

Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Electoral review

December 2016

Translations and other formats

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Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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Summary

Who we are and what we do

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. 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.
2. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

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

Why the Council of the Isles of Scilly?

4. Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, we have been given the power to conduct this electoral review. Furthermore, the Commission received a request to carry out the review. We are conducting this review of the Council of the Isles of Scilly (CIOS) as the value of each vote in council elections varies depending on where you live in Scilly. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. The unique nature of the Isles of Scilly means that we are unable to deliver 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal. Therefore, the review considered the number of councillors for the CIOS in order to minimise the existing variances as far as is practical.

Our proposals for the Council of the Isles of Scilly

- The CIOS should be represented by 16 councillors, this is five fewer seats than at present.
- The CIOS should have five wards, as at present.
- The boundaries of all wards will stay the same.

Have your say

5. **We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements of the Council of the Isles of Scilly.**

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

6. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹

7. The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)
 - Dr Peter Knight CBE, DL
 - Alison Lowton
 - Peter Maddison QPM
 - Sir Tony Redmond
-
- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

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

Introduction

8. This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:
- The wards in the Isles of Scilly 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 authority.

What is an electoral review?

9. Our three main considerations are to:
- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
 - Reflect community identity
 - Provide for effective and convenient local government
10. Our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Consultation

11. We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for the CIOS. We then held a period of consultation on our draft recommendations.

12. This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
20 September 2016	Number of councillors decided
27 September 2016	Publication of draft recommendations, start of public consultation
25 November 2016	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
21 December 2016	Publication of final recommendations

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

Analysis and final recommendations

14. 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.

15. 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. As stated earlier, given the unique nature of the authority, it is not possible to both minimise variances and reflect the distinct nature of the island communities that make up the council.

16. We have concluded it is essential to maintain specific 'off-island' representation to respect the distinct communities that live there and their individual needs and characteristics. We consider that combining the smaller islands together in a single ward to minimise the electoral variances would not reflect community identities or provide for effective and convenient representation for 'off-island' residents.

17. 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.

	2016	2022
Electorate of CIOS	1,795	1,832
Number of councillors	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	112	115

18. 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'. The Commission is aware that as a consequence of these final recommendations there will still be electoral inequality within the council by 2022. However, electoral equality will be significantly better than at the commencement of the review.

19. Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the CIOS 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 take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

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.

Submissions received

20. See Appendix C for details of submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

21. The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2022, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations at the end of 2016. These forecasts were broken down by island and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 2% by 2022.

22. We considered the information provided by the council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

Number of councillors

23. The CIOS has, at present, 21 seats available for elected members. There are currently three vacant seats. This means that the number of elected members stands at 18 rather than 21. We have looked at evidence provided by the Democratic Processes Panel on the council and Councillor Daly's (St Martin's) submission. We have concluded that a reduction in the number of councillors to 16 will ensure the best allocation of councillors between the islands while allowing elected members of the authority to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. We therefore recommend that the council size is reduced by five to 16 councillors as part of our final recommendations.

Draft recommendations consultation

24. We received 30 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. The majority of submissions focussed on the number of councillors for St Mary's and the off-islands of St Martin's and St Agnes. Our draft recommendations received a mixture of support and objection.

25. There was support from nine respondents for reducing the number of councillors for the islands of Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's, St Mary's and Tresco. One respondent proposed that Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's and Tresco wards be abolished and the number of councillors reduced to 11 for the CIOS. Three respondents proposed reducing the number of councillors for the CIOS to 10, six for St Mary's and one for Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's and Tresco.

26. We received 18 responses that objected to our draft recommendations, most of which came from the inhabitants of St Agnes and St Martin's. These respondents preferred that St Agnes and St Martin's retain two councillors. There was also objection to Bryher and Tresco being represented by one councillor. Four respondents preferred no change to the number of councillors for the CIOS.

27. We have considered all the evidence received regarding the number of councillors for the CIOS, the associated considerations of island living in general such as transport and service provision, and the additional pressure that the CIOS faces as the smallest unitary authority in England. We do not consider that the evidence to either further reduce from 16 or retain the existing number of councillors was persuasive. A council size of 16 provides for a better overall allocation of councillors between the islands than other numbers proposed during consultation. Although electoral equality is not ideal, it still represents a significant improvement from the existing council size. Therefore, we have decided that a council size of 16 will continue to allow the CIOS to maintain an effective representational role for councillors.

28. The Commission does not intend to alter any of the existing warding patterns. The inhabited islands of Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's, St Mary's and Tresco will each continue to represent individual wards as at present.

Final recommendations

29. The tables and maps on pages 8–12 detail our final recommendations for each area of the CIOS. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

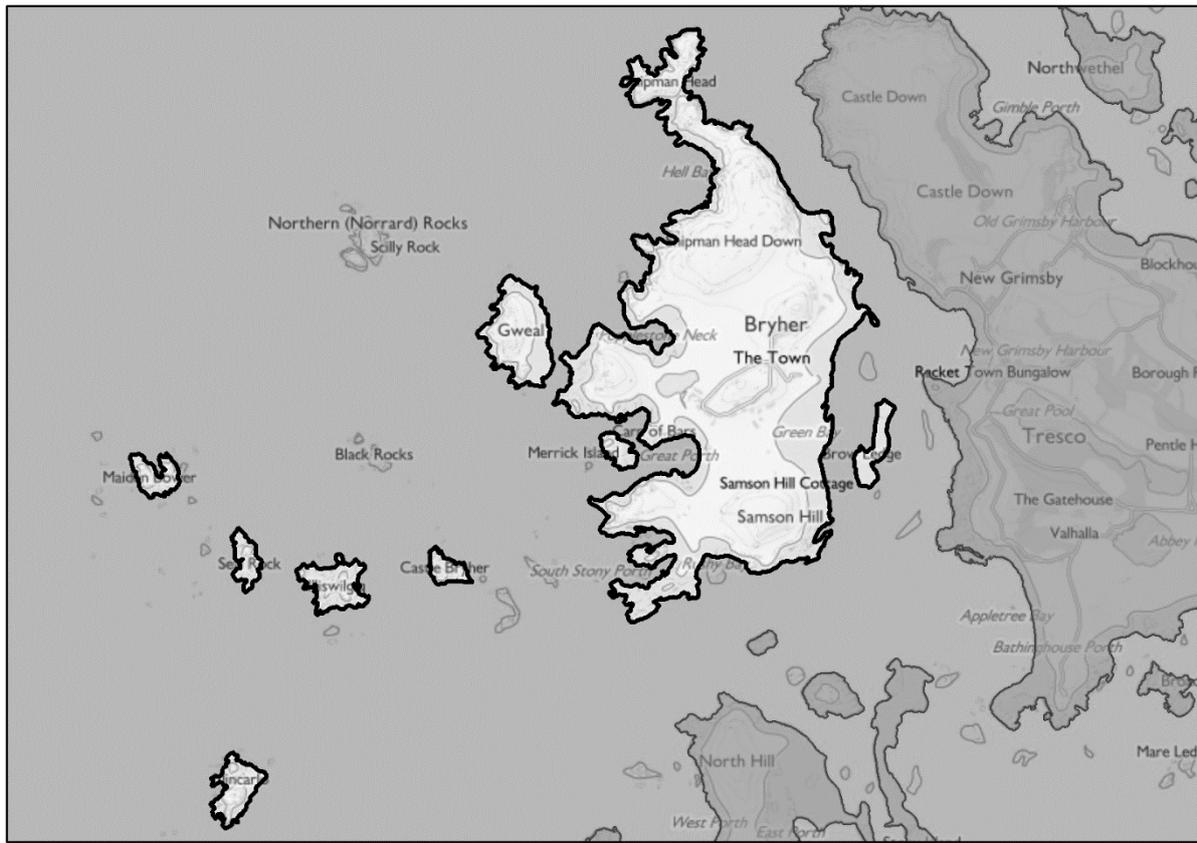
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

30. Our final recommendations are for four single-member wards, and one 12-member ward. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for better electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

31. A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements is set out in the table on page 13 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Bryher

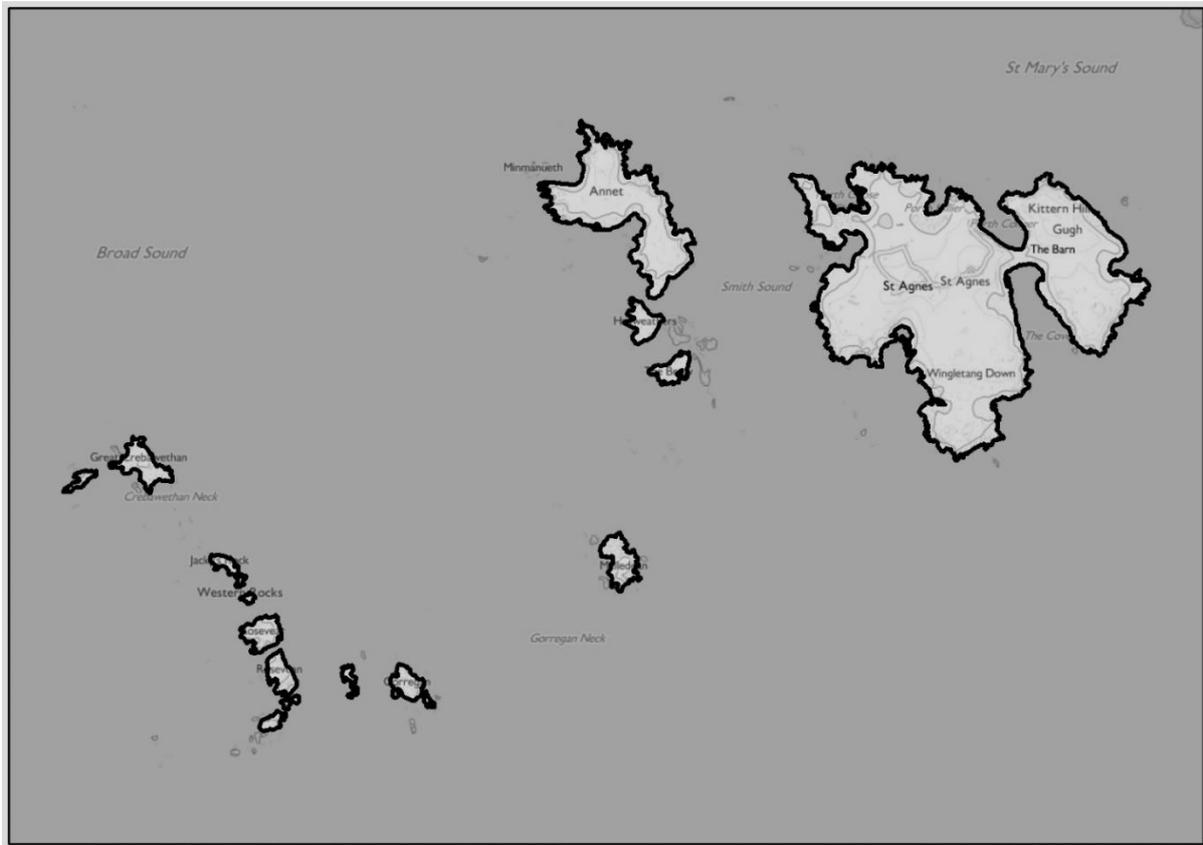


Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Bryher	1	-30%

32. The Commission does not propose, as part of its final recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for Bryher ward. As stated above, we remain of the view that each island should have its own elected member to ensure that all communities are effectively represented on the council.

33. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to Bryher ward be reduced by one to form a new single-councillor ward. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations for the CIOS.

St Agnes

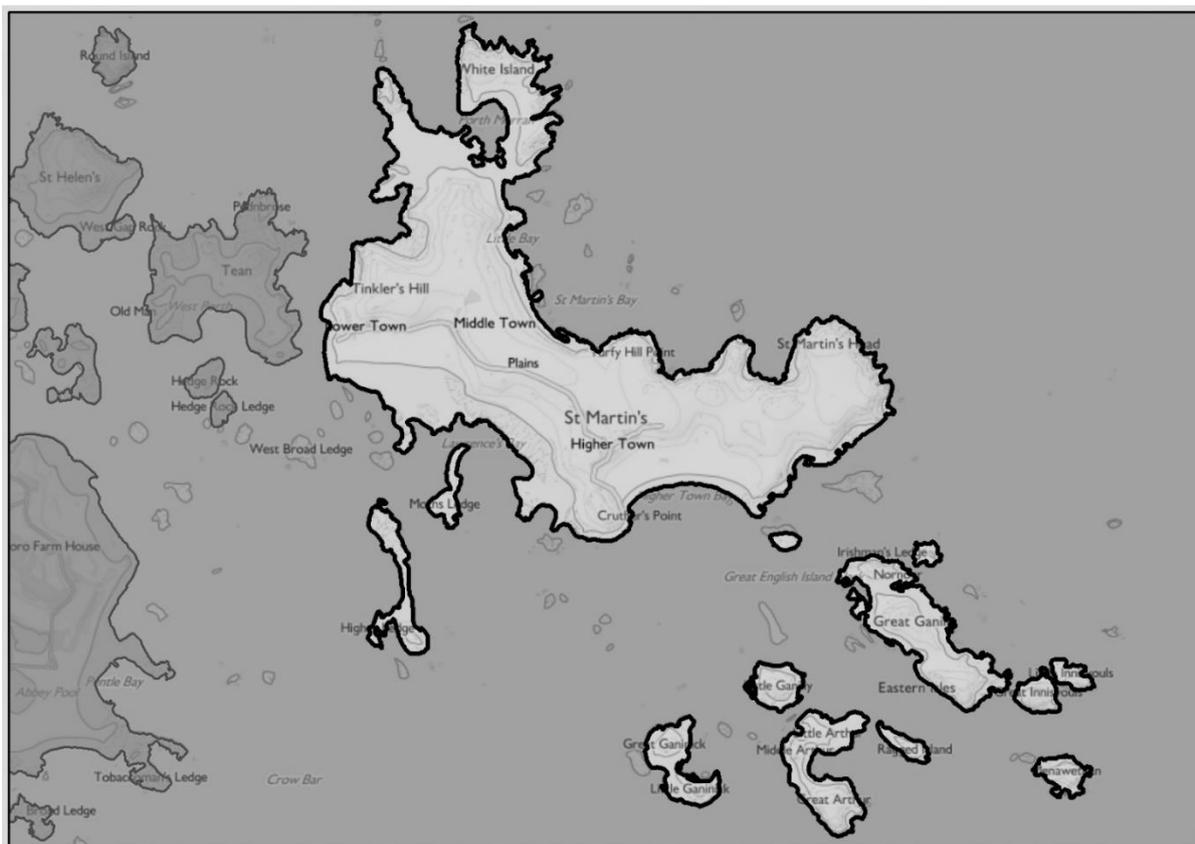


Ward name	Number of cllrs	Variance 2022
St Agnes	1	-34%

34. The Commission does not propose, as part of its final recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St Agnes ward. As stated above, we remain of the view that each island should have its own elected member to ensure that all communities are effectively represented on the council.

35. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to St Agnes ward be reduced by one to form a new single-councillor ward. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations for the CIOS.

St Martin's

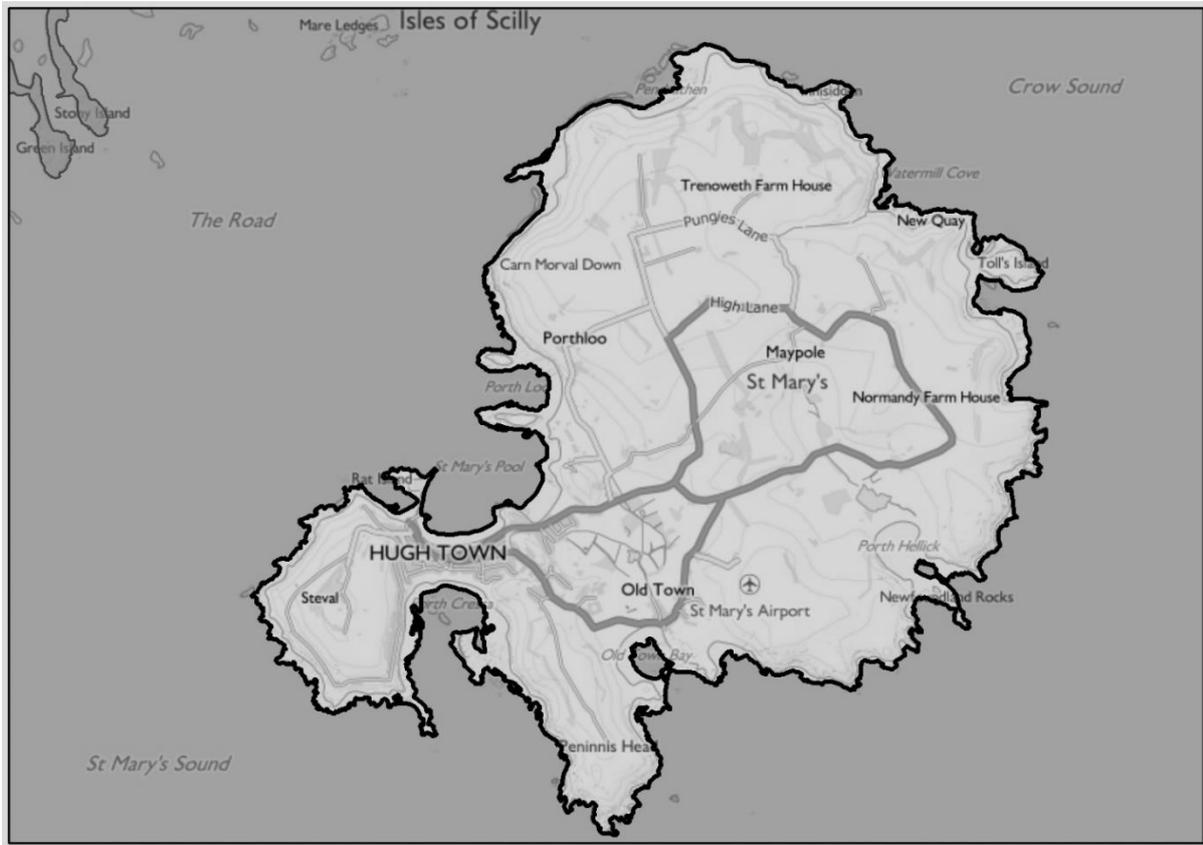


Ward name	Number of cllrs	Variance 2022
St Martin's	1	7%

36. The Commission does not propose, as part of its final recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St Martin's ward. As stated above, we remain of the view that each island should have its own elected member to ensure that all communities are effectively represented on the council.

37. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to St Martin's ward be reduced by one to form a new single-councillor ward. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations for the CIOS.

St Mary's

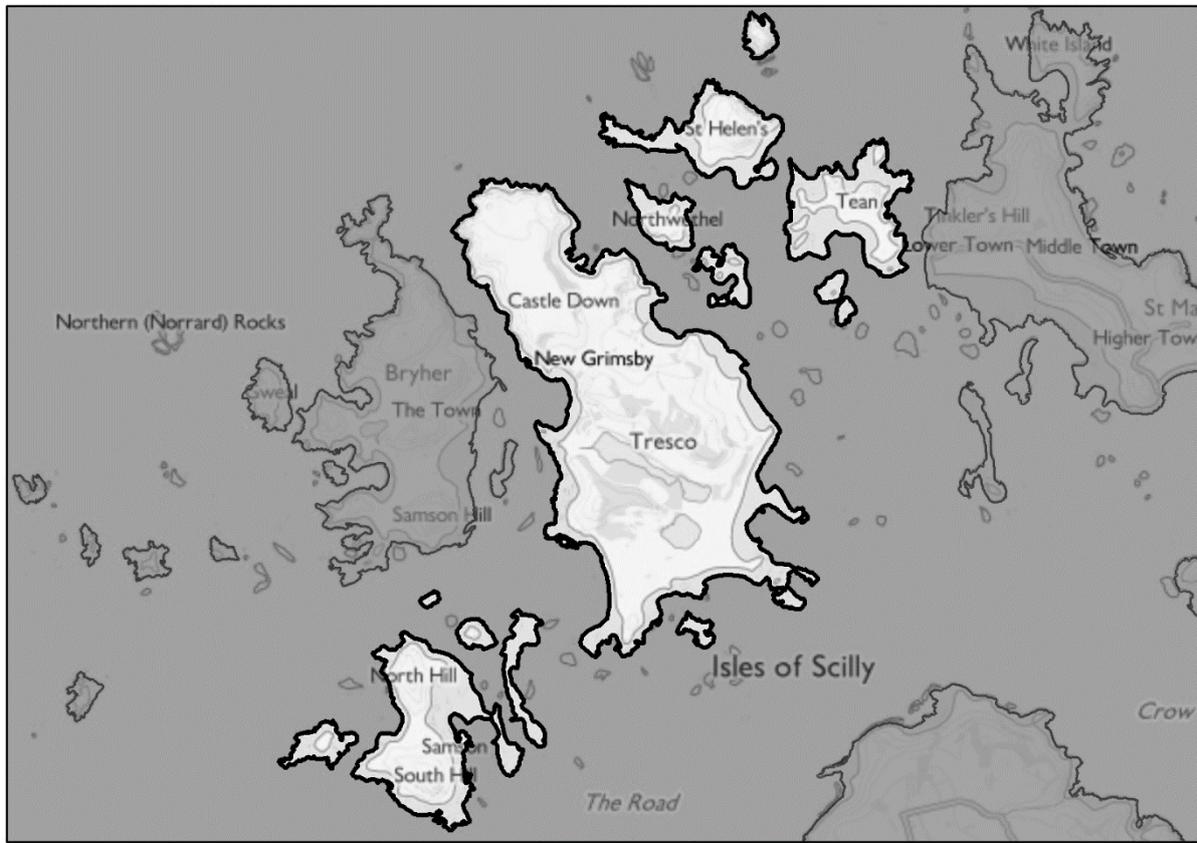


Ward name	Number of cllrs	Variance 2022
St Mary's	12	4%

38. The Commission does not propose, as part of its final recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St Mary's ward. As stated above, we remain of the view that each island should have its own elected member to ensure that all communities are effectively represented on the council.

39. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to St Mary's ward be reduced by one to form a new 12-member ward. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations for the CIOS.

Tresco



Ward name	Number of cllrs	Variance 2022
Tresco	1	11%

40. The Commission does not propose, as part of its final recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for Tresco ward. As stated above, we remain of the view that each island should have its own elected member to ensure that all communities are effectively represented on the council.

41. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to Tresco ward be reduced by one to form a new single-member ward. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations for the CIOS.

Conclusions

42. The table below shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2016 and 2022 electorate figures.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2016	2022
Number of councillors	16	16
Number of electoral wards	5	5
Average number of electors per councillor	112	115
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	3
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 30% from the average	2	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 40% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

The Council of the Isles of Scilly should be made up of 16 councillors serving five wards representing four single-councillor wards, and one 12-councillor ward. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for the Council of the Isles of Scilly. You can also view our final recommendations for the Isles of Scilly on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

What happens next?

43. We have now completed our review of the Council of the Isles of Scilly. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft 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 the CIOS in 2017.

Equalities

44. This report has been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

Appendix A

Final recommendations for the Council of the Isles of Scilly

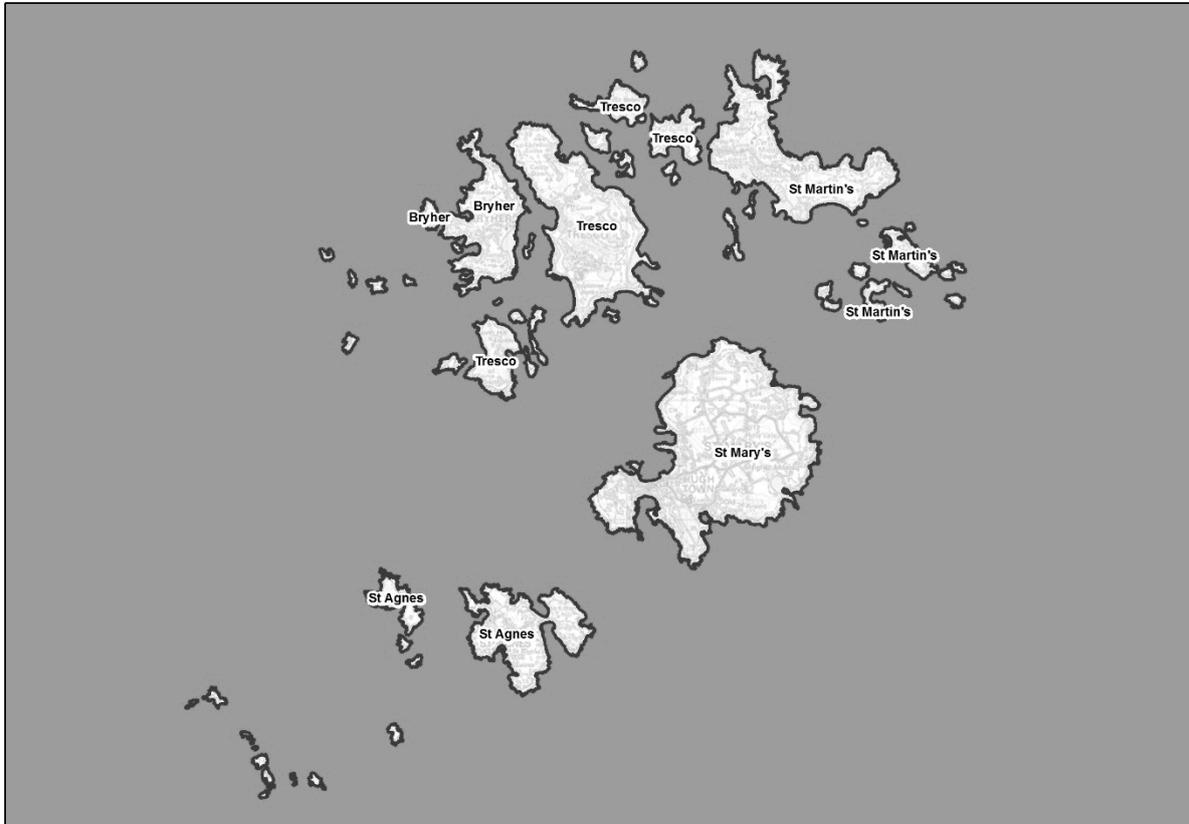
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2016)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bryher	1	78	78	-30%	80	80	-30%
2 St Agnes	1	74	74	-34%	76	76	-34%
3 St Martin's	1	121	121	8%	123	123	7%
4 St Mary's	12	1,398	117	4%	1,426	119	4%
5 Tresco	1	124	124	11%	127	127	11%
Totals	16	1,795	-	-	1,832	-	-
Averages	-	-	112	-	-	115	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

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 authority. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/cornwall/isles-of-scilly>

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/cornwall/isles-of-scilly>

Councillors

- Councillor C. Daly (St Martin's) *two further submissions received*
- Councillor F. Grottick (St Mary's)
- Councillor R. McCarthy (St Agnes)
- Councillor T. Moulson (St Mary's)

Petition

- St Martin's petition from 48 signatories

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