Comments on the 2026 Sheffield ward boundary review

August 9, 2026

1 Introduction and general comments

It is not entirely clear to me why this review is being carried out. The current ward boundaries have only been in use since 2016, so are not particularly out of date. In the forecast electorate data, only one ward (Ecclesall) has an electorate more than 10% from the average, and that only just so, at 11%. Several recently completed reviews have accepted this sort of level of electoral inequality in newly drawn wards. So the review seems unnecessary, especially as there are moves in the current Representation of the People Bill to change the registration system in ways which could see an increase in electorate in areas where there is currently under-registration. My view is therefore that the Commission should consider postponing this review for two or three years to see whether the levels of electoral inequality under the current boundaries change significantly.

However, if the review is to continue now, I have a few comments on possible changes. Given the lack of significant problems with electoral inequality in the current map, I would not suggest major changes, so these are in the nature of tweaks rather than a wholesale re-draw.

2 Manor Castle and Richmond

There is a small problem with the current ward map caused by development on the boundary between Manor Castle and Richmond wards. This should be dealt with by moving the boundary so that all properties on Hangthwaite Close, Dobroyd Avenue and Hickleton Lane are entirely within Manor Castle ward together with the rest of the development they are part of and the adjoining Manor estate. Only a few houses are involved, so the electoral effect will be negligible.

3 Reducing the electorate of Ecclesall ward

If Ecclesall ward is to be trimmed to reduce its electorate to within 10% of the average electorate, then I would suggest that territory should not be transferred to Fulwood ward, breaching the strong value of the Porter Valley. Nor should territory be transferred to Graves Park ward or to Beauchief & Greenhill ward, which would likewise breach the strong boundary along the Sheaf Valley. Therefore the options would be to transfer territory to either Dore & Totley ward or to Nether Edge & Sharrow ward, so I have considered options for these.

It is relatively easy to identify areas in Ecclesall ward which could potentially be transferred to Nether Edge & Sharrow. Indeed, the current polling district LD was previously in Nether Edge ward. The problem is that Nether Edge & Sharrow is already close to crossing the 10% limit itself, and so in turn areas would have to be found to remove from that ward, which would be likely to split Sharrow.

Turning to possible transfers to Dore & Totley ward, in the last review, some areas in the west of Ecclesall, in the Parkhead area, were transferred to that ward. In some ways this was unfortunate, because I would regard Parkhead as a sub-area of Ecclesall, and certainly not part of "Dore and Totley", nor even really of Whirlow, which has been in Dore & Totley ward for longer. However, given that this has already happened it would be possible to transfer further areas of western Ecclesall adjoining these. For example I would suggest that the remaining properties on Bents Road and all of those on Bents Drive would fit with the area of Ecclesall already in Dore & Totley ward. (This would include the grounds of Silverdale School.) I believe that moving this small area to Dore & Totley ward would reduce the forecast electorate in Ecclesall to within 10% of the average without increasing the electorate of Dore & Totley too much.

I don't think this option is ideal, but the possible boundaries are reasonably clean and no worse than the existing boundary. If this were done, then I suggest changing the name of Dore & Totley ward to reflect the inclusion of western parts of Ecclesall; the name I would suggest would be "Dore, Totley & Parkhead". Overall this is probably the simplest option and I would (somewhat reluctanly) suggest it.

I did consider transferring the Parkhead area back to Ecclesall and transferring the Millhouses area (which I feel is less strongly associated with Ecclesall than Parkhead) to Dore & Totley ward in exchange. However, this would require further knock-on changes to reduce to electorate of Dore & Totley.