

1. Purpose of the consultation

This Community Governance Review was proposed as an opportunity to review and possibly make changes to the governance arrangements of Aldenham Parish Council's parish boundaries and Ridge Parish Council's future prospects of the parish.

2. The consultation process

The initial consultation began on 30th January to 1st April 2022. Representations from any person or body within Hertsmere were encouraged to comment or make proposals on the aspects of the matters under review by completing a short online survey. Paper responses were also available on request.

Social Media posts and the Hertsmere webpages were utilised to highlight the importance of the review and leaflets were delivered to the areas that the review may effect.

A public forum was held at Ridge Village Hall to answer any questions surrounding the review and its details. Local residents were encouraged to attend and from there, encouraged to fill in the online survey.

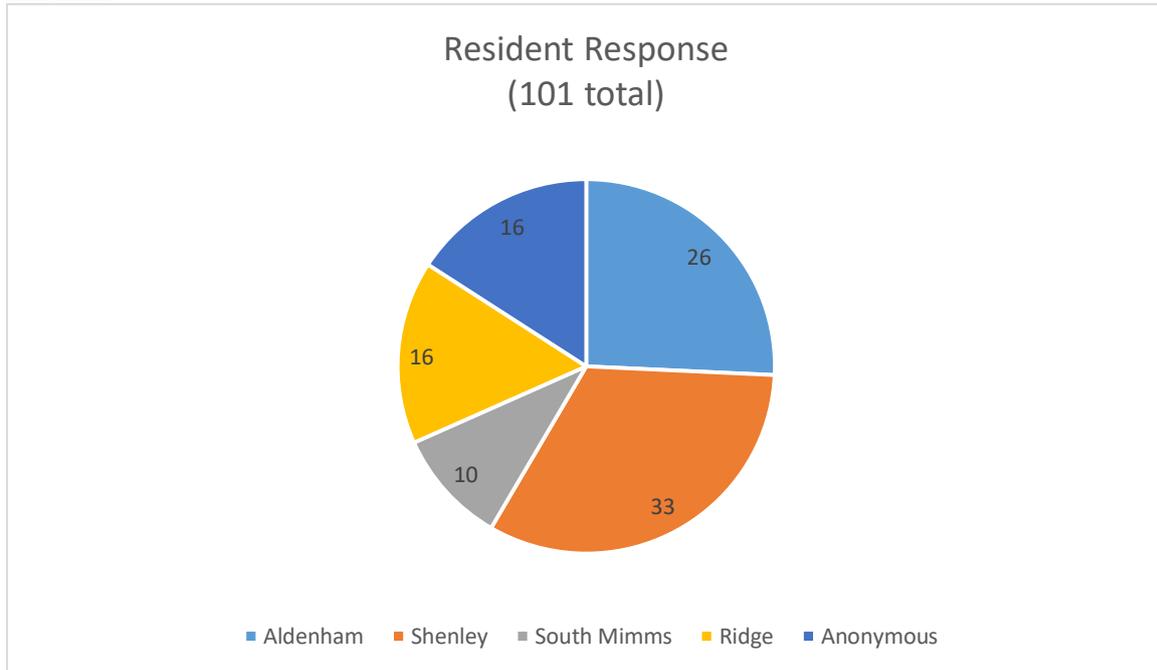
The dedicated team running the review also attended Aldenham Parish Council's meeting to answer any questions surrounding the review and its details for the council members.

3. Feedback on the proposals

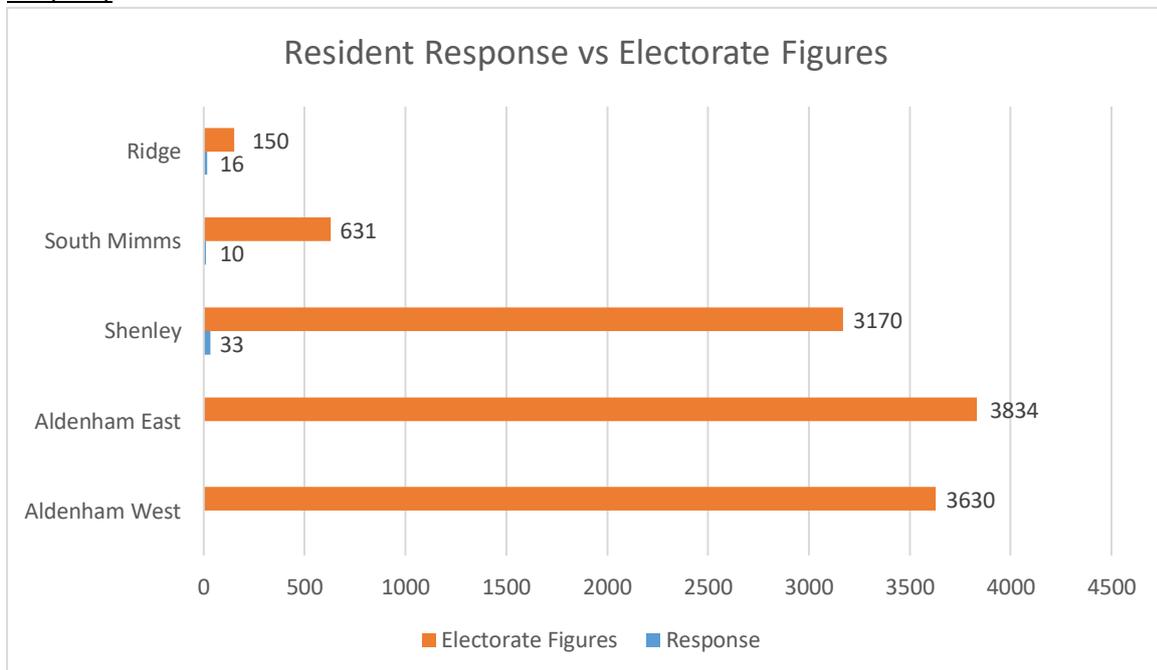
In total, 105 responses were received for this initial consultation;

- 101 local residents
- 3 local councillors
- 1 other

Graph a)



Graph b)



*Aldenham Parish had a total of 26 resident responses across Aldenham West and Aldenham East combined.

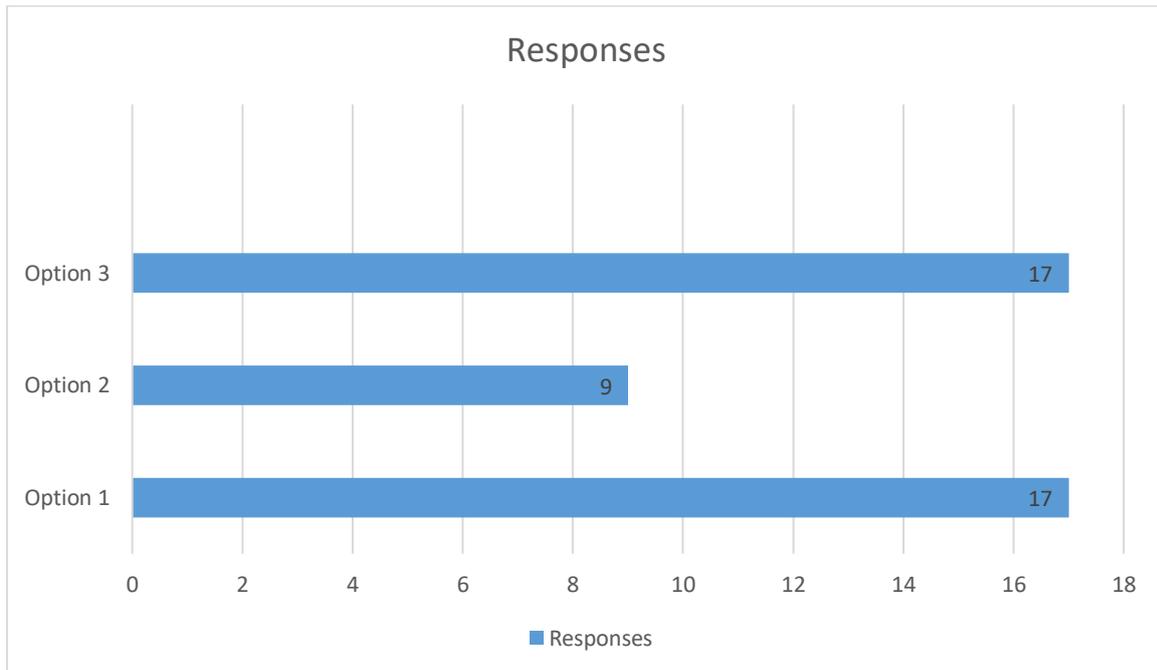
** Electorate figures generated and correct as of 4th May 2022

4. Preferred Options

Residents of **Aldenham Parish**, particularly residents of polling districts EA, EE and EF, were asked their preferred option for the future of the parish boundaries. The options were:

- Option 1: Remove polling district EA from the parish and create a parish meeting
- Option 2: Leave polling district EA part of Aldenham Parish Council
- Option 3: Align the boundaries to include polling district EE and EF in the parish area

Graph c)



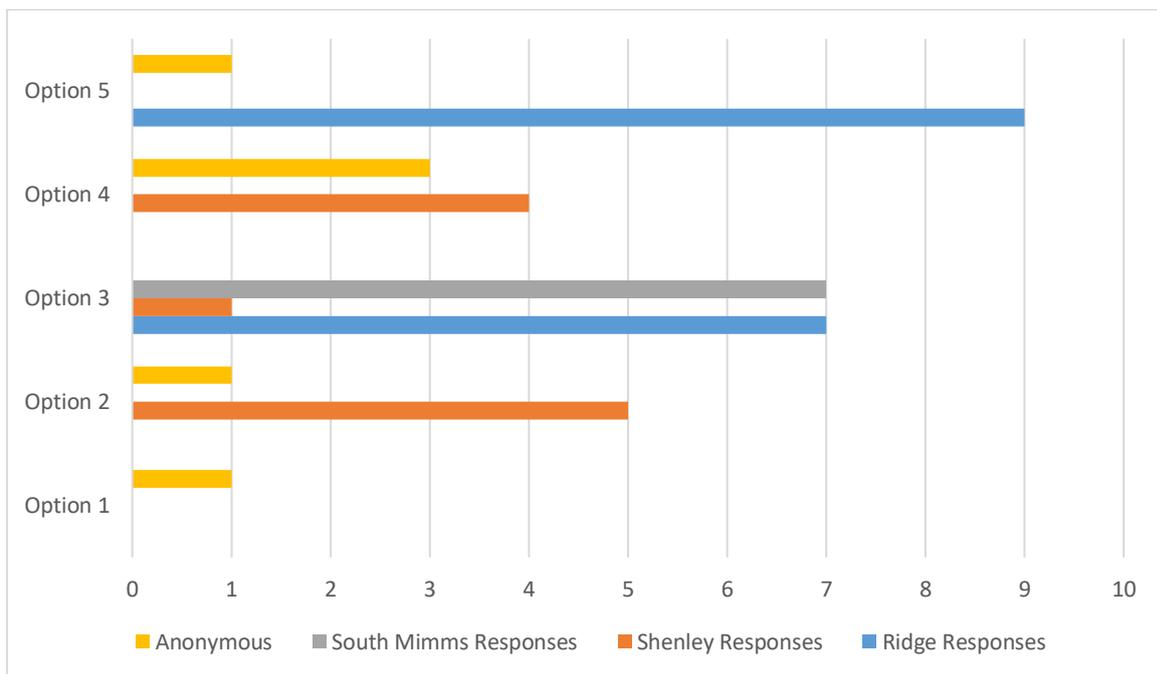
Residents of **Ridge Parish** were asked their preferred option for the future of Ridge Parish Council. The options were:

- Option 1: Remove the Parish Council and replace with an annual parish meeting
- Option 2: Merge Ridge Parish with Shenley Parish
- Option 3: Merge Ridge Parish with South Mimms Parish
- Option 4: Merge Ridge Parish with Shenley Parish and South Mimms Parish

With a proposed option of:

- Option 5: Reinstate Ridge Parish Council

Graph d)



*Participants of the consultation had the option to select a “none of the above” option which explains the difference in numbers of amount of resident’s responses and the amount listed above.

5. Comments received

Participants of the initial consultation had availability to make comments on their responses and were as follows;

(All comments were taken directly from the survey so, no spelling or grammar errors have been amended)

5.1 - Responses from Aldenham Parish Residents

- a. *"I have lived in my property for 24 years which forms part of the AW discussion, I have been happy with the arrangement to date. I feel this new proposal would lead us to being eventually pushed into the Watford Borough something that I would be opposed to. We may not have direct road access to the parish but we do have and do use the walking access to the parish."*
- b. *"As a related matter, I must take this opportunity to most strongly suggest that Hertsmere Borough Council do propose transferring all of the Polling District EA The Birds estate, into Watford Borough Council area at the next LGBCE Boundary Review. It really is foolish to continue with the situation where waste collection vehicles and teams from Hertsmere are sent miles out of the borough to service just 4 roads, and yet Watford Council waste collection vehicles and teams are also in the same area collecting from The Gossamers and Ravenscroft properties."*
- c. *"Residents in EA probably do not identify with APC due to divide of M1 and it simplifies the boundary line. Regarding EE/EF, restoring APC to its original historic boundaries would give these unparished districts access to all APC services and they could benefit from CIL money. A further advantage could be on consultations and representations on planning applications and amendments to neighbourhood plan."*
- d. *"Adding EE and EF will bring Elstree Aerodrome, Slades Farm and Hilfield into APC. These employment areas need careful scrutiny by planners and I am confident APC is alert to issues that may arise. Area EA is an anomaly as it is a small area cut off from APC by the A41 and M1 so doesn't really fit"*
- e. *"The district EA does not have any links to the main Parish .Districts EE & EF have direct links to the historic parish which should be restored."*
- f. *"Half our lane is part of the APC, and half is not. This seems to make little sense, geographically. As a conservation area, it would make sense for the entire area to be kept in the same manner, by the same team. I think it would also benefit local community ethos and cohesion."*
- g. *"Being in ward EE, this would mean an additional levy on the residents of Patchetts Green. I think it's important to consult and discuss with the residents the pros and cons especially during these difficult economic times"*
- h. *"For the avoidance of doubt, please leave Hilfield Lane under the auspices of Aldenham West"*
- i. *"Those areas on the other side of the M1 should be transferred to Watford Council"*

5.2 - Responses from Ridge Parish Residents

- a. *"Ridge previously had a parish council and there is a strong passion within the village to reinstate this to give the village a voice it deserves. Whilst the population is smaller than surrounding parishes the area Ridge parish covers is in proportion. The historical and environmental heritage of Ridge can best be protected and developed by those residents that live there. Please reinstate Ridge parish. No merger and no abolishment please. We have willing people to stand as members."*
- b. *"Ridge and South Mimms are very closely linked"*
- c. *"if Ridge, Shenley and South Mimms join together it would be a mirror of Shenley Ward on HBC. I think smaller the better."*
- d. *"Ridge should form its own parish Council again so we can build our own community with our own voice rather than competing with another parish who would outnumber us on the decisions."*
- e. *"Ridge PC was previously disbanded after several years of struggling to exist. There have been NO parish council elections for at least 25 years as there were never enough people to volunteer. The precept required to support a PC (with so few households) would be well over £100 per household. And this would be almost entirely just to pay for a parish clerk to do the administration"*
- f. *"Ridge should have its own parish council to take care of its own requirements"*
- g. *"Prefer to have our own Parish Council. There has been some interest in getting this up and running but we are struggling to get the electoral roll and the addresses for all those in the Parish."*
- h. *"The Ridge parish council formed by residents in 2019, needs to be formally recognised and reinstated asap"*
- i. *"I would like Ridge parish to be separate from neighbouring parishes. I believe the interests of Ridge parish are best served by its residents."*
- j. *"There is a clear need for a Ridge Parish Council. There are six people post a meeting on 10th March who are willing to stand. After a village residents meeting 10th March it was clear there is a desire to retain a Ridge Parish Council. As stated above there are already six people who are willing (now) to stand for the Ridge Parish Council."*
- k. *"Ridge is its own distinct and unique area, with needs, views and requirements which are distinct to other parishes. There is significant local support to re-form the Parish."*

*We received an email naming 6 residents who are willing to stand as elected members of a Ridge Parish Council, should that be named as the best option moving forward.

5.3 – Responses from South Mimms Parish Residents

- a. *“I would rather S Mimms as a stand alone PC but if there must be a change then I would only want Ridge to join us, not any other PC”*
- b. *“PUTTING THEM ALL TOGETHER WE WILL LOSE OUR SMALL VILLAGE PERSPECTIVE”*
- c. *“I feel that merging Ridge with South Mimms Parish Councils is as far as we wish to expand as anything else would feel too diluted and no longer relevant to the needs of our village.”*

5.4 – Responses from Shenley Parish Residents

- a. *“If Shenley, Ridge and South Mimms merged, would the Parish council part of the Council tax reduce for all?”*
- b. *“Dividing Parishes is not in the interest of each parish, will lessen our fight against continuing threat to our greenbelt in my opinion. Any changes nowadays are met from many residents with caution and threat to our neighbourhood. I see this as a possible loss of power from individual parishes with regard to many neighbourhood issues”*
- c. *“Makes sense to bring together the three village parishes to create a stronger combined voice”*
- d. *“I do not think Shenley Council will benefit from merging with the other proposed councils as it would distract the council from focusing on issues relevant to the residents of Shenley.”*
- e. *“If this has benefits for the residents of these Parishes then why have you not communicated them? If there are no benefits for the residents of these Parishes then why are you even considering this?”*
- f. *“I am pleased to remain as existing. The tireless work and successes of councillors and community working together is something I would not want changed by joining with other parishes.”*
- g. *“Shenley works well as it is.”*
- h. *“Larger Parish may benefit from CIL. Local residents should have a referendum. Any merged Parish should have pro-rata representation.”*

5.5 – Responses from Anonymous Participants

- a. *“Don’t want to spend more money.”*
- b. *“Some residents are banned by law from the village public house and areas due to their abusive violence and should not be allowed to be on the parish council. They have targeted villagers who have lived in the village for more than 60 years and caused many arguments in parish council meetings. I have lived in Ridge village for more than 46 years. There are now some vile residents who have caused so much disruption/verbal abuse etc to many elderly residents who have lived and kept the beautiful village 60+ Years, some being served legal papers to bar them from village meetings and the village pub. No one wants this type of person on our parish. Join up with Mymms and Shenley.”*
- c. *“We are happy with remaining a separate parish with our own voice.”*