

New electoral arrangements for Bracknell Forest Borough Council Draft Recommendations

June 2020

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Andrew Scallan CBE
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Bracknell Forest?

7 We are conducting a review of Bracknell Forest Council ('the Council') as the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Bracknell. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Bracknell Forest are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

Our proposals for Bracknell Forest

9 Bracknell Forest should be represented by 41 councillors, one fewer than there are now.

10 Bracknell Forest should have 15 wards, three fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of all wards should change; none will stay the same.

How will the recommendations affect you?

12 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to consider any representations which are based on these issues.

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 30 June 2020 to 7 September 2020. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 7 September 2020 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 31 for how to send us your response.

Review timetable

17 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Bracknell Forest. We then held a period of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
17 December 2019	Number of councillors decided
7 January 2020	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
16 March 2020	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
30 June 2020	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
7 September 2020	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
1 December 2020	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

20 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

21 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2019	2025
Electorate of Bracknell Forest	89,882	102,657
Number of councillors	42	41
Average number of electors per councillor	2,140	2,504

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Bracknell Forest will have good electoral equality by 2025.

Submissions received

23 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices by appointment, or on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 14% by 2025.

25 However, at the end of our warding consultation, when the Council submitted its proposed warding arrangements, we noted that the forecast figures used by the Council did not reflect the previously agreed forecast number for the overall electorate. Consequentially, this significantly altered some of its projected electoral

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

variances in certain parts of the borough.

26 Following discussions with the authority, we noted that this difference had emerged from incorrect forecasting for a single polling district (WM) in the north of the borough. The Council informed us that it had included the early stages of a development in this polling district in the forecasts originally sent to us; however, it failed to consider the later stages already under construction. This led to an error and miscalculation in its figures for this polling district and the overall electorate, excluding an additional 1,173 electors based on a further 558 planned properties by 2025.

27 The Commission is content that the new figures received more accurately reflect the forecast growth in the borough. We have therefore used these figures as the basis of our draft recommendations.

Number of councillors

28 Bracknell Forest Council currently has 42 councillors. At the previous stage of the review, we looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that decreasing this number by two would ensure the Council could carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

29 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 40 councillors – for example, 40 one-councillor wards, 20 two-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

30 We received three submissions that referred to the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. All of these submissions argued for a further reduction in the number of councillors to 30, 33, and 38 councillors. However, none of these alternative proposals outlined how the reductions would be achieved in terms of the decision-making responsibilities of the Council or made reference to our key criteria. We have therefore not adopted any of these proposals as part of our draft recommendations.

31 The Commission, when proposing a council size, reserves the right to alter this number if it discovers that an alternative council size would provide a pattern of wards that better reflects its statutory criteria. When drawing up our draft recommendations, we concluded that a council size of 41 members would allow us to provide a warding pattern that better reflected local communities and ensured good electoral equality.

32 We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a 41-member council.

Ward boundaries consultation

33 We received 38 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two borough-wide proposals from Bracknell Forest Council and a local resident, and two partial schemes from a local resident and Winkfield Parish Council. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

34 The submissions received from the Council and local residents proposed mixed warding patterns of two- and three-councillor wards for Bracknell Forest. The response from Winkfield Parish Council proposed a mixed warding pattern of two-, three- and four-councillor wards. It is our view that four-councillor wards do not aid effective and convenient local government, potentially diluting the accountability of councillors to the electorate. We have therefore not included any four-councillor wards as part of our draft recommendations, although we have taken careful account of the community evidence provided by the Parish Council and the boundaries proposed.

35 Having carefully considered the submissions received, we are of the view that the different proposals provided for good electoral equality in some areas of the borough, broadly used clear boundaries, and in some cases provided evidence of community identity. Consequently, we have generally based our draft recommendations on the proposals from the Council, Winkfield Parish Council, and a member of the public, subject to modifications in some areas to provide clearer boundaries and reflect evidence of community identity received from other local interests.

36 Given the travel restrictions, and the social distancing, arising from the Covid-19 outbreak, there was a detailed virtual tour of Bracknell Forest. This helped to clarify issues raised in submissions and assisted in the construction of the proposed draft boundary recommendations.

Draft recommendations

37 Our draft recommendations are for 12 three-councillor wards, two two-councillor wards and one one-councillor ward. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

38 The tables and maps on pages 9–26 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Bracknell Forest. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

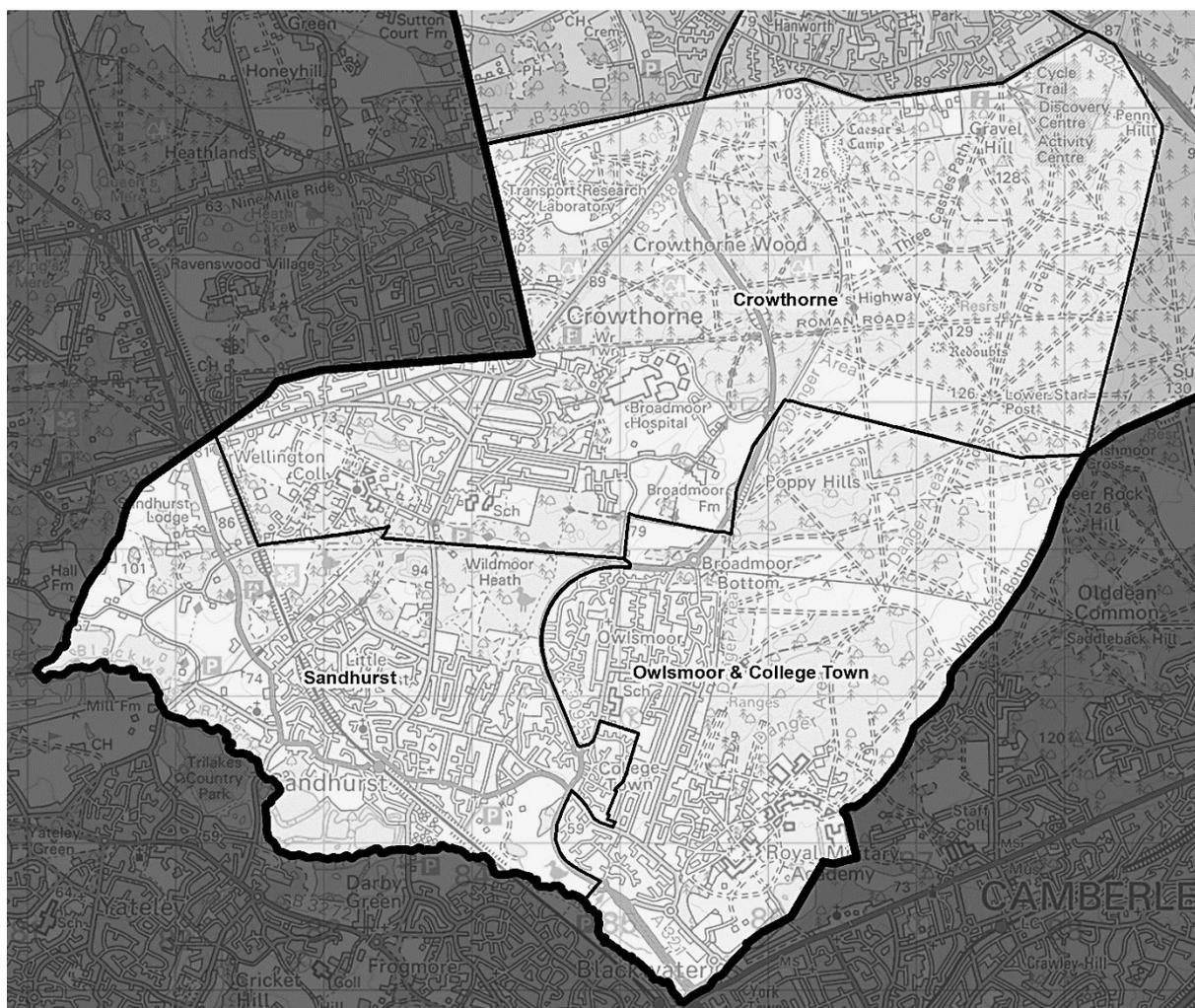
⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

39 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 37 and on the large map accompanying this report.

40 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

Crowthorne and Sandhurst



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Crowthorne	3	-10%
Owlsmoor & College Town	3	9%
Sandhurst	3	9%

Crowthorne

41 We received three proposals relating to this area. The representations proposed significantly different boundaries for Crowthorne, represented by either two or three councillors.

42 The Council proposed a warding arrangement comprising a two-councillor Crowthorne ward and a two-councillor Wildmoor & Owlsmoor ward. This arrangement linked the Pinehill Road area of Crowthorne parish, to the south of Lower Broadmoor Road, with Owlsmoor to form a new Wildmoor & Owlsmoor ward.

43 We received two other proposals from local residents, both arguing for a three-councillor Crowthorne ward. One resident suggested that the entirety of Crowthorne parish should form its own ward. The other resident argued that the areas around Longdown Road and Mickle Hill in northern Sandhurst should be included within a Crowthorne ward in order to improve electoral equality. In our view, this proposed arrangement does not provide a clearly identifiable boundary and would divide a community. We have consequently not adopted this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

44 We received significant opposition to the Council's proposal in other submissions, notably from Crowthorne Parish Council, which argued for the ward boundary in this area to be coterminous with the parish ward. Both the Parish Council and other local residents argued that the arrangement proposed by the Council split a community and did not provide for a clear and identifiable boundary. On touring the area virtually, we agreed that the Council's proposed boundary divided a coherent community. We do not consider that placing the area south of Lower Broadmoor Road within a Wildmoor & Owlsmoor ward reflects the interests of local communities or provides for effective and convenient local government, particularly given the geographic composition of the area and Crowthorne's separation from surrounding towns in Bracknell Forest.

45 We have therefore concluded that local communities would be better reflected by a warding arrangement which does not split Crowthorne parish. Our draft recommendations are consequently based on the submissions received from Crowthorne Parish Council and local residents. We have included the entirety of Crowthorne parish in a three-councillor Crowthorne ward. This ward is similar to the existing Crowthorne ward, subject to the addition of electors from Byron Drive, Chaucer Road, and the Wellington College area.

46 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Crowthorne ward, with an electoral variance of -10% by 2025.

Owlsmoor & College Town and Sandhurst

47 We received three proposals for this area. Two of the submissions proposed similar boundaries for Sandhurst, suggesting that the current two-councillor wards should be combined to form one three-councillor ward. One proposal argued for the retention of the current warding arrangement in Sandhurst. Each submission provided differing proposals for the Owlsmoor and College Town areas.

48 The Council proposed a warding arrangement comprising a two-councillor College Town ward, a two-councillor Wildmoor & Owlsmoor ward, and a three-councillor Sandhurst ward. This arrangement proposed Rackstraw Road as the eastern boundary for a Sandhurst ward, including electors from Avocet Crescent and Wargrove Drive in a College Town ward. The Council also proposed to retain the

current boundary of Snaprails Par and Yeovil Road between the wards of College Town and Wildmoor & Owlsmoor.

49 We received two other proposals from local residents, both of which argued to include different sections of Owlsmoor and College Town in a single Sandhurst ward in order to improve electoral equality in the area. One proposal argued to retain the existing arrangement, keeping Avocet Crescent and Wargrove Drive in Sandhurst. The other submission suggested that Owlsmoor Road acts as a boundary between Sandhurst and the Owlsmoor and College Town communities. We also received comments from local residents in the area who agreed that the arrangement in Sandhurst, Owlsmoor, and College Town should be for two three-councillor wards.

50 As part of our virtual tour of the area, we were able to confirm that Rackstraw Road appears to be the most appropriate boundary between Owlsmoor and Sandhurst. However, an arrangement which used Rackstraw Road as a boundary would create an electoral variance of 21% more electors than the borough average by 2025. In our view, this level of electoral inequality is unacceptably high. Furthermore, the proposal to use Owlsmoor Road as the boundary would create an electoral variance of 19% more electors than the borough average for Sandhurst ward. Again, in our view this level of electoral inequality is unacceptably high. We have therefore been unable to adopt either of these proposals as part of our draft recommendations.

51 Our draft recommendations in this area are based on a combination of the submissions received from the Council and local residents. We propose a three-councillor Owlsmoor & College Town ward and a three-councillor Sandhurst ward. Our proposed boundary between these wards is similar to the existing arrangement, subject to a modification that extends the current boundary around Avocet Crescent and down to Yorktown Road, including Moray Avenue and Inverness Way in Sandhurst ward. Electors from Wargrove Drive would now be within Owlsmoor & College Town ward. While we accept that there is a sense of separation between this area and Sandhurst, the other arrangements suggested in paragraph 49 would result in unacceptably high levels of electoral inequality. We would be particularly interested to hear alternative proposals from electors about what they feel is a defining boundary in this area.

52 Our draft recommendations are for a three-councillor Owlsmoor & College Town ward and a three-councillor Sandhurst ward, with electoral variances of 9% and 9% respectively by 2025.

Central Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Central Bracknell	1	-3%
Easthampstead & Wildridings	3	-6%
Hanworth	3	-5%

Central Bracknell

53 We received four proposals for this area. All proposals divided the area or included it in surrounding wards of either two or three councillors.

54 The Council proposed a warding arrangement that split the area along Church Road, Market Street, and the railway line. This proposal placed parts of Central Bracknell in Bullbrook, Easthampstead & Wildridings, Harmans Water, and Priestwood & Garth wards.

55 We received three other submissions from local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. Both local residents argued for the retention of the current two-councillor Wildridings & Central ward, with some modifications in order to improve electoral

equality in other wards. Winkfield Parish Council also suggested retaining the current Wildridings & Central ward but proposed to extend the area to the south as part of a three-councillor Easthampstead & Wildridings ward.

56 We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that, while they all resulted in good electoral equality, none of the proposed patterns of wards provided for a good balance of our three statutory criteria in the central area of Bracknell. Having visited the area on our virtual tour of the borough, we consider Downshire Way, Millennium Way, and Skimped Hill Lane to act as significant barriers between communities and therefore provide the most appropriate boundaries. This view was reflected in submissions from members of the public, which stated that Central Bracknell has its own community identity and interests. Having considered all the evidence submitted, and given that the electorate in the town centre is forecast to grow substantially by 2025 due to the large number of developments taking place, we agree that the most appropriate warding arrangement is for the town centre to be represented in its own ward.

57 Our draft recommendations are based on the submissions received from local residents. We propose a one-councillor ward that includes the entirety of the town centre. The northern boundary of our proposed ward is similar to the existing Wildridings & Central ward, running along Skimped Hill Lane and Millennium Way, and down Larges Lane to the railway line. The proposed southern boundary runs across Downshire Way and re-joins the current eastern boundary on Broad Lane to the railway line.

58 Our draft recommendation is for a one-councillor Central Bracknell ward, with an electoral variance of -3% by 2025.

Easthampstead & Wildridings

59 We received five proposals for this area. Two of the submissions proposed similar boundaries for Easthampstead & Wildridings, arguing to retain the current two-councillor wards of Old Bracknell and Wildridings & Central. The remaining proposals suggested combining most of the existing wards to create a three-councillor ward for the area. Each proposed different boundaries for this ward.

60 The Council proposed a warding arrangement which combined the existing wards of Old Bracknell and Wildridings & Central, with some alterations to the boundary in the central area of Bracknell. This arrangement suggested the High Street as the northern boundary of the ward, joining the railway line and moving east to Hazel Hill before re-joining the current boundary of Broad Lane. This proposal also used South Hill Road as the southern boundary of the ward, moving electors to the south of the road into Hanworth ward.

61 We received five submissions from local residents and Winkfield Parish council. Two local residents argued for the retention of the current two-councillor wards of Wildridings & Central and Old Bracknell, with some modifications in order to improve electoral equality in other wards. Winkfield Parish Council suggested a three-councillor Easthampstead & Wildridings ward, comprising the current Wildridings & Central ward and the Easthampstead area to the north of Reed's Hill, currently part of Old Bracknell ward. We also received a submission from a member of the public which proposed that the Wildridings and Easthampstead areas should form a single ward.

62 Our draft recommendations are based on the submissions received from the Council, Winkfield Parish Council, and local residents. As a consequence of our recommendations for Bracknell Central ward, we are unable to adopt the Council's proposal in the north of the ward. However, we agree that the areas of Wildridings and Easthampstead share similar interests and identities. We therefore recommend a three-councillor ward that includes the majority of the current Old Bracknell and Wildridings & Central wards, modified to reflect the boundaries of Central Bracknell ward as discussed in paragraph 57. The southern boundary will also feature a small modification to the current arrangement, discussed further in paragraph 67.

63 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Easthampstead & Wildridings ward, with an electoral variance of -6% by 2025.

Hanworth

64 We received four proposals for this area. Four of the submissions suggested mostly similar boundaries to the current arrangement for Hanworth, subject to their differing proposals for the neighbouring Easthampstead & Wildridings ward as described in paragraphs 60–61. Three submissions proposed to retain a three-councillor ward, and one proposed a four-councillor ward.

65 The Council proposed that the northern boundary of a Hanworth ward should extend to South Hill Road. This proposed arrangement included electors from Heathmoors, Manston Drive and adjoining roads, Finmere, Gainsborough and Greenham Wood in a Hanworth ward.

66 We received three other submissions from local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. Both local residents argued to retain the current ward boundaries, with some modifications in order to improve electoral equality in the area. Winkfield Parish Council suggested a four-councillor ward, extending the boundary of a Hanworth ward to Crowthorne Road, Reed's Hill and the eastern stretch of South Hill Road. As discussed in paragraph 34, we are of the view that a four-councillor ward would not provide for effective and convenient local government and we have therefore not adopted this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

67 Our draft recommendations are based on the Council's submission for a three-councillor ward, with a slightly modified northern boundary. While we agree that electors from Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood share affinity with Hanworth, we are not convinced that utilising South Hill Road as a boundary would reflect communities in Heathmoors, Manston Drive, Longwater Road, Canon Hill, and Lingwood, all of which are accessed from the north. In order to reflect the access routes for each area we instead propose that these electors should be included in Easthampstead & Wildridings ward, using Ringmead as the northern boundary for Hanworth ward, turning north at North Lake and curving around Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood before re-joining the current boundary on Bagshot Road.

68 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Hanworth ward, with an electoral variance of -5% by 2025.

West Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Binfield South with Jennett's Hill	3	3%
Great Hollands	3	0%

Great Hollands

69 We received four proposals for this area. Two of the submissions proposed similar boundaries for Great Hollands, arguing to retain the current arrangement of two two-councillor wards, with modifications to improve electoral equality. The remaining proposals argued for a three-councillor Great Hollands ward and a four-councillor Great Hollands & Jennett's Hill ward respectively.

70 The Council proposed to retain two two-councillor Great Hollands wards. This proposal modified the current boundary on Great Holland Road, moving across Great Hollands Park, north along Wordsworth, and then east through the estate opposite Great Hollands Primary School to join Ringmead.

71 We received three other proposals from two local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. One resident's proposal suggested Ringmead as the northern boundary of a Great Hollands ward, moving the entire estate into its own three-councillor ward. The other resident proposed a similar arrangement to the Council, splitting the estate at Appledore. Winkfield Parish Council suggested combining the current Great Hollands North and Great Hollands South wards into a four-councillor ward, using Berkshire Way as the northern boundary. As discussed previously, we have not included four-member wards as part of our draft recommendations.

72 We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that, while they all resulted in good electoral equality, the proposals that split the Great Hollands estate did not provide for the best reflection of communities or use clear and identifiable boundaries. We also noted the lack of access between Jennett's Hill and the Great Hollands estate. Having considered the possibility of retaining the current boundary of Great Hollands Road, we noted that this would create an electoral variance in Great Hollands North of 30% by 2025. We have therefore not adopted any of the proposals that split the Great Hollands estate as part of our draft recommendations.

73 Our draft recommendations are based on a resident's submission for a three-councillor Great Hollands ward. We consider that this offers the best balance of our statutory criteria in both Binfield, Great Hollands, and Jennett's Hill – discussed further below. Our proposed Great Hollands ward keeps the entirety of the Great Hollands estate together, using Ringmead as a boundary between Great Hollands and Binfield South with Jennett's Hill (discussed below).

74 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Great Hollands ward, with an electoral variance of 0% by 2025.

Binfield South with Jennett's Hill

75 We received three proposals for this area. Two of the submissions for Binfield proposed similar boundaries, arguing for a ward mostly coterminous with the Binfield parish boundary. The remaining proposal suggested splitting the area into two wards.

76 The Council proposed a new three-councillor Binfield ward, mostly coterminous with the Binfield parish boundary. This arrangement used Berkshire Way as the southern boundary of the ward, following the parish boundary in the east to the edge of the borough.

77 We received two other proposals from a local resident and Winkfield Parish Council. The local resident argued for two Binfield wards as a consequence of their proposals for Great Hollands ward. This proposal separated Binfield parish at Foxley Lane, with the proposed boundary continuing through Park Farm to the eastern

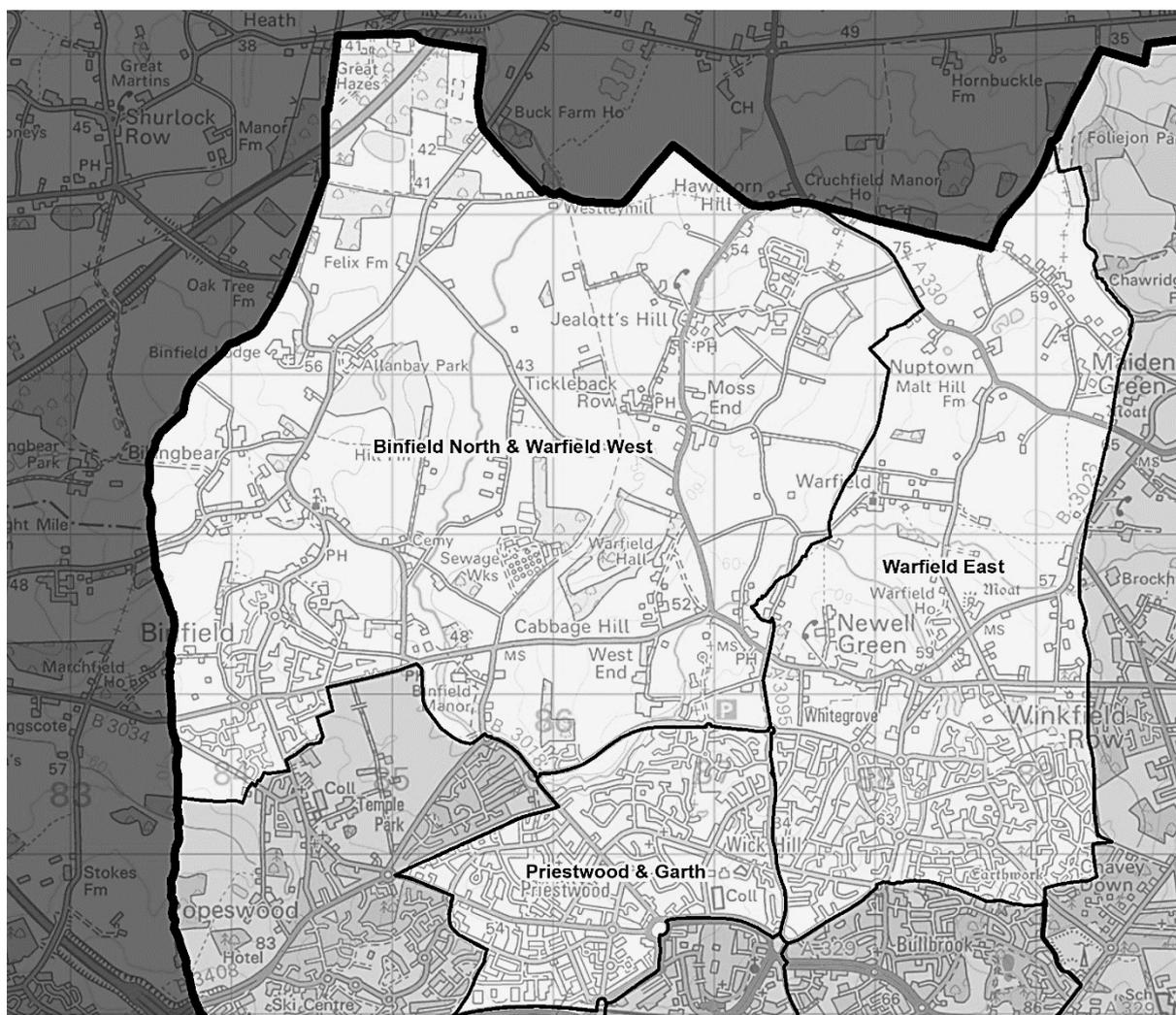
boundary of the parish. The resident combined the area to the south of this proposed boundary with Jennett's Hill and the small remainder of the parish, which sits to the south of Berkshire Way. We also received a submission from a local resident who commented that the Wykery Copse area should remain within a Binfield ward. Winkfield Parish Council offered the same proposal as the Council.

78 As part of our virtual tour of the area, we were able to confirm that Berkshire Way is a strong and identifiable boundary between Binfield and Jennett's Hill. However, as a result of our decision to avoid splitting the Great Hollands community (discussed above in paragraph 72), it is not possible to propose a warding arrangement in this area that utilises Berkshire Way as a boundary and still retains good electoral equality. In order to retain good balance of our statutory criteria across the whole area, we have therefore taken the view that Berkshire Way must be crossed as part of the warding arrangement. We particularly welcome local comments on this view during our consultation on these draft proposals.

79 Our draft recommendations are therefore based on a resident's submission for a three-councillor 'Binfield South' ward. This arrangement includes the Amen Corner, Farley Wood, Park Farm, Popeswood, and Temple Park areas of Binfield parish with Jennett's Hill, using Ringmead as the southern boundary between this area and Great Hollands estate. While we are conscious that the two areas either side of Berkshire Way do not share a great deal of access routes, we are of the view that this arrangement ensures no communities are split across the west of the borough and provides for good levels of electoral equality in 2025.

80 We propose to name this ward Binfield South with Jennett's Hill. Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor ward, with an electoral variance of 3% by 2025.

North Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Binfield North & Warfield West	2	3%
Priestwood & Garth	3	3%
Warfield East	3	0%

Binfield North & Warfield West and Warfield East

81 We received three proposals for this area of the borough. Two of the submissions proposed differing variations of a Binfield and a Warfield ward, each mostly coterminous with the parish boundaries. The remaining proposal suggested an arrangement which split the current Binfield with Warfield ward.

82 The Council proposed a three-councillor Binfield ward (discussed in paragraph 76) and a two-councillor Warfield ward for this area. The Council's proposal for Warfield split Warfield parish into two wards, including Quelm Park and Warfield Park in a rural two-councillor Warfield ward while retaining the remainder of the

parish in a two-councillor Whitegrove ward (with the exception of electors on Lynwood Chase, Gough's Lane and Priory Lane).

83 We received two other proposals for this area from a local resident and Winkfield Parish Council. The local resident argued for a combined two-councillor Binfield North and Warfield ward, with boundaries similar to the current Binfield with Warfield ward, and suggested retaining the existing three-councillor Warfield Harvest Ride ward. Winkfield Parish Council made a similar suggestion to the Council's three-councillor Binfield ward, however recommended combining the existing Warfield Harvest Ride ward with most of Warfield parish in a three-councillor ward.

84 We received several submissions regarding Warfield parish from local interests. Warfield Parish Council and several residents requested that Warfield be represented in its own ward, with the Parish Council suggesting a 'north-south' or 'east-west' split to the parish. Residents from Spring Meadow, Flintgrove, and Kenilworth Avenue also proposed that residents on the south side of Holly Spring Lane be included in a Warfield ward.

85 Due to the considerable amount of development taking place in Warfield parish, it is not possible to recommend a warding arrangement completely coterminous with the parish boundaries. A three-councillor ward comprising the entirety of the parish would create an electoral variance of 48% more electors than the borough average by 2025. In our view, this level of electoral inequality is unacceptably high. The distribution of electors in the parish, due to its rural-urban split, also presents problems in developing two wards which would adhere to our statutory criteria, use clear and identifiable boundaries, and avoid creating unviable parish wards⁵.

86 Our draft recommendations are therefore based on a combination of the submissions received, as well as our own proposals. We are proposing a two-councillor Binfield North & Warfield West ward that includes a number of electors from the east of Warfield parish, as suggested by Warfield Parish Council. We are also proposing a three-councillor Warfield East ward comprised of the remainder of Warfield parish, with the exception of Quelm Park.

87 It should be noted that, due to the arrangement of parish boundaries in Warfield, we are unable to include the entirety of Warfield Park within Warfield ward. Doing so would create two unviable parish wards of less than 100 electors.

⁵ We will not normally recommend the creation of parish wards that contain no or very few electors (fewer than a hundred) unless it can be demonstrated to us that, within a short period of time, there will be sufficient electors as to warrant the election of at least one parish councillor. This is because each parish ward must by statute return at least one parish councillor. To do so, there must be a reasonable number of local government electors in the parish ward to make the election of a councillor viable.

88 Our draft recommendations are for a two-councillor Binfield North & Warfield West ward and a three-councillor Warfield East ward, with electoral variances of 3% and 0% respectively by 2025.

Priestwood & Garth

89 We received four proposals for this area of the borough. Two of the representations proposed mostly similar boundaries to the current arrangement for Priestwood & Garth, with amendments in order to improve electoral equality in the area. All proposals recommended a three-councillor ward.

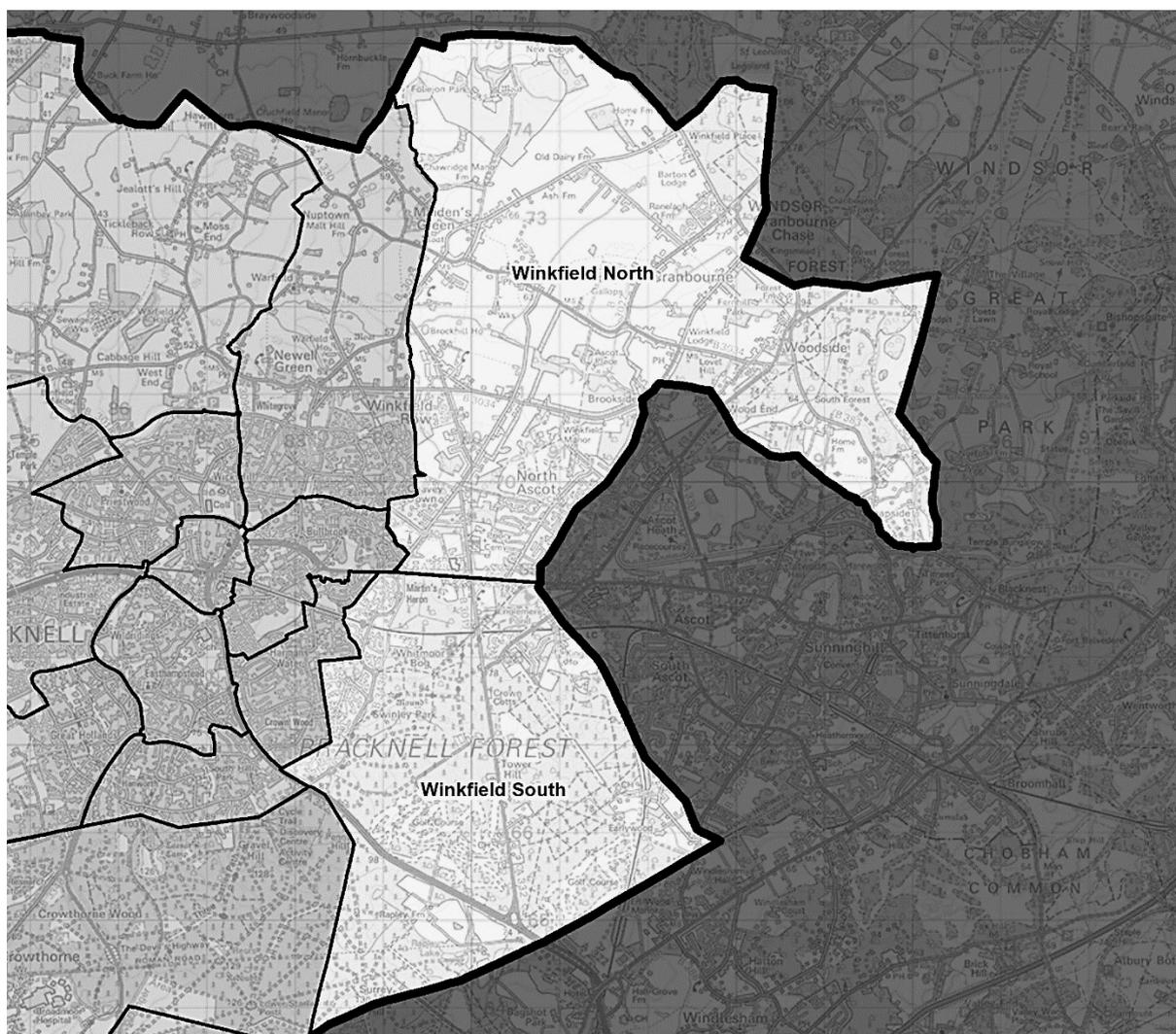
90 The Council proposed to include a section of central Bracknell (currently part of Wildridings & Central ward) in Priestwood & Garth ward. This proposed arrangement extended the current boundary from Skimped Hill Lane, south along Market Street, across the railway line to Church Road, and re-joined the current boundary at Warfield Road. The Council also suggested including Elen Place and the north of Kennel Lane in the ward.

91 We received three other proposals from two local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. One resident suggested a similar warding arrangement to the Council, proposing that the area in the far north-west of central Bracknell should be included in Priestwood & Garth ward. The remaining proposals suggested retaining the current warding arrangement.

92 As a consequence of our proposals for Central Bracknell (paragraphs 57–58), we were unable to adopt the proposals outlined above as part our draft recommendations for Priestwood & Garth. As noted in paragraph 56, we consider Millennium Way and Skimped Hill Lane to provide a strong and identifiable barrier between communities. Our proposed three-member Priestwood & Garth ward incorporates this barrier as its south-east boundary, with the ward extending north to include electors in Elen Place, the north of Kennel Lane, and Quelm Park to secure good electoral equality.

93 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Priestwood & Garth ward, with an electoral variance of 3% by 2025.

Rural East Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Winkfield North	3	-2%
Winkfield South	2	6%

Winkfield North and Winkfield South

94 We received three proposals for this area. All of the submissions proposed significantly different boundaries for Winkfield North and Winkfield South, represented by either two or three councillors.

95 The Council proposed a three-councillor ward that combined the existing Winkfield & Cranbourne and Ascot wards. This arrangement retained the existing boundaries in this area, with the exception of using the Warfield parish boundary to the north-west.

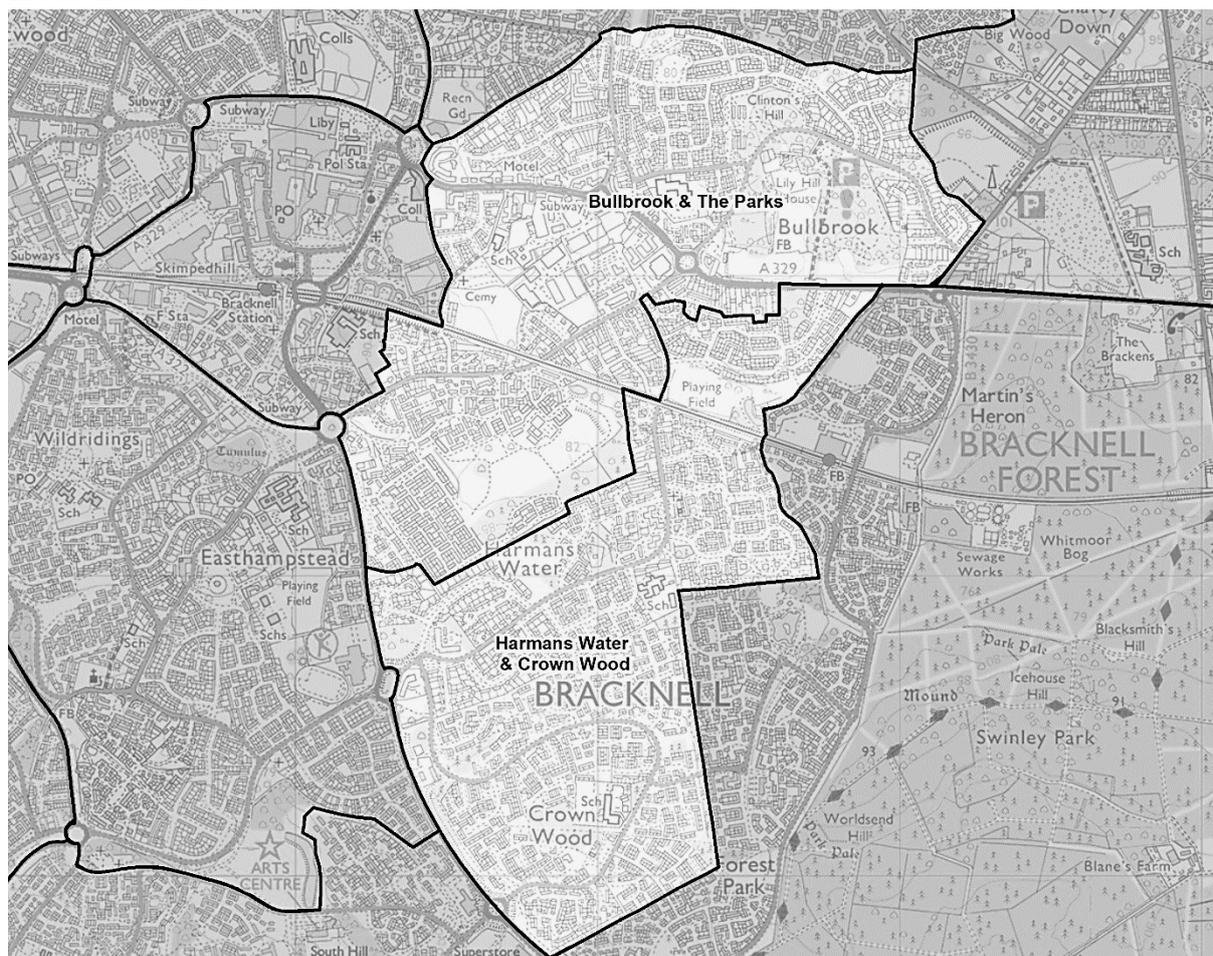
96 We received two other proposals from a local resident and Winkfield Parish Council. The resident proposed retaining the existing wards, with the exception of

using the Warfield parish boundary to the north-west. Winkfield Parish Council recommended that the area be split into a three-councillor Winkfield North ward and a two-councillor Winkfield South ward, using the London Road as a boundary between the two. Citing considerable community evidence, the Parish Council also argued that the Winkfield South ward should be coterminous with the parish boundary, including electors from Forest Park, The Warren, and Martins Heron in a two-councillor ward.

97 Our draft recommendations are based on the proposal from Winkfield Parish Council, with a modification in the north-west to ensure that the boundary follows the Warfield parish boundary. In our view, the proposal from Winkfield Parish Council reflects communities in the area, while our amendment provides for effective and convenient local government in Warfield. We particularly welcome submissions from residents in this area during the consultation on these draft recommendations.

98 Our draft recommendations are for a three-councillor Winkfield North ward and a two councillor Winkfield South ward, with an electoral variance of -2% and 3% respectively by 2025.

East Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Bullbrook & The Parks	3	2%
Harmans Water & Crown Wood	3	-9%

Bullbrook & The Parks

99 We received four submissions for this area. The submissions proposed significantly different boundaries, represented by either two or three councillors.

100 The Council proposed a three-councillor Bullbrook ward, extending the current boundaries to the west and east while using Holly Spring Lane as the northernmost boundary. This proposed arrangement used Church Road and Warfield Road as the western boundary of the ward before following the railway line to the south to Martins Heron and therefore including Mount Lane and Martins Heron in Bullbrook.

101 We received three other proposals from local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. One local resident argued for the retention of the current warding arrangement for Bullbrook, with the exception of using Holly Spring Lane as the northern boundary and excluding properties to the south of Broad Lane to the south of the railway. Another resident proposed that the western boundary of a Bullbrook

ward should be London Road and Bay Road, removing Holly Spring Lane, Park Road, and Deepfield Road from the ward. As a result of Winkfield Parish Council's proposals for Martins Heron, as described in paragraph 96, the Parish Council suggested using the railway line as the southern boundary. This proposal would have included all electors to the north of the railway line in a two-councillor Bullbrook ward.

102 We also received evidence from councillors in this area who argued that Martins Heron and The Warren have close community ties and should be kept together in the same ward. The councillors also suggested that The Parks and The Warren share strong community links with Harmans Water.

103 As a result of our proposals in other areas of the borough (in particular, the strong evidence for retaining The Warren and Martins Heron together in Winkfield South ward), we are unable to adopt the proposals for Bullbrook submitted to us. Using the railway line as the southern boundary of a Bullbrook ward would result in an electoral variance of -20% variance with three-councillors, or a +20% variance with two-councillors. In our view, this level of electoral inequality is unacceptably high.

104 Our draft recommendations are therefore based on a combination of the submissions we received and our own proposals. In order to improve the electoral variance of a three-councillor Bullbrook ward, we propose to include The Parks in a three-councillor Bullbrook & The Parks ward. Both areas are linked by Broad Lane. The northern boundary of the ward will remain mostly the same as the current arrangement, moving south-west along Park Road and Larges Lane to incorporate The Parks. The eastern and south-eastern boundary above the railway line will remain the same as present, subject to including electors in properties on the south side of London Road.

105 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Bullbrook & The Parks ward, with an electoral variance of 2% by 2025.

Harmans Water & Crown Wood

106 We received four proposals for this area. They all proposed significantly different wards for Harmans Water & Crown Wood, represented by either two, three, or four councillors.

107 The Council proposed a two-councillor Harmans Water ward, using the railway line as a boundary between this area and Bullbrook. The Council also proposed a three-councillor Savernake ward, including The Warren, Forest Park, and Crown Wood.

108 We received three other proposals from local residents and Winkfield Parish Council. One local resident suggested retaining most of the existing Harmans Water ward, with the exception of the exclusion of The Warren. The other resident

proposed retaining the existing boundary. Winkfield Parish Council suggested a four-councillor ward, including the majority of the existing Crown Wood and Harmans Water wards, subject to their other suggestions for Forest Park, Martins Heron, and The Warren as described in paragraph 96. As discussed in paragraph 35, we do not include four-member wards within our recommendations and are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

109 We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that, while some alternatives resulted in good electoral equality, none of the proposed patterns of wards provided for a good balance of our statutory criteria. Due to our changes in other areas of the borough, we are also unable to recommend the pattern of wards proposed to us. If we were to include The Parks in a Harmans Water & Crown Wood ward, using the railway line as the northern boundary, this would result in a +13% variance with three-councillors. We therefore recommend that Harmans Water and Crown Wood should be joined in their own ward. This provides for good electoral equality while preserving two existing communities which have similar identities. Both areas are linked by Harmans Water Road and Opladen Way.

110 Our draft recommendation is for a three-councillor Harmans Water & Crown Wood ward, with an electoral variance of -9% by 2025.

Conclusions

111 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Bracknell Forest, referencing the 2019 and 2025 electorate figures. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2019	2025
Number of councillors	42	41
Number of electoral wards	18	15
Average number of electors per councillor	2,140	2,504
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	4	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	0

Draft recommendations

Bracknell Forest Council should be made up of 41 councillors serving 15 wards representing one single-councillor ward, two two-councillor wards and 12 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Bracknell Forest. You can also view our draft recommendations for Bracknell Forest on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

112 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

113 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Bracknell Forest Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

114 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Binfield, Bracknell Town, Sandhurst Town, Warfield, and Winkfield.

115 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Binfield parish.

Draft recommendations

Binfield Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Binfield North	4
Binfield South	7

116 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bracknell Town parish.

Draft recommendations

Bracknell Town Council should comprise 27 councillors, as at present, representing 17 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Birch Hill	2
Bullbrook	3
Crown Wood	2
Garth	2
Great Hollands North	2
Great Hollands South	2
Hanworth	2
Harmans Water	2
Jennett's Hill	1
Lynwood and Priory	1
North Lake	1
Old Bracknell	2
Priestwood	1
Scott's Hill	1

The Parks	1
Town Centre	1
Wildridings	1

117 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Sandhurst Town parish.

Draft recommendations

Sandhurst Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Avocet	1
Central Sandhurst	5
College Town	5
Little Sandhurst	5
Moray	1
Owlsmoor	6
Wargrove	1

118 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Warfield Parish Council.

Draft recommendations

Warfield Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Priory	1
Quelm	1
St Michael's	3
Warfield	1
Warfield Park	1
Whitegrove	6

119 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Winkfield Parish Council.

Draft recommendations

Winkfield Parish Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Ascot Priory	1

Forest Park	5
Martins Heron and Warren	2
North Ascot	6
Winkfield & Cranbourne	4

Have your say

120 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole of Bracknell Forest or just a part of it.

121 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Bracknell Forest, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

122 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

123 Submissions can also be made by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to:

**LGBCE c/o Cleardata
Innovation House
Coniston Court
Riverside Business Park
Blyth
NE24 4RP**

124 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Bracknell Forest which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters.
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

125 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

126 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the Bracknell Forest?

127 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

128 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

129 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

130 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

131 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

132 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Bracknell Forest in 2023.

Equalities

133 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Bracknell Forest Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Binfield North & Warfield West	2	3,306	1,653	-23%	5,134	2,567	3%
2	Binfield South with Jennett's Hill	3	6,647	2,216	4%	7,769	2,590	3%
3	Bullbrook & The Parks	3	6,117	2,039	-5%	7,683	2,561	2%
4	Central Bracknell	1	1,330	1,330	-38%	2,441	2,441	-3%
5	Crowthorne	3	5,145	1,715	-20%	6,796	2,265	-10%
6	Easthampstead & Wildridings	3	6,661	2,220	4%	7,082	2,361	-6%
7	Great Hollands	3	6,948	2,316	8%	7483	2,494	0%
8	Hanworth	3	6,604	2,201	3%	7,104	2,368	-5%
9	Harmans Water & Crown Wood	3	6,313	2,104	-2%	6,805	2,268	-9%
10	Owlsmoor & College Town	3	7,678	2,559	20%	8,222	2,741	9%
11	Priestwood & Garth	3	7,110	2,370	11%	7,764	2,588	3%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12 Sandhurst	3	7,397	2,466	15%	8,152	2,717	9%
13 Warfield East	3	6,939	2,313	8%	7,506	2,502	0%
14 Winkfield North	3	6780	2,260	6%	7,389	2,463	-2%
15 Winkfield South	2	4,907	2,454	15%	5,327	2,664	6%
Totals	41	89,882	–	–	102,657	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,192	–	–	2,504	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Bracknell Forest Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Number	Ward name
1	Binfield North & Warfield West
2	Binfield South with Jennett's Hill
3	Bullbrook & The Parks
4	Central Bracknell
5	Crowthorne
6	Easthampstead & Wildridings
7	Great Hollands
8	Hanworth
9	Harmans Water & Crown Wood

10	Owlsmoor & College Town
11	Priestwood & Garth
12	Sandhurst
13	Warfield East
14	Winkfield North
15	Winkfield South

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/berkshire/bracknell-forest

Appendix C

Submissions received

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/berkshire/bracknell-forest

Local Authority

- Bracknell Forest Council

Councillors

- Councillor J. Clifton Thompson (Crowthorne Parish Council)
- Councillor I. Kirke (Bracknell Forest Council)
- Councillor S. Prasad (Bracknell Town Parish Council)
- Councillor A. Merry (Bracknell Forest Council)
- Councillor I. Mattick (Bracknell Forest Council)
- Councillor D. Roberts (Bracknell Town Parish Council)
- Councillor M. Tullett (Bracknell Forest Council)

Political Groups

- Bracknell Forest Labour Party

Parish and Town Councils

- Binfield Parish Council
- Bracknell Town Council
- Crowthorne Parish Council
- Winkfield Parish Council
- Sandhurst Town Council
- Warfield Parish Council

Local Residents

- 23 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

Local Government Boundary Commission for
England
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street, London
SW1H 0TL

Telephone: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Twitter: @LGBCE