the existing Godshill boundary to Avonside Farm. However, after further consideration, the Town Council made it known that it would not object to the proposal, provided that only Crystal Hollow, and no more of the Town Council's area, transferred to Godshill.

- 2.3 With regard to Godshill's boundary with Breamore, Breamore Parish Council is content with the proposal to transfer to Breamore the triangular piece of land north of the River Avon shown on Map B. While there is no information available as to why the boundary was drawn as it is, it is presumed to be an historic anomaly arising from land ownership. The land in question is low-lying pasture land, undeveloped, with no residences or buildings. Breamore Parish Council's support for the proposal (subject to the landowner's views) was based on the fact that no residences were affected and there would be no financial implications for either parish council.

3. CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with the requirements of the 2007 Act, the reviews have been published on the Council's website and consultations undertaken with those in the area. A news release was also issued. The document attached at Appendix 1 was sent to:

- all households in Godshill;
- those residents of Fordingbridge along the B3078 Southampton Road between the boundary with Godshill and Avonside Farm;
- the Godshill and Breamore Parish Councils and Fordingbridge Town Council;
- the owners of the property known as "Armsley" (who also own the triangular piece of land shown on Map B);
- local District and County Councillors;
- Hampshire County Council
- The National Park Authority
- Sandy Balls Estate

- 3.2 Views were requested within a three week period, ending on 4 June 2010. Any views received following despatch of this report and before the meeting of the Committee will be reported orally.

- 3.3 A number of telephone calls supporting the proposals have been received. Four written expressions of support, and one objection, have been received from residents. These are attached at Appendix 2. Only one response (in support) has been received from a Crystal Hollow resident.

- 3.4 The National Park Authority has no objections to the proposals.

4. PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

- 4.1 Government guidance on boundaries between parishes is:

"As far as boundaries between parishes are concerned, these should reflect the 'no-man's land' between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways. They need to be,

and be likely to remain, easily identifiable. For instance, factors to consider include parks and recreation grounds which sometimes provide natural breaks between communities but they can equally act as focal points. A single community would be unlikely to straddle a river where there are no crossing points, or a large area of moorland or marshland. Another example might be where a community appeared to be divided by a motorway (unless connected by walkways at each end). Whatever boundaries are selected they need to be, and be likely to remain, easily identifiable.'

'In many cases a boundary change between existing parishes, or parishes and unparished areas, rather than the creation of an entirely new parish, will be sufficient to ensure that parish arrangements reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. For example, over time, communities may expand with new housing developments. This can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across them resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours.'

- 4.2 Based on this guidance, it appears that Godshill's boundary with Breamore should be moved as suggested. The request in relation to the boundary with Fordingbridge is not as clear-cut and the Committee's detailed consideration of the issues is requested.

5. CRYSTAL HOLLOW

- 5.1 As far as can be ascertained, the area known as Crystal Hollow was semi-formally used for residential purposes in the 1960s when a number of gypsy families were settled in touring caravans on the site. The site was at that stage leased to the Council by the Sandy Balls Estate but the District Council did not renew the lease in the early 1990s. It has since been developed as a park home by the Sandy Balls Estate. There are 10 park homes on the site.
- 5.2 When Godshill Parish Council was created in 1999, similar arguments to those now being advanced by the Parish Council that Crystal Hollow should fall within Godshill were put forward. The District Council was at that stage satisfied that Crystal Hollow's community identity lay with Godshill, and proposed that the boundary between Godshill and Fordingbridge be along a line further south than it is at present. This would have included Crystal Hollow within Godshill. However, the then Department for the Environment (which at that time had to agree to changes in parish boundaries) did not approve this and the boundary was established along the line of what was then the Godshill ward of Fordingbridge Parish Council. While no reasons were given for not agreeing to the District Council's proposals for the boundary, the fact that it did not follow a strong physical feature was likely to have been a factor.
- 5.3 Identification of a alternative clearly defined physical boundary remains an issue but members will note from Map A that the existing boundary is also not ideal. Crystal Hollow would now appear to be established as an integral part of the Sandy Balls development (which is in Godshill), with residents making extensive use of the facilities at Sandy Balls. Despite the low number of responses from Crystal Hollow residents to the District Council's consultation, residents have made it known to the Godshill Parish Council that they consider that their community of interest lies with Godshill. The local District

Councillor for Godshill, Cllr Bill Dow, is also aware of a strong desire on the part of Crystal Hollow residents for their development to be located in Godshill.

- 5.4 At the time of despatch of this agenda, recommendations regarding what might be an appropriate boundary if the Committee is minded to agree to Godshill Parish Council's request, are not available but a recommendation will be made to the meeting on 11 June.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There have been no objections to the proposals for the adjustment of the boundary between Godshill and Breamore at the property known as "Armsley" and it is suggested that the Committee agrees to proceed with this proposal.
- 6.2 While there has been a low response to the consultation with regard to the boundary between Godshill and Fordingbridge, it appears that there is a distinct community of interest and affinity of residents of Crystal Hollow with Godshill rather than Fordingbridge. Therefore, subject to an appropriate boundary being agreed, the officers suggest that recommendations to move the boundary so that Crystal Hollow is in Godshill be published.

7. NEXT STAGES

- 7.1 The Act requires that the Council's draft proposals are published and further consultations undertaken. The response to that consultation will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Most of the resource implications in proceeding with the CGR are in staff time. Costs of consultation are likely to total approximately £1,000, which will be met from within existing budgets.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME & DISORDER AND EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 10.1 That draft proposals to change the boundaries of Godshill –
- (a) with Breamore, at the property known as Armsley, as shown on Map B;
 - (b) with Fordingbridge, so that Crystal Hollow falls within Godshill Parish, along a line to be agreed by the Committee;

be published and consultations on these draft proposals be undertaken.

10.2 That the matter be further considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

Further information:

Rosemary Rutins
Democratic Services Manager
Tel: (023) 8028 5381
e-mail: rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Published documents



Changes to Godshill's boundaries with Fordingbridge and Breamore?

New Forest District Council is consulting you, as a resident who might be affected, about two possible changes in the boundaries between Godshill, Fordingbridge and Breamore.

Godshill Parish Council has requested that the boundary with Fordingbridge, to the north of the B3078 at Crystal Hollow, is moved so that all of Crystal Hollow is in Godshill. If this is agreed, any area currently within Fordingbridge that transfers to Godshill would lie within NFDC's Forest North West ward, rather than Fordingbridge District Ward. This area is shown hatched on Map A. The area hatched is indicative only for purposes of this consultation – the actual line of any future boundary will depend on the responses to consultations and discussions with the National Park Authority, the planning authority for the area.

Secondly, Godshill Parish Council wishes the boundary between Godshill and Breamore, at the property called Armsley, adjusted so that the boundary follows the River Avon. If this area is transferred to Breamore Parish, it would lie within the Downlands and Forest District ward, rather than the Forest North West District ward. The area is shown hatched on Map B.

New Forest District Council has power to make changes to parish boundaries but only after it has gone through a process known as a "community governance review" (CGR). The District Council is undertaking a CGR to progress Godshill Parish Council's request. The terms of reference for the review are available to view at <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=10343>

The CGR procedures require, amongst other things, that local government electors for the area are consulted before the District Council agrees draft recommendations. As a resident who might be affected, your views on Godshill Parish Council's requests for the boundary changes are invited. The District Council will take into account any views expressed before it decides on draft recommendations. The draft recommendations will appear on the District Council's website, www.newforest.gov.uk. We will contact you again to inform you of the draft recommendations.

If you wish to comment on the proposed boundary changes please email:

melanie.stephens@nfdc.gov.uk

or write to:

Melanie Stephens, New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

by Friday 4 June 2010. If you would like to speak to someone about the process, please telephone (023) 8028 5379.

Your comments should include your name and property address. Please be aware that your name and property address (but not your e-mail address or any telephone number that might be provided) will be published on the Council's website and might be included in publicly available reports to the District Council's relevant Committee.



From: Richard Fell
Sent: 19 May 2010 22:28
To: melanie.stephens@nfdc.co.uk
Cc: Rosemary Rutins
Subject: Changes to Godshill Boundaries with Fordingbridge and Breamore

Melanie

I was unable to attend the Godshill parish council meeting which dealt with the boundary change issues as I was called in to work to deal with the impact of the Volcanic Ash upon the UK ATC network.

In your recent correspondance you have invited affected residents to send in their views

MAP A - I wish to oppose the amendment of the Parish boundary which proposes to include Crystal Hollow static mobile home park wholly within Godshill Parish. To my mind this creates a boundary anomoly not disimilar to that being removed in the case of the MAP B proposal. I fail to see what positive benefit the inclusion of Crystal Hollow makes to the community of Godshill. One could also argue for the inclusion of Sunnyside, Avonside Farm and additional properties to the West along B3078 Southampton Road to be included as I fail to see the logic for any amendment.

Perhaps you can advise whether if this proposal is recommended that the next proposal will be for the "Godshill" village sign will be moved further west along the Southampton Road to reflect the change ? Will this also affect the postal addresses of the Crystal Hollow park which I assume will have a positive impact on future property valuations of the Crystal Hollow dwellings ?

MAP B - I therefore support the re-alignment of the boundary along the River Avon as these seems to be both logical to continue to follow the line of the River Avon and does not affect any residential dwellings. What is the history behind this not being the case originally ?

Richard Fell

Mr & Mrs Richard Fell
Woodpeckers
Woodgreen Road
Godshill
Fordingbridge
Hampshire
SP6 2LP

Melanie Stephens

From:
Sent: 17 May 2010 14:16
To: Melanie Stephens
Subject: Godshill Boundary Changes.

Dear Melanie,

Thank you for your letter and maps regarding the community governance review. I am a resident of Godshill and I was chairman of Godshill Parish Council when we looked into the boundaries. For many years the area known as Crystal Hollow was empty with no residents, now that a small community has been created there who tend to use Godshill as their village it seemed sensible to include the area as part of Godshill rather than as part of Fordingbridge which is some distance away. The area at Armsley constituted a slightly strange boundary being a small area of ground on the west side of the river and if no one objects it appeared logical to tidy this up.

I did also consider looking at the area along Blissford Road where I live as the Parish boundary splits the village/hamlet of Blissford down the middle with one half in Hyde parish and one half in Godshill parish. This has been a problem for me in the past when we wanted to get married at our local church in Hyde, where our daughter

(my stepdaughter) had previously had her wedding, but the new vicar would not allow us to do so as our house is on the Godshill side of the stream which divides the village. As there is no church in Godshill, only a chapel, we had to get married elsewhere. This problem would obviously be solved if the whole of Blissford was in Hyde parish. Maybe this is one for the next review which I believe is in ten years time!

Best Regards,

Martyn Powell

Kingfisher Cottage, Blissford, Hampshire, SP6 2JH.

Melanie Stephens

From: [redacted]
Sent: 18 May 2010 20:15
To: Melanie Stephens
Subject: Proposed boundary changes - Godshill Parish
From : Mr L E and Mrs S M Baker, Silvercroft, Godshill Wood SP6 2LR

Thank you for sending details of the two proposed boundary changes relating to Godshill Parish. We have no specific comments to make save to say that they appear to make practical sense and that we find ourselves wondering how on earth a section of Godshill Parish ever found itself on the other side of the river, which is plainly Breamore territory!

Leslie and Susan Baker

Melanie Stephens

From:
Sent: 19 May 2010 18:13
To: Melanie Stephens
Subject: Proposed boundary change - Godshill with Fordingbridge

Dear Ms. Stephens,

Thank you for your circular letter concerning the proposed changes to Godshill's boundaries with Fordingbridge and Breamore. My wife and I reside at 9 Crystal Hollow, thus the following comments relate solely to the request made by Godshill Parish Council that the boundary is moved so that all of Crystal Hollow is in Godshill.

My wife and I have always regarded ourselves as being in Godshill, as opposed to Fordingbridge (as, I anticipate, do the majority, if not all, of the residents of Crystal Hollow) thus we are firmly in favour of the request made by Godshill Parish Council.

I hope that the proposal can be agreed.

Yours sincerely,

Miles Hardy

Submitted on behalf of Miles & Wendy Hardy,
Crystal Hollow, Southampton Road,
Godshill, SP6 2JJ.

CHANGES TO GODSHILL'S PARISH BOUNDARIES

Mr. P. Trim
The Wellground
Well Lane
Godshill
Fordingbridge
Hampshire SP6 2LQ

ATTN MELANIE STEPHENS.

World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF UK)

Regarding CRYSTAL HOLLOW PLAN A proposal.

I am in total agreement.

Prior to Godshill becoming an official parish, I served 12 years on what was then a village council & Crystal Hollow was occupied by gipsies, a number of which I got to know.

As NFDC well know the site now houses quite a number of residents after the completion of the housing development. I also know quite a number of the residents who I jokingly refer to as the "Crystal Hollow mob".

They take part in the village activities & I regard them as Godshill residents. This endorses my view that the Parish boundary should encompass their site.

The Crystal Hollow Saga is quite fascinating & explained by Jean Merrilake in her wonderful book "The Story of Godshill".

I enclose a copy of the relevant pages which may be of interest to you & your colleagues.

Re PLAN B — the Amoley proposition — JUST COMMON SENSE!

An omission on my garage door — you will notice I have as yet to include the N.F.D.C emblem. Finding room is a problem!

