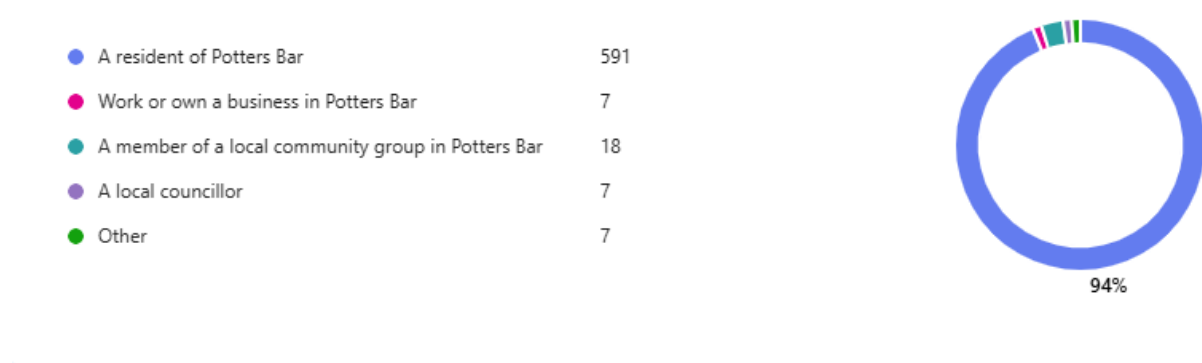


CGR – Potters Bar responses overview 1st consultation

From 21 April to 8 June 2026 and received 604 responses. Of those who took part, 72% supported the establishment of a parish council.



A civil parish is the area or locality that sits within the designated parish boundary.

A **civil parish** is the lowest tier of local government administration in England, representing a specific geographical area (village, town, or neighbourhood).

A **parish council** is the elected body of local councillors responsible for managing that specific civil parish area.

We asked, “Do you feel a Civil Parish should be created within Potters Bar?”

The majority of respondents were **supportive of creating a Civil Parish in Potters Bar**. The most common reasons given were:

- **Stronger local representation and a greater voice for residents** in decisions affecting Potters Bar.
- **Improved local accountability**, with decisions made by people who live in and understand the area.
- Creation of a **Parish Council**, giving Potters Bar a dedicated body focused solely on local issues.

- A desire for **greater influence over planning, development, and local services.**
- Strengthening **community identity, cohesion, and local events.**
- Concerns that Potters Bar is sometimes overlooked within wider Hertsmere governance and would benefit from having its own recognised local authority structure.

Those **opposed** to the proposal most commonly cited:

- Concerns about **higher council tax costs** and additional financial burdens on residents.
- The creation of **another layer of bureaucracy or local government.**
- A belief that existing councils should already be delivering these services and representing residents effectively.
- Concerns that local government reorganisation and future unitary authorities may make a new parish unnecessary.

We did receive a few responses from residents who were undecided or required further clarification.

Summary: Supporters viewed a Civil Parish as a way to strengthen local democracy, representation, and community identity, while opponents were primarily concerned about cost, duplication of services, and increased bureaucracy.

We asked, “If a Civil Parish is created within Potters Bar, do you feel a Parish Council should be created?”

Based on the responses provided, there is a clear majority in favour of creating a Parish Council.

Those supporting a Parish Council most commonly cited:

- **Stronger local representation** – residents feel Potters Bar needs its own elected body to speak specifically for the town.
- **Greater influence over local decisions** – particularly on planning, development, community facilities, public spaces, and local services.
- **Local people making local decisions** – supporters believe councillors who live in Potters Bar would better understand local issues and priorities.
- **Improved accountability and accessibility** – residents would have a clearer point of contact for local concerns.

- **Protection of Potters Bar's identity and interests** – several respondents felt the town is overlooked within the wider borough and would benefit from having its own voice.
- **Preparation for local government reorganisation** – some viewed a Parish Council as a way to retain local influence if larger unitary authorities are introduced.
- **Community engagement and cohesion** – respondents felt a Parish Council could promote local events, projects, and civic pride.

Those opposed to creating a Parish Council most commonly cited:

- **Additional cost to residents** – concerns about increased council tax through a parish precept were the most frequently mentioned objection.
- **Creation of another layer of bureaucracy** – many felt existing councils already provide sufficient governance.
- **Limited powers and influence** – some questioned whether a Parish Council would be able to make meaningful changes.
- **Duplication of existing services** – respondents argued that responsibilities are already covered by Hertsmere Borough Council or other authorities.
- **Concerns about inefficiency or political agendas** – a small number expressed scepticism about the effectiveness of additional elected representatives.

We asked, “Should a Parish Council be divided into parish wards?”

Overall sentiment from the responses reviewed:

The majority of respondents who supported the creation of a Parish Council also supported dividing it into parish wards. A significant minority opposed wards, often because they opposed the creation of a Parish Council altogether or were concerned about additional costs of creating a Parish Council.

Key themes in favour of parish wards

- **Improved local representation** was the most common reason given. Many respondents felt that different areas of Potters Bar have distinct characteristics, priorities, and concerns which would be better represented through ward-based councillors.
- **Greater focus on local issues**, with councillors able to concentrate on the needs of specific neighbourhoods.

- **Clearer accountability and accessibility**, making it easier for residents to know who represents them and who to contact regarding local concerns.
- **Improved efficiency and management**, with responsibilities distributed across wards rather than managed across the whole town.
- **Fair and balanced representation**, ensuring all areas of Potters Bar have a voice in local decision-making.
- Some respondents also believed wards could **reduce election costs**, as by-elections could be held within individual wards rather than across the entire parish.

Key themes against parish wards

- **Concerns about increased bureaucracy and red tape**, with some believing additional wards would make local government more complicated and less efficient.
- **Potential additional costs**, including concerns about more councillors, administration, and higher council tax.
- Some respondents felt **Potters Bar is not large enough** to justify ward divisions.
- Others argued that the town should be treated as **one unified community**, fearing wards could create division, competition for resources, or unequal treatment between areas.

We asked, “Do you agree that if the Parish Council is warded, the warding arrangements should match the Borough wards?”

Respondents who answered “**Yes**” commonly cited:

- **Consistency and simplicity** – matching existing borough wards would be easier for residents to understand.
- **Avoiding confusion** – having one set of boundaries was viewed as more straightforward than creating new ward arrangements.
- **Administrative efficiency** – several respondents felt this would simplify governance and representation.
- **Maintaining existing community representation** – many felt the current ward structure already reflects local areas adequately.

Respondents who answered “**No**” suggested:

Ward Size and Balance

- Some respondents felt **Bentley Heath & The Royds** is too large geographically or could become disproportionately large due to future development.
- Others highlighted the need to ensure wards remain balanced by population, both now and in the future.
- Some respondents believe that smaller or different wards would provide better local representation.
- Concerns that current borough ward boundaries do not reflect local communities or polling districts.
- Suggestions that Potters Bar should be treated as a **single parish ward** rather than divided into wards.

Future Reviews

- A number of respondents supported the proposals as a starting point but recommended future reviews to accommodate housing growth, Local Government Reorganisation, or changes in population.