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Summary

Who we are

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.

Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Electoral review

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 Welwyn Hatfield?

We are conducting an electoral review of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council as the Council currently has high levels of electoral inequality where some councillors represent many more or many fewer voters than others. This means that the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Welwyn Hatfield. When we decided to conduct the review, 41% of wards had a variance of more than 10% from the average for the borough. Hatfield West ward had 29% more electors than the average for Welwyn Hatfield.

Our proposals for Welwyn Hatfield

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council currently has 48 councillors. Based on the evidence we received during previous phases of the review, we consider that maintaining a council size of 48 members will ensure the Council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively.

Electoral arrangements

As Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council elects by thirds, the Commission has produced a pattern of three-member wards. Our final recommendations therefore propose that Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's 48 councillors should represent 16 three-member wards across the borough. None of our proposed wards would have an electoral variance of greater than 10% from the average for Welwyn Hatfield by 2021.

We have finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Welwyn Hatfield.

1 Introduction

1 This electoral review has been conducted following our decision to review Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's ('the Council') electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

What is an electoral review?

2 Our three main considerations in conducting an electoral review are set out in legislation¹ and are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

3 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

4 We wrote to the Council as well as other interested parties, inviting the submission of proposals on council size. We then held two periods of consultation: firstly on warding patterns for the Council and secondly on our draft recommendations. The submissions received during our consultations have informed our final recommendations.

This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
17 March 2015	Council size decision
12 May 2015	Invitation to submit proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
7 July 2015	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
25 August 2015	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
20 October 2015	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations
1 December 2015	Publication of final recommendations

How will the recommendations affect you?

5 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 instances, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward

¹ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

name may also change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. The names or boundaries of parishes will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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 under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)
Alison Lowton
Sir Tony Redmond
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

2 Analysis and final recommendations

7 Legislation states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors² in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the date of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

8 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum.

9 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors as shown on the table below.

	2015	2021
Electorate of Welwyn Hatfield Borough	78,850	83,233
Number of councillors	48	48
Average number of electors per councillor	1,643	1,734

10 Under our final recommendations, none of our proposed wards will have electoral variances of greater than 10% from the average for the borough by 2021. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Welwyn Hatfield.

11 Additionally, in circumstances where we propose to divide a parish between borough wards or county divisions, we are required to divide it into parish wards so that each parish ward is wholly contained within a single borough ward or county division. We cannot make amendments to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

12 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Welwyn Hatfield or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. The proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

13 See Appendix B for details of submissions received. All submissions may be inspected at our offices (by appointment). All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

² Electors refer to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Electorate figures

14 As prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ('the 2009 Act'),³ the Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2021, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations at the end of 2015. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 5.6% to 2021. The growth will largely be driven by increases in the existing Hatfield South and Peartree wards.

15 During our consultation on warding patterns, we received comments that the Council's forecasts did not fully take account of possible developments which might increase the electorate further. Following our consultation on our draft recommendations, we received further comments that the forecasts for the Peartree area of Welwyn Garden City in particular may not adequately reflect development which may take place in the coming years. We asked the Council to consider these concerns and received an explanation of the current nature and extent of planning permissions and the likelihood of development within the forecast period. Forecasting the electorate is an inexact science, but we consider that the Council has reasonably taken future development into account. Having considered the information provided by the Council, we are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time and these figures form the basis of our final recommendations.

Council size

16 Prior to consultation on warding patterns, the Council submitted a proposal that the current council size of 48 members be maintained. We also received a submission from the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council proposing that the size of the Council be reduced to 34. Councillor Siewniak also supported a reduction in council size to 34.

17 We considered that the Council's submission provided sufficient evidence to justify the retention of the current council size. We did not consider that the Liberal Democrat Group provided persuasive evidence to justify a reduction in the existing council size. We are satisfied that the Council had sufficiently demonstrated that the authority could operate efficiently and effectively under a council size of 48 and ensure effective representation of local residents.

18 Those respondents who proposed a reduction did not, in our view, adequately justify their preferred number in the context of the size and geographical nature of the borough, as well as considerations of effective governance and decision-making for the authority. We therefore consulted on electoral arrangements for Welwyn Hatfield based on a council size of 48 members, which we now confirm as final.

Electoral cycle

19 When conducting an electoral review, we must have regard to the electoral

³ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 Sch 2 2(4)

cycle of the council under review. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council elects by thirds. This means that in three years out of four, elections are conducted for a third of the Council seats. Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act requires that in such circumstances, we consider the desirability that each ward returns three councillors. Accordingly, we start reviews of these councils with a presumption that there will be a uniform pattern of three-member wards. This consideration does not, however, take precedence over our other statutory criteria. Our guidance on electoral reviews⁴ sets out our approach. We will not recommend a uniform pattern of wards if, in our view, it results in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality, does not reflect communities or hinders the provision of effective and convenient local government. However, in each case, such evidence needs to be provided on a ward-by-ward basis.

20 We received a number of proposals in response to our draft recommendations which opposed a number of three-member wards and instead outlined a number of two-member wards. We considered each of these proposed wards and the extent to which we considered they met the statutory criteria. We note that while there was some strong opposition to a number of the three-member wards, we did not receive strong evidence of community identity to show that they did not satisfactorily meet the criteria or that a different warding pattern would better meet the statutory criteria. We therefore decided not to move away from a uniform pattern of three-member wards.

Warding patterns

21 We received 13 submissions during the initial consultation stage on warding patterns for Welwyn Hatfield. We received four borough-wide proposals, from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council ('the Council'), a submission from the Labour Group on the Council, from the Welwyn Hatfield Liberal Democrats and from one local resident. Further submissions were received from Councillors Bell, Bromley, Roberts and Watson, from Little Heath Action Group, North Mymms District Green Belt Society and three local residents. None of the submissions proposed a uniform pattern of three-member wards.

22 We carefully considered whether proposals for either single-member or two-member wards were supported by evidence of community identity which would demonstrate why a three-member ward would not meet our statutory criteria for each of the areas concerned. In the warding schemes submitted to us, the evidence we received did not persuade us that a uniform pattern of three-member wards would impair the ability of the Council to serve community identity and interests. Our draft recommendations were therefore for 16 three-member wards

Draft recommendations

23 We received 69 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These are detailed in Appendix B. The majority of submissions received opposed our proposal for a uniform pattern of three-member wards and, in particular, those at Welham Green, Brookmans Park & Little Heath and Welwyn East. We received no alternative proposals for three-member wards in these areas. We did receive a

⁴ Electoral reviews: Technical Guidance, LGBCE, April 2014.
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/10410/technical-guidance-2014.pdf

number of proposals in these areas for two-member and single-member wards which respondents stated would better address the community identity criterion. We did not consider that these alternatives were supported by strong community identity argument although we recognise the strength of feeling demonstrated locally. We received proposals for alternative boundaries for our Handside and Sherrards wards from respondents who considered our proposals did not reflect community identity.

Final recommendations

Welwyn and the northern parishes

24 We received objections to the proposed three-member Welwyn East and Welwyn West wards. The respondents who objected to this warding arrangement considered the existing three-member Welwyn East ward and two-member Welwyn West ward should be retained. They argued that our Welwyn West ward would divide the Mardley Heath and Oaklands areas. Some objectors argued that because the inclusion of part of the Haldens area of Welwyn Garden City in our Welwyn East ward would combine a parished and unparished area, there could not be effective representation of people in either part of the proposed ward. We are not persuaded by these arguments that a two-member ward for Welwyn West is justified. We do accept, however, the view of Welwyn Parish Council that the boundary between our Welwyn East and Welwyn West wards should follow the A1(M) rather than the A1000 to the south of the Clock roundabout. This amendment would not affect any electors. We have therefore decided that, with this modification, our draft recommendations for Welwyn East and Welwyn West be confirmed as final.

Welwyn Garden City

25 In addition to objections to the inclusion of the Bessemer Road area in our Welwyn East ward, we received objections to changes to the current boundaries of the Panshanger ward. We also received a proposal that two two-member wards be provided in the Peartree area. These proposals did not contain community evidence to persuade us to move from our draft recommendations for these areas.

26 In our draft recommendations, we proposed that the area around Bridge Road at the northern end of the town centre be included in the Sherrards ward. We received objections to this proposal, supported by evidence of the access to and use by residents of the area of churches and church halls, healthcare providers and shopping facilities in the central and southern parts of the Handside area. We were persuaded by this evidence to modify our draft recommendations and as our final recommendation we propose that the Handside and Sherrards wards retain their current boundaries.

Hatfield

27 Our draft recommendation that the Ellenbrook area be included in the Hatfield Villages ward was broadly supported whilst our proposal to include Roe Green in the Hatfield Central ward attracted both support and objection. We received objections to the inclusion of an area at Oxlease in the Hatfield East ward. We did not receive community evidence, however, to persuade us to move from our draft recommendations in the way suggested.

The southern parishes

28 We received over 40 representations commenting that Welham Green and Hatfield South ought not to be combined in a single ward. Respondents argued that

the village of Welham Green is a distinct community separate from Hatfield South. Many of those responding said that our proposed ward would result in the Council yielding to development pressures, resulting in the loss of Welham Green's village identity. No alternative three-member ward was suggested. Whilst we accept the evidence that Welham Green and Hatfield South are separate communities, we do not expect future decisions on planning and development to be shaped by the alignment of ward boundaries. We recognise some respondents also described the community of Welham Green and while we recognise it is a strong community, we are not persuaded that we would be breaking local ties by including part of Hatfield South with it. We are not persuaded that a Welham Green & Hatfield South ward would prevent the Council and elected members for this part of the borough from considering the interests of the whole of this area.

29 In our draft recommendations, we included the parish of Essendon in a largely rural ward combining the parish with Brookmans Park and Little Heath. Respondents to our draft recommendations stated that Essendon parish has historical associations with Hatfield and no community association with the rural area to the south. It was proposed that Essendon be included in a Hatfield East ward as at present. In order to do so would require consequential changes to all of the wards in the rural south and east of the borough and we are not persuaded that we have received persuasive evidence to justify making such changes.

Detailed wards

30 The tables on pages 10–15 detail our final recommendations for each area of Welwyn Hatfield. Where we have moved away from our draft recommendations we have outlined how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory criteria of:

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

Welwyn and the northern parishes

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Welwyn East	3	1%	The part of Welwyn parish which lies to the east of the A1(M) excluding those areas lying to the north of the Great North Road and to the west of Mardley Wood. This ward would also include the parish of Woolmer Green and a small part of Welwyn Garden City accessed from Bessemer Road.	We received objections to the separation of Mardley Heath and Oaklands by a ward boundary, but no evidence of how those two areas interact. We also received objections to the inclusion of part of the Haldens area of Welwyn Garden City in the Welwyn East ward despite its immediate proximity to the Digswell Water area. We were not persuaded that the fact that Welwyn is parished but Welwyn Garden City is not would mean that residents of the Bessemer Road area would receive unfair representation. We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation, subject to a modification of the boundary with Welwyn West, described below.
Welwyn West	3	-6%	The parishes of Ayot St Lawrence and Ayot St Peter, together with those parts of Welwyn parish lying to the west of the A1(M) and to the east of east of the A1(M), north of the Great North Road and west of Mardley Wood.	The existing Welwyn West ward is not large enough to be allocated three councillors. Doing so would result in a poor level of electoral equality. Respondents argued that the existing two-member ward should be retained. We do not consider that we have received sufficient evidence to persuade us to recommend retention of a two-member Welwyn West ward. We did receive and agree with, however, a proposal that our final recommendations follow the route of the A1(M) to the south of the Clock roundabout. This modification would affect no electors. We have decided to include this modification in our final Welwyn West ward.

Welwyn Garden City

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Haldens	3	-5%	The current Haldens ward amended by the exclusion of properties in the Bessemer Road area and the inclusion of properties at The Paddock, Wellington Drive and Watchlytes.	Our Haldens ward combines the Haldens area with the northern part of the Panshanger area consisting of those areas lying to the south of Hems Lane, and those served by The Paddock, Wellington Drive and Watchlytes. We received no clear evidence to persuade us to modify our draft recommendation for this area which we now confirm as final.
Handside	3	9%	The southern part of Welwyn Garden City lying to the west of the main railway line. This is the current Handside ward.	We proposed in our draft recommendations that the area to the north of Bridge Road be included in the adjoining Sherrards ward. However, we were persuaded by evidence relating to the community interactions of people in this area with the parts of Handside ward lying to the south of it and are therefore amending our draft recommendations. Our final recommendation is for a Handside ward with boundaries unchanged from the current ward.
Hollybush	3	0%	The southern part of Welwyn Garden City. The current Hollybush ward modified by the exclusion of Marley Road and Beehive Green.	Our proposals for the Hollybush area represent a small change to the existing Hollybush ward. We received no evidence to persuade us to modify our draft recommendation, which we confirm as final.
Howlands	3	1%	The south-eastern part of Welwyn Garden City. The current Howlands ward modified by the exclusion of the Bushey Ley area and inclusion of Marley Road, Beehive Green and Wheatley Road areas.	We propose a Howlands ward which differs from the existing Howlands ward by the inclusion of the Beehive Green and Wheatley Road areas. Whilst we received suggestions that the Cowper Road area be included in either the Hollybush or Peartree wards, we received no evidence of community identity related to this suggestion. We therefore confirm our draft recommendation as final.

Panshanger	3	-4%	The eastern part of Welwyn Garden City. The current ward modified by the exclusion of The Paddock, Wellington Drive and Watchlytes and the inclusion of the Bushey Ley area.	In our draft recommendations, we proposed changes to the boundaries of the current Panshanger ward. We received some objections to these changes, but no evidence to demonstrate that community ties would be broken. We therefore confirm our draft recommendation as final.
Peartree	3	-1%	Part of Welwyn Garden City lying to the east of the main railway line. The current ward modified by the exclusion of the Wheatley Road area.	In our draft recommendations, we proposed to address electoral inequality in the existing Peartree area by not including in it areas south of Salisbury Road. In response to our consultation on our draft recommendations, we received a proposal that the Peartree ward be divided into two two-member wards; this was not accompanied by evidence to justify adopting a two-member ward in this area. We therefore confirm our draft recommendation as final.
Sherrards	3	-10%	The northern part of Welwyn Garden City lying to the west of the main railway line. This is the current Sherrards ward.	Our draft recommendation was to include the Bridge Road area in this ward in order to improve electoral equality in the Sherrards area. In response to the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received evidence relating to community ties between the Bridge Road area and Handside ward. Respondents also commented that they did not share community identity with the Sherrards area. We have therefore decided to modify our draft recommendations in this part of the borough and propose that the boundaries of the existing Sherrards ward be retained.

Hatfield

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Hatfield Central	3	8%	The current Hatfield Central ward with the addition of part	We proposed as part of our draft recommendations that an area at Roe Green Lane be included in our Hatfield Central

			of the Roe Green Lane area of the town.	ward. We received objections to this proposal due to the consequential creation of a parish ward for this area. However, not including this area in our Hatfield Central ward would result in our Hatfield South West ward having 13% more electors per councillor than the average for the borough by 2021. We are not prepared to recommend this level of electoral inequality and therefore confirm as part of our final recommendations our Hatfield Central ward.
Hatfield East	3	5%	The eastern part of Hatfield parish. The current ward minus Essendon parish but with the addition of the Oxlease Drive area.	In our draft recommendations, we proposed a Hatfield East ward which included the Oxlease Drive area. This would result in a good level of electoral equality. Representations received suggested that we include Essendon in the Hatfield East ward and not include in it the Oxlease Drive area. However, we were not persuaded by evidence submitted to make this change and also note that the exclusion of the Oxlease Drive area from Hatfield East alone would result in high levels of electoral inequality in other wards in Hatfield town. We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for Hatfield East.
Hatfield South West	3	3%	The part of Hatfield town bounded by Cavendish Way to the north, the A1(M) to the west, Woods Avenue and Travellers Lane to the east, excluding that part south of the De Havilland Primary School and the area served by the southern part of Bishops Rise.	As part of our draft recommendations, we proposed a three-member ward combining those parts of the Hatfield West ward lying to the east of the A1(M) and parts of Hatfield South. Submissions to us proposed retaining Hatfield South as a two-member ward. However, we did not receive persuasive evidence of community identity to move away from a uniform pattern of three-member wards. We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for Hatfield South West.
Hatfield Villages	3	-1%	The current Hatfield Villages ward with the addition of the Ellenbrook Lane area lying to	We proposed as part of our draft recommendations the addition of the Ellenbrook Lane area in our Hatfield Villages ward. We received expressions of support for, and no

			the south of St Albans Road West.	objections to, this proposal. Therefore, we confirm this ward as final.
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The southern parishes

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Brookmans Park & Little Heath	3	0%	The current ward with the exclusion of the Newgate Street area of Hatfield parish but the addition of Essendon parish.	We received objections to the inclusion of Essendon parish in a Brookmans Park & Little Heath ward. Respondents stated that people in Essendon access services in Hatfield town. We found that including Essendon in a ward with part of Hatfield town would result in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality both in Hatfield town and the more rural southern area that we are not prepared to recommend. We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for this area.
Northaw & Cuffley	3	-4%	The parish of Northaw & Cuffley with the addition of the Newgate Street area of Hatfield parish.	In our draft recommendations, we proposed to include the Newgate Street area in our Northaw & Cuffley ward. Whilst we received one expression of support for and one objection to this proposal we did not receive persuasive evidence of community identity to persuade us to modify our draft recommendation. We therefore confirm this ward as final.
Welham Green & Hatfield South	3	5%	The current ward with the addition of that part of south Hatfield served by the southern ends of Bishops Rise and Travellers Lane.	Under our draft recommendations, we proposed that Welham Green be combined in a ward with the southern part of Hatfield. Respondents objected to this proposal. Respondents argued that Welham Green is separate from Hatfield South and that development pressures threaten the separate identity of the village. We do not consider that our proposal would determine the Council's response to those pressures. Furthermore, we received no substantial evidence of community identities in the southern part of Hatfield to persuade us to move from our draft

				recommendation. We also considered that alternative proposals for a three-member ward covering the area were not put forward. Therefore, we have decided to confirm our Welham Green & Hatfield South ward as final.
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Conclusions

31 Table 1 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2015 and 2021 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2015	2021
Number of councillors	48	48
Number of electoral wards	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	1,643	1,734
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	0	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council should comprise 48 councillors serving 16 three-member wards. The details and names are shown in Table A1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Welwyn Hatfield. You can also view our final recommendations for Welwyn Hatfield on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Parish electoral arrangements

32 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.

33 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, Welwyn Hatfield Borough 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.

34 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 Hatfield and Welwyn.

35 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 Hatfield parish.

Final recommendation
Hatfield Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing 10 wards: Briars (returning two members), Central (returning two members), East (returning three members), Ellenbrook (returning one member), Meadows (returning one member), Newgate Street (returning one member), South (returning one member), South West (returning one member), Villages (returning two members) and Wildhill (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

36 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 Welwyn parish.

Final recommendation
Welwyn Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Digswell (returning two members), Mardley Heath (returning two members), Oaklands (returning two members) and Village (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

3 What happens next?

35 We have now completed our review of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2016.

Equalities

36 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

Table A1: Final recommendations for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Brookmans Park & Little Heath	3	4,973	1,658	1%	5,193	1,731	0%
2	Haldens	3	4,714	1,571	-4%	4,946	1,649	-5%
3	Handside	3	5,418	1,806	10%	5,663	1,888	9%
4	Hatfield Central	3	5,362	1,787	9%	5,595	1,865	8%
5	Hatfield East	3	5,128	1,709	4%	5,465	1,822	5%
6	Hatfield South West	3	4,996	1,665	1%	5,369	1,790	3%
7	Hatfield Villages	3	4,932	1,644	0%	5,126	1,709	-1%
8	Hollybush	3	4,975	1,658	1%	5,192	1,731	0%
9	Howlands	3	4,982	1,661	1%	5,259	1,753	1%
10	Northaw & Cuffley	3	4,772	1,591	-3%	4,984	1,661	-4%
11	Panshanger	3	4,754	1,585	-4%	4,995	1,665	-4%
12	Peartree	3	4,636	1,545	-6%	5,174	1,725	-1%
13	Sherrards	3	4,507	1,502	-9%	4,691	1,564	-10%

Table A1 (cont.): Final recommendations for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
14	Welham Green & Hatfield South	3	5,130	1,710	4%	5,457	1,819	5%
15	Welwyn East	3	5,046	1,682	2%	5,258	1,753	1%
16	Welwyn West	3	4,525	1,508	-8%	4,866	1,622	-6%
	Totals	48	78,850	–	–	83,233	–	–
	Averages	–	–	1,643	–	–	1,734	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Welwyn Hatfield Borough 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

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/hertfordshire/welwyn-hatfield>

Local authority

- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Political parties

- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Labour Group
- Welwyn Hatfield Conservative Association
- Welwyn Hatfield Liberal Democrats
- Handside Liberal Democrats

Town and parish councils

- Essendon Parish Council
- Hatfield Town Council
- Welwyn Parish Council

Councillors

- Cllr J. Broach (Welwyn Hatfield BC)
- Cllr G. Dowler (Welwyn Hatfield BC)
- Cllr S. Kyriakides (Welwyn Hatfield BC)
- Cllr P. Neville (Welwyn PC)
- Cllr K. Thorpe (Welwyn Hatfield BC)
- Cllr C. Watson (Welwyn Hatfield BC)

Local organisations

- The Essendon Society
- North Mymms District Green Belt Society
- Little Heath Action Group
- Welham Green Residents Association

Residents

- 51 local residents

Appendix C

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