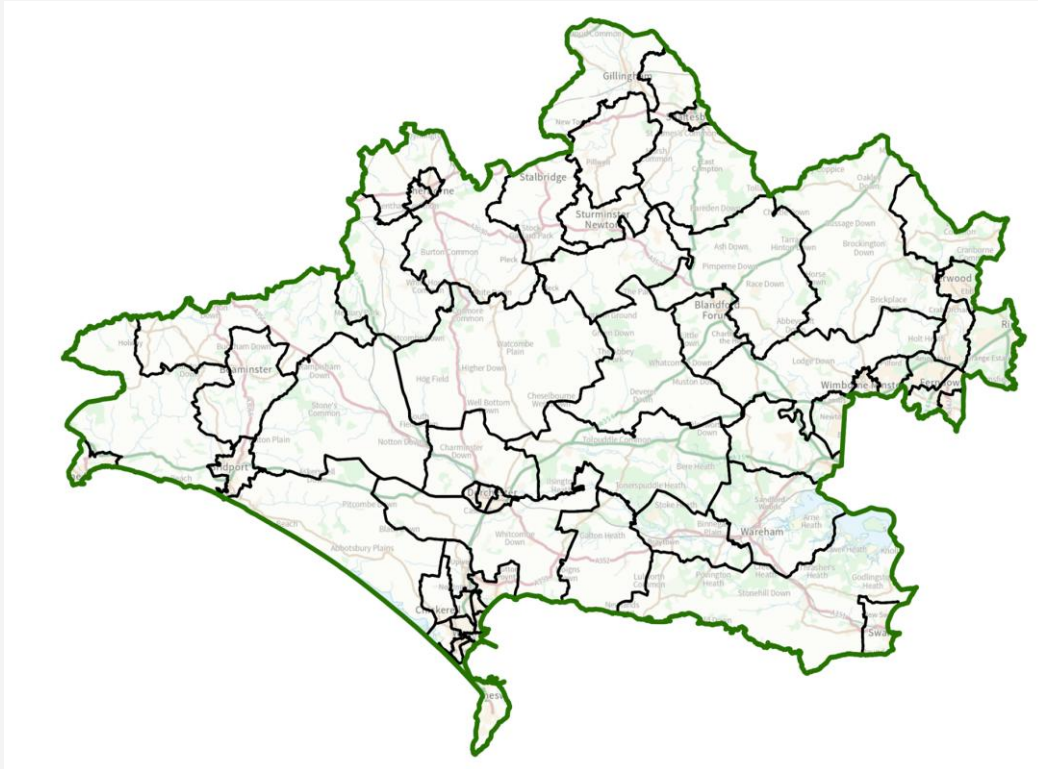




Have your say on a new political map

New ward boundaries are being proposed for the Dorset Council area, and residents and organisations are invited to share their views on the proposals.

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission is carrying out the review to make sure councillors represent a similar number of electors and that ward arrangements work effectively.

The draft proposals include 84 councillors across a mix of single, two and three-member wards.

The public consultation is open until 9 November 2026.

Boundary Commission Recommendations

We received differing proposals for a Sherborne Rural ward from the Council and Councillor Legg. Councillor Legg proposed to largely retain the existing ward, subject to the transfer of Purse Caundle parish. By contrast, the Council proposed a substantially revised ward extending further south to include Buckland Newton, Minterne Magna and Mappowder parishes, while also incorporating the Cam Vale Grouped Parish Council. Additionally, the Council proposed transferring Bradford Abbas parish, Clifton Maybank parish and Thornhackett Grouped Parish Council to its proposed Yetminster & Yeo Valley ward.

Our draft recommendations more closely resemble the Council's proposals, although we have made a number of amendments to reflect all the evidence received during consultation. We do not propose extending the ward as far south as the Council suggested, having been persuaded by evidence from Councillor Legg that Buckland Newton and its neighbouring parishes do not have strong links with Sherborne. We have also included Bishop's Caundle parish in this ward, reflecting the evidence from Councillor Legg that it shares closer links with Sherborne and the surrounding rural area than with Stalbridge.

We also recommend the inclusion of Cam Vale Grouped Parish Council in this ward. This reflects a submission from a local resident who argued that Longburton parish, which forms part of the grouped parish council, shares community links, services and day-to-day relationships centred on Sherborne and the surrounding area, rather than with Yetminster. We consider that the inclusion of the grouped parish council in a Sherborne Rural ward better reflects local community identities and interests.

While both the Council and Councillor Legg proposed transferring Purse Caundle parish to a Stalbridge ward, we recommend that it be retained in Sherborne Rural ward. This is to secure good electoral equality for the ward.

Yetminster & Yeo Valley

We have based our Yetminster & Yeo Valley ward on the Council's proposal. This reconfigures the existing ward by including Bradford Abbas, Clifton Maybank & Thornhackett Grouped Parish Council, and transferring Cam Vale Grouped Parish Council to Sherborne Rural ward and Corscombe, Halstock & District Grouped Parish Council to a new Broadwindsor ward. We were persuaded to adopt this proposal because we consider it better reflects the transport links between communities linked along the A37 corridor and the Heart of Wessex railway line.

However, we propose including Melbury Bubb, Melbury Osmond, Melbury Sampford and Stockwood parishes in this ward. The Council had instead included these parishes in its proposed Broadwindsor ward. We consider that these parishes share stronger links with Yetminster than with communities to

the west, where road connections are more limited. We also note the evidence from Councillor Legg that suggested that the Council's proposal would divide Chetnole & Stockwood Grouped Parish Council between wards.

We were not persuaded to adopt Councillor Legg's proposed ward, which largely retained the existing arrangements. As outlined above, we consider that Cam Vale Grouped Parish Council is more appropriately included in our proposed Sherborne Rural ward. In addition, we do not consider that Corscombe, Halstock & District Grouped Parish Council shares particularly strong links with Yetminster.