



**FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS  
FOR PARISHES OF  
BLAGDON & BURRINGTON  
IN THE VICINITY OF  
THE COMMUNITY OF RICKFORD**

Electoral Registration Officer  
North Somerset Council  
PO Box 138  
Town Hall  
Weston-super-Mare  
Somerset  
BS23 1DZ

1<sup>st</sup> May, 2002

## **WHY THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE PARISHES OF BLAGDON AND BURRINGTON ARE UNDER REVIEW**

Since July 2000 North Somerset Council has been aware of the proposal by residents of the community of Rickford for their village to be united within one civil parish. The Council has consulted with the parishes of Blagdon and Burrington in this matter. Currently the village of Rickford is split between both parishes with the current boundary essentially containing those properties to the east of the brook running through Rickford to be within the parish of Blagdon whilst the remainder of the village lies within the parish of Burrington. The detail of the existing boundary is shown on the map (Appendix 1).

The proposal of local residents of the village of Rickford sought to relocate the parish boundary in order that all residents were contained within one parish. The residents submitted a proposal to this Council detailing a referendum that they had undertaken of the whole village and making a proposal that Rickford entirely be contained within the parish of Burrington.

Prior to the Local Government and Rating Act 1977 there was no mechanism to enable a district or unitary council to keep the parishing arrangements within their area under review. The 1977 Act provided a process whereby such councils could decide to review parish electoral arrangements and boundaries. On receipt of the proposal from residents of Rickford in mid 2000 the Council consulted with Blagdon and Burrington Parish Councils to seek their views prior to giving consideration to the need to conduct a parish boundary review. Blagdon Parish Council called an extraordinary parish council meeting to consider the proposal of the residents of Rickford on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> August, and took the views of that meeting to the Blagdon Parish Council meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2000. Following those meetings minutes were forwarded to this Council along with the information that Blagdon Parish Council rejected the proposal to re-locate the parish boundary at Rickford by a small majority (voting for 5, against 4, abstention 1). Burrington Parish Council considered the matter at a parish council meeting in mid 2000 and informed this Council that it had no objections at all to the proposals put forward and supported the aims of the residents of Rickford .

The Policy Committee of North Somerset Council considered the merit of conducting a parish boundary review noting that the two parish councils were split on the issue with Burrington in favour and Blagdon opposed. However, the Committee felt that the representations of local residents showed sufficient local support to justify going ahead with a formal review under the terms of the Local Government and Rating Act 1977 with a view to assessing the desirability of relocating the village of Rickford into a single civil parish.

## **CONSULTATION PROCESS PRIOR TO MAKING OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to commence the review the Electoral Registration Officer held two public meetings. The first meeting was held at The Workshop at Rickford at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2001 and was attended by 28 persons. The second meeting was held at the Village Club, Blagdon, on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2001 attended by 48 persons. The views of local residents were sought on the following questions:-

1. The proposal for Rickford to be contained within the parish of Burrington.
2. The suggested route of the new parish boundary.
3. The preferred timescale for the implementation of changes to parish boundaries.

At the meeting held at Rickford 22 people were in favour of the whole of Rickford being contained in the parish of Burrington; 22 people wished Rickford Pond also be located within Burrington; and 22 people wished implementation of the parish boundary change to take effect from 2003.

At the meeting held at Blagdon 26 persons were in favour of the whole of Rickford being contained in the parish of Burrington whilst 14 persons did not wish the boundary to change, and 5 people abstained. Five people wished Rickford Pond to also be located within Burrington whilst a total of 25 people wished the pond or the pond in combination with neighbouring properties to remain within Blagdon, and 12 people abstained. Twenty-two people wished implementation of the boundary change from early 2003 whilst 6 persons were not in favour of a boundary change at any time, and 14 persons abstained.

Following the public meetings a further 6 letters of support for the proposal for the whole of Rickford to be contained within Burrington were received (from 8 residents of Rickford and 2 other local residents). Several letters stressed the community links between Rickford and Burrington particularly with regard to education facilities, playgroup, church, and village hall and by reason of safe and easy access on foot.

Burrington Parish Council submitted a letter stating that it had no objection to the proposal at this stage although it believed that the detail of the proposed new boundary would have to be considered at a later date.

Blagdon Parish Council responded prior to the holding of the public meetings, having considered the matter at a meeting in the autumn of 2000 where it rejected the proposal to relocate the boundary at Rickford.

Following the consultation process all responses were carefully considered and a suggested new Parish boundary prepared for consideration by the Planning and Regulatory Committee. Good practice in boundary reviews is to follow identifiable and permanent geographical features. On this basis, if the boundary is to change all buildings in the main settlement of Rickford, and Rickford Pond should be included.

The normal timescale for any boundary change is for it to take effect at the date of the next ordinary full parish council elections. The next ordinary parish elections take

place in May 2003 and the majority of people who commented on the issue of timescale agreed that this would be the preferred date for any change.

On balance, taking into account all representations, it was felt that the weight of local opinion in Rickford and the parishes affected was in favour of change.

## **DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OF NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**

The Planning and Regulatory Committee of North Somerset Council at their meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2001 made the following recommendations:-

That as a result of initial public consultation in the relation to the review of parish boundaries between Blagdon and Burrington in the vicinity of Rickford, the Council make the following draft recommendations and give all necessary publicity to them:-

- a. That North Somerset Council propose that the whole of the community of Rickford be contained within the parish of Burrington;
- b. that the boundary between the parishes of Blagdon and Burrington be amended to follow the route set out on the map attached at Appendix 1 from point "AA" to point "BB"; and
- c. that the proposed implementation of the revised parish boundary be in time to permit the scheduled parish council elections in May 2003 to proceed on the revised basis, subject to the making of the necessary Order by the Secretary of State for Local Government, Transport and The Regions.

The Council consulted on its draft recommendations for a period of two months from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2001.

A period of a further 4 to 8 weeks enabled North Somerset Council to take any representations into consideration and to decide whether to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. In this report the Council is publishing its Final Recommendations and making these available to all interested persons.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OF NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**

Following publication of the Council's Draft Recommendations a further public meeting was held at the Parish Room Burrington on 24 January 2002 attended by twelve persons, the majority of whom voted in favour of Rickford being united within the Parish of Burrington.

During the consultation period described above the Council received eight letters (signed by thirteen persons) in support of, and one letter against, the Draft Recommendations.

As a result of an issue raised both at the public meeting and in a letter of support from two residents the Electoral Registration Officer made a detail adjustment to the proposed Parish Boundary in the vicinity of Rickford Pond to accurately reflect the shape of that water feature.

## **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**

Following the period for receipt of public representations to the Council's Draft Recommendations, the Planning and Regulatory Committee of North Somerset Council, at their meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2002, made the following recommendations:-

**That as a result of public consultation on the Council's Draft Recommendations in relation to the review of Parish boundaries between Blagdon and Burrington in the vicinity of Rickford, the Council make the following Final Recommendations for submission to the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, and give all necessary publicity to them:-**

- a. that North Somerset Council propose that the whole of the community of Rickford be contained within the parish of Burrington;**
- b. that the boundary between the parishes of Blagdon and Burrington be amended to follow the route set out on the map attached at Appendix 1 from point "AA" to point "BB"; and**
- c. that the proposed implementation of the revised parish boundary be in time to permit the scheduled parish council elections in May 2003 to proceed on the revised basis subject to the making of the necessary Order by the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions.**

At their full Council Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2002 the Council received the recommendations of the Planning and Regulatory Committee as set out above and resolved to accept them.

**These Final Recommendations are now submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions for consideration. The Council makes it final recommendations available to all interested persons.**

It is now for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject, the Council's Final Recommendations. The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into affect.

Any further comments or queries relating to the Council's Final Recommendation should be addressed to:-

Electoral Registration Officer (Ref: MHJ),  
Parish Review in the Vicinity of Rickford,  
North Somerset Council,  
PO Box 138,  
Town Hall,  
Weston-super-Mare,  
Somerset, BS23 1DZ

## **ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Existing Electoral Arrangements**

The existing parishes of Blagdon and Burrington are unwarded. The parish of Blagdon in the 2002 Register of Electors has an electorate of 957, the parish of Burrington in the 2002 Register of Electors has an electorate of 375. The boundary between the two parishes in the vicinity of Rickford is indicated by the solid line on the map (Appendix 1).

### **Proposed Electoral Arrangements**

Under the terms of North Somerset Council's final recommendations all properties in the village of Rickford currently lying within the village of Blagdon would transfer to the parish of Burrington. On the basis of the 2002 Register of Electors this would represent a transfer of 31 electors from Blagdon to Burrington leading to Blagdon having an electorate of 924 and Burrington an electorate of 396.

The proposed revision to the parish boundaries between Blagdon and Burrington in the vicinity of the village of Rickford is as described by the dashed line indicated on the map (Appendix 1).

