

**From:** [Wellingborough Conservatives](#)  
**To:** [reviews](#)  
**Subject:** Re: North Northamptonshire Boundary Review  
**Date:** 02 March 2023 11:36:02  
**Attachments:** [WCA submission to Boundary Commission final.pdf](#)

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Dear Sir

Please find attached the submission of the Wellingborough Conservative Association to the North Northamptonshire Council boundary review.

We have enclosed some maps in the document, but in case these are not clear, I have also attached jpg files of the maps as well.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sent on behalf of Paul Bell, Chairman, Wellingborough Conservative Association

Quoting reviews <[reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)>:

Dear all,

After discussion with North Northamptonshire Council, the Commission has decided to amend some of the electorate forecasts being used in this electoral review. The revisions, which affect polling districts CRJ & CRK ([Corby](#)), and EBL ([Wellingborough](#)), are detailed on the Commission's website at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/east-midlands/northamptonshire/north-northamptonshire>.

In light of this change, the Commission has decided to extend the current consultation period for North Northamptonshire for four weeks to allow ample time for submissions to be prepared in light of these revisions. All submissions already received will be taken into account, and there is no need to re-submit if your proposals are unaffected by the revisions.

The consultation will now close on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Best regards,

A small black rectangular redaction box covering the signature.A larger black rectangular redaction box covering the name.

**Review Assistant**

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How are we doing? Click [here](#) to give us your views.

Regards  
Gill

Gill Mercer  
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**Local Government Boundary Review**  
**for North Northamptonshire Council**  
**submitted by Wellingborough Conservative Association**

This document contains the suggestions from Wellingborough Conservative Association for the new NNC wards in the Wellingborough area. Our overriding goal was to avoid splitting up communities. In summary, we propose the following wards:

| <b><u>Suggested Name</u></b> | <b><u>No. Councillors</u></b> | <b><u>%age Error</u></b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Brickhill & Queensway      | 3                             | -6.7%                    |
| • Croyland                   | 2                             | +7.6%                    |
| • Earls Barton               | 3                             | -11.3%                   |
| • Finedon                    | 1                             | -3.9%                    |
| • Hatton Park                | 3                             | +9.4%                    |
| • Higham Ferrers             | 2                             | -4.9%                    |
| • Irchester                  | 3                             | -7.4%                    |
| • Irthlingborough            | 2                             | -1.8%                    |
| • Pemberton                  | 2                             | +5.2%                    |
| • Rushden Lakes              | 2                             | +6.1%                    |
| • Sartoris                   | 2                             | +5.2%                    |
| • Victoria                   | 2                             | -8.6%                    |

We tried to keep each of the new wards within 10% of the notional electorate for the proposed number of councillors. (I.e. within 10% of 4090, 8180 or 12270.) However, retaining communities was our highest priority.

The majority of the wards are described in separate chapters.

We have included maps of some of the new wards in a series of Appendices.

Appendix A gives the proposed boundaries for the Rushden wards.

Appendix B shows the proposed Croyland ward.

Appendix C shows the proposed Brickhill & Queensway ward.

Appendix D shows the proposed Hatton Park ward

Appendix E shows the proposed Victoria ward.

High-resolution images of the maps are also available.

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## **Brickhill & Queensway Ward**

Queensway and Brickhill are adjacent residential areas on the western side of Wellingborough. They are strongly connected. (E.g. a very active parish church, St. Marks, sits almost exactly at the point where the two areas meet.)

We propose that these two areas be combined into a single NNC ward.

A community centre called Glamis Hall serves both areas. Between them, St. Marks and Glamis deliver a wide range of community services. (E.g. a nursery, Alcoholics Anonymous, Cubs, Scouts, youth clubs, Keep-Fit groups, etc.)

The area is recognised as being in the “Left-Behind” category and suffers from anti-social-behaviour.

Not long ago, there was a fatal stabbing in Queensway. The whole community rallied, with a new group formed to oppose knife-crime. There were marches from the area, right across the Town. The new group was supported by local councillors, the police and representatives of NNC.

It demonstrated the degree of community cohesion in the area.

The integration of Queensway and Brickhill is helped by both being in the catchment area of a single secondary school. Weavers Academy is on Brickhill Road and serves the whole ward.

Overall, we believe that it demonstrates the logic of combining Brickhill and Queensway as a single NNC ward.

This possible NNC ward is too large for a 2-member ward. (It has 10,630 electors). Given the strength and cohesion of the community, it is illogical to consider removing part of the ward to bring it down in size to 8180 plus 10%. (I.e. down to 8998.) We therefore suggest adding some neighbouring areas to it to bring it up to the size of a 3-member ward i.e. 12,270).

The most obvious way to bring the ward up to the size of a 3-member ward is to include part of the existing Croyland ward. We suggest achieving this by adding the following:

- The triangle formed by Saint Barnabas Street, College Street, Grove Street and Arthur Street. This quartet of roads sits between Westfield and Northampton Roads.
- The part of Northampton Road from Oxford Street to Westfield Road (thus including all of Northampton Road)
- the mini-estate consisting of Brook Street West, Dale Street, Wood Street, Hill Street and Townsend Close.
- Croyland Road up to the brook.

- the whole of Westfield Road. (Part of this road is already included, as it is in Brickhill)

None of the above areas has any strong affinity to any other area. They do not have the strong community of Brickhill & Queensway. There are therefore no community-link reasons to include these additional areas in any particular NNC ward. It is therefore reasonable to include them in the Brickhill & Queensway ward.

With these additional areas, the proposed NNC ward will have 11,449 voters. This is within 6.7% of the ideal figure (12,270 voters) for a 3-member NNC ward.

## **Croyland Ward**

Centuries ago, Croyland Abbey (at Crowland, in Lincolnshire) owned lands in the Wellingborough area and monks from the Abbey resided in the Town.

The Abbey and the monks left Wellingborough long ago, but their name lives on.

Croyland Road is one of the main arteries through Wellingborough, and Croyland is the name of an existing NNC ward. However, the ward is not a single, coherent community. Instead, it is a conveniently defined zone, bounded by several major roads.

Within the Croyland area, there are several well-defined estates that form separate communities. They have previously been included in Croyland ward, and the logic for doing so remains strong.

The Wilby Way Estate (polling district CSB) is a very modern estate on the western edge of Wellingborough. Wilby Way, a very busy, high-speed dual-carriageway, is a hard boundary between the estate and the open countryside beyond Wellingborough.

To the east of this estate is the Kingsway estate. This is the area that is to the south of the Kingsway road (polling district CSA) and to the east of the Swanspool Brook. It is a distinct community. It is edged by Princess Way/Windsor Road and Valley Road.

St Andrew's Church is the major hub in this area, where community activities take place.

The area on the northern side of Kingsway, around Priory and Abbey Roads is another mini-estate, but functionally part of the same Kingsway community. This area (polling district CSH) also includes The Drive.

Although split from this area by being in a different polling district, Doddington Road, between London Road and Turnells Mill Lane, should be included as well as Swanspool Parade and Broadway.

Another adjacent estate is the John Lea estate, which was built on the site of the old John Lea School. It has a single entrance (off Doddington Road). It has no other road links.

Next to the John Lea estate, and part of the same polling district (CSC), is the mini-estate formed by Campbell Road, Warwick Road, and James Road. Once again, this mini-estate is completely disconnected from the other estates, with just a single entrance to the estate (off Doddington Road).

The area behind the Castle Theatre (Castle Road, Castle Street, Castle Mews and Castle Lane) is another community that has always previously been included in the Croyland ward. We propose to also include this area in the NNC Croyland ward.

These estates are each relatively distinct and separate from each other and from the rest of Wellingborough. None of them is large enough to form even a one-councillor NNC ward. We therefore propose that they all be merged together into a single NNC ward, as has traditionally been done.

Closely linked to these estates is the central area of Wellingborough, which we propose including in this NNC ward.

This central area was historically included in the Croyland & Swanspool ward. This historic ward covered Swanspool House and Gardens, including the Grade 1 listed Tithe Barn (which is all that is left of the Croyland Abbey site). These gardens were also the site of the Wellingborough Zoo.

Part of these gardens has been built on, as a new estate (the Abbots Way estate), including Abbots Way, Spring Gardens, Pilgrim Way, Monks Way and Friars Close. (The names hark back to the Crowland Abbey heritage of the area.)

Also included in this NNC ward are the area between Oxford Street and Broad Green, plus the central part of the town centre from John Street and Regent Street in the north and with the strong border of Cannon Street and Victoria Road in the east.

The final part of the ward will be Irthlingborough Road and the estates off it (including Saxby Crescent) from London Road to the junction of Embankment and Senwick Road, taking in Embankment as well. This includes an estate centred on Chapman Road and including, Carton Grove and Ultra Close, which extend onto the Embankment.

This means that Croyland NNC ward will, roughly speaking, be the south quarter of Wellingborough Town, running from the eastern edge of the Town to the western edge.

The northern boundary of the proposed NNC ward would run from Cannon Street along Regent Street, along Havelock Street, St John Street, across Broad Green, to the junction of Short Lane and Westfield Road. It would include West Villa Road, Rock Street, Jacksons Lane, West Street, and Oxford Street.

The western boundary would run from Westfield Road, south across the Recreation Ground to, and across, Oxford Street, then south between Wood Street and Spring Gardens and include the Abbots Way estate. It will also include Archfield, Sharman Road and Tithe Barn Road.

The western boundary will then cross Croyland Road, before following the path of the Brook to Wilby Way and then south, to the A45.

The southern boundary will run along the A45 until it reaches London Road.

The eastern boundary will go from the A45, running north up London Road, until it reaches the Embankment. It will then run north along the Embankment until it reaches Irthlingborough Road. It will run west along Irthlingborough Road, until it reaches Saxby Crescent. It then loops round Saxby Crescent on the northern side, thereby including the crescent in Croyland Ward.

The eastern boundary then returns to Irthlingborough Road and runs along it until it reaches the Castle Fields. It will then go north across the Fields to reach Midland Road. It will go along the southern edge of Midland Road, until it reaches Victoria Road.

It will then run along the western side of Victoria Road and subsequently Cannon Street, until it reaches Regent Street.

We propose that this NNC ward be called Croyland.

In summary, the proposed Croyland ward would include:

- The Wilby Way Estate
- The Kingsway estate south of the Kingsway road
- The Priory Road estate
- Swanspool Parade, Broadway and the Drive
- Doddington Road from London Road to Turnells Mill Lane
- The John Lea estate
- The Campbell Road estate
- The central area of Wellingborough (Rock Street, Jacksons Lane, West Street, John Street, Havelock Street, Regent Street, Great Park Street from Regent Street to Alma Street, then along Alma Street, Cambridge Street etc.)
- Oxford Street including Archfield and Tithe Barn Road
- Abbots Way estate
- The area of Castle Street, Castle Road etc
- Irthlingborough Road from the Embankment to just short of Castle Street and including the Chapman Road estate and Saxby Crescent.

This ward is served by Wrenn Secondary School and All Saints Primary School.

The proposed Croyland Ward would have approximately 8806 voters and is therefore only slightly over (+7.6%) the ideal number for a two-councillor NNC ward.

## **Earls Barton Ward**

The existing Earls Barton NNC ward is a collection of villages that loop round the urban area of Wellingborough. The villages do not have a lot of community connection to each other.

Individually, each village has its own small community. None of those communities should be split up and shared between multiple NNC wards. The entirety of each village should be included in a single NNC ward.

The existing NNC ward called “Earls Barton” has the same boundaries as the previous NCC Division. It comprises the villages of Earls Barton, Ecton, Mears Ashby, Sywell, Great Doddington, Wilby, Hardwick, Great Harrowden, Little Harrowden, Isham, Orlingbury, plus the small estate of Millers Park (next to the Five Wells prison), and the Redhill Grange estate (which is really part of Wellingborough town) plus Glenvale Park.

We do not think that this assemblage is viable any longer. We suggest creating a new NNC ward based on Earls Barton, but starting again from scratch.

The largest village in this area is Earls Barton itself. However, with 5,167 voters, it is too big to be a NNC ward for one councillor. We suggest that splitting up the village of Earls Barton is unreasonable, since it is a distinct community, with a rich Anglo-Saxon and ironstone quarrying heritage. It has an active Parish council and its residents robustly identify with their village.

Since we cannot reduce the size of Earls Barton down to a one-councillor NNC ward, we are forced to increase it to a two or three councillor ward. It is therefore necessary to group other villages with Earls Barton to make a 2 or 3 member NNC ward.

We propose to link Earls Barton with some adjacent villages that are in the Daventry constituency, namely Ecton, Mears Ashby and Sywell. That brings the number of voters to 6907, which is still too many for a one-councillor ward, and still too few for a two-councillor NNC ward.

Elsewhere, we have proposed moving Wilby, Great Doddington and Millers Park to the Irchester NNC ward. We cannot therefore include them in the Earls Barton NNC ward.

Instead, we must add in some other nearby villages. We suggest Hardwick, Great Harrowden, Little Harrowden, Isham and Orlingbury, plus Redhill Grange. This brings the projected electorate up to 9867. This is now too big for a two-councillor NNC ward, but still too small for a three councillor NNC ward. We therefore propose adding Pytchley.

The village of Pytchley has close connections with the other villages in the Earls Barton NNC ward. Pytchley, Isham, Great Harrowden, Little Harrowden and Orlingbury, plus Redhill

Grange, are all either on or near to the northern branch of the A509 and therefore have both proximity and easy mutual access to link them.

Pytchley is situated in the centre of the existing Burton-and-Broughton NNC ward, but adjacent to the Earls Barton NNC ward. Moving it from the Burton-and-Broughton NNC ward into the Earls Barton NNC ward cuts the rest of the existing Burton-and-Broughton NNC ward into two convenient halves. They will then be free to be linked to other NNC wards.

E.g. Broughton can be linked to Rothwell-and-Mawsley, while Burton can be linked to its close neighbour, Barton Seagrave.

A new SUE, called Glenvale Park, is being constructed to the north of Wellingborough. We propose including it in the Earls Barton NNC ward.

In an ideal world, the urban areas of Glenvale Park and Redhill Grange would be in a separate ward to the various villages that are included here. However, they have traditionally been linked to those villages, so it is not unreasonable to continue to do so.

Currently, the Glenvale Park SUE is split between polling districts EBL and HPC. This is illogical, and we propose including both parts of the development in the same NNC ward, Earls Barton.

EBL polling district has a projected electorate of 600 and will be entirely within Earls Barton.

HPC polling district is mostly in the Hatton Park NNC ward, but includes the southern part of Glenvale Park. We propose divesting HPC of its Glenvale Park component and linking that component with EBL.

The HPC part of Glenvale Park currently has 33 electors according to the electoral register, but the SUE is being built out at a rapid rate. (250 homes per year is the forecast from the developer.) It does not seem unreasonable to conclude that by 2028, the electorate of the HPC part of Glenvale Park will probably be much higher, but our estimate is conservative.

Earls Barton ward would include the following:

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Earls Barton village | 5167 voters |
| Ecton                | 450 voters  |
| Mears Ashby          | 414 voters  |
| Sywell               | 876 voters  |
| Hardwick             | 78 voters   |
| Great Harrowden      | 89 voters   |
| Little Harrowden     | 796 voters  |
| Redhill Grange       | 850 voters  |
| Isham                | 717 voters  |

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| Orlingbury    | 429 voters |
| Pytchley      | 417 voters |
| Glenvale Park | 600 voters |

The new Earls Barton NNC ward would have 10,883 voters. This is within 11.3% of the target for a three-councillor NNC ward. We would prefer to have more voters in this NNC ward, but given the build-out rate of Glenvale Park, it is better to have capacity to grow.

## **Finedon Ward**

The existing Finedon ward of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is an illogical construct. We propose deconstructing it.

The current NNC Finedon ward consists of 2 separate and unrelated parts, Finedon village and the eastern part of Wellingborough. They have almost nothing in common.

Finedon village and Wellingborough Town are separated by open fields, so the current ward has two parts that have a large gap between them. There is no community link between these two unrelated parts.

Finedon village (polling district FIA) has 3931 electors, which is big enough to have a single councillor. (It is 96.1% of the ideal figure for a one-councillor NNC ward.) We therefore suggest that it becomes a one-councillor NNC ward, to be called "Finedon" Ward.

Finedon village has a long and proud history and is a very close knit community. Its name dates back to the Domesday Book when it was called Thingdon and was the second largest community in the county at the time. It is thought to be of Danish or Viking origin.

It is also home to the pub with the oldest licence in the country, the Bell Inn, (1042).

There is a very active local History Society that has produced many leaflets and books on aspects of Finedon's history. Finedon has had three books written about its history, "Finedon otherwise Thingdon", "Finedon Revealed" and "Look at Finedon", all of which add substance to its unique situation.

Finedon is quite separate from any other communities. It thinks of itself as a town and in 2018 changed the name of its council to Finedon Town Council. The Town Council is very active and runs the cemetery, parks such as the Finedon Pocket Park, Banks Park and the Green. It also runs events such as the Christmas Fayre.

The Town Council is in the process of taking over the Town's Recreation Ground from NNC. The Ground is home to the Volta Football Club and the Town's Bowls Club, which is celebrating its Centenary this year. There is also a very active Cricket Club.

The Town has a number of active community groups, typified by the rescue of Finedon library.

The library was scheduled for closure by the now-defunct County Council. The community pulled together to keep the library open and it is now thriving and run by volunteers. It organises such groups such as Rhyme Time, Story time, Stay-and-Play, Musical Funtime,

Book club, Craft club, Wellness walk, Warm Space, donations of warm clothing and Community market, etc.

Finedon is well known for its annual Scarecrow competition, with entries appearing in gardens right across the village.

St Mary the Virgin church is the main parish church and there is a strong community there, which runs lots of activities including Craft-and-Chat and the Christmas Tree Festival. Its Annual Flower Show is attended by over 2000 people. Working out of the church, the Mothers' Union is also active in the village.

The Independent Wesleyan Church is another focal point of the village.

There is also a Finedon Community centre, which hosts Mums-and-Tots, Badminton, Beavers and Scouts etc. Other community rooms are the Star Hall (which hosts an annual pantomime and other celebrated productions each year) and the Mission Hall.

We propose that the Finedon NNC ward should be coincident with the parish of Finedon (i.e. its borders should be the parish boundaries). It will have a projected population of 3,931, which is within 3.9% of the target for a one-councillor NNC ward.

## **Hatton Park Ward**

The northern part of the Town of Wellingborough has traditionally been a County Council Division called Hatton Park. It would logically form the basis for a ward for North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).

We suggest that the NNC ward should retain the name of “Hatton Park”. We also propose that it should mostly consist of the Wellingborough Town Council (WTC) wards of Hatton, Redwell and Rixon.

Thus, the new Hatton Park NNC ward would consist of:

- **WTC’s Redwell Ward**

This WTC ward is between Niort Way in the north and west, Sywell Road in the south and Harrowden Road in the east. It has several fairly modern estates, positioned on either side of Gleneagles Drive:

- the Wentworth/golf-course side (polling district HPD)
- the Barnwell/Westminster Road estate
- Vicarage Farm Road and the Torringtons (polling district HPC).

A new SUE, called Glenvale Park, is being constructed to the north of Wellingborough. Currently, this SUE is split between polling districts EBL and HPC. This is illogical, and we propose including both parts of the development in a single NNC ward.

HPC polling district is mostly in Redwell, but includes the southern part of Glenvale Park. We propose divesting HPC of its Glenvale Park component and linking that component with EBL in the Earls Barton NNC ward.

The Glenvale Park part of HPC currently has 33 electors according to the electoral register. We therefore propose reducing the projected electorate for Redwell by 33.

Redwell is projected to have 5619 electors, which we are reducing to 5586. This is too large for a single-councillor NNC ward and it is not reasonable to split it. Instead, we propose to expand it.

The community hubs in Redwell are Vicarage Farm Community Centre and Redwell Leisure Centre.

The Redwell ward abuts WTC’s Hatton ward.

- **WTC’s Hatton Ward**

WTC’s Hatton ward is the area between the brook in the west, Hardwick Road in the south and Harrowden Road in the east, plus half of the estate to the west of Harrowden road, centred round The Pyghtle. It also includes Gold Street and roads south of that.

Within this WTC ward, there are 5 separate communities,

- An estate centred on the Hatton Park Road area

- Harrowden Road and turnings off it
- Hardwick Road and turnings off it (polling district HPA)
- The Pyghtle, The Headlands, Ridgeway, Sandy Close and Whytewell Road (HPB)
- Gold Street and roads south of it. This area includes
  - the block of terraces of Gisburne Road, Ferrerstone Road, Avenue Road, and Lister Road.
  - Baker Street, Poplar Street, Bell Court, Regent Street and Great Park Street from Cannon Street to Regent Street.
  - Knights Court, the eastern side of Broad Green, Wharton Close area.
  - George Street, North Street area

In summary, we propose adding this entire polling district (CSD) into the Hatton Park ward. This area is in the Hatton WTC ward, but it is in the existing Croyland and Swanspool NNC ward.

This area of WTC Hatton ward is projected to have 3543 electors.

The community hubs in this area are the Wellingborough Town Cricket Club and the Wellingborough Bowling Club.

- **WTC's Rixon Ward**

Three estates in WTC's Rixon ward are currently in the Hatton Park ward and are proposed to be included in the new Hatton Park NNC ward.

**(1) Hemmingwell Estate**

The community around Nest Farm Road, Hemmingwell Road, Fulmar Lane, and the 'birds' estate (Kestrel, Osprey, Robin etc) form a strong community called the Hemmingwell estate. This would be included in Hatton Park NNC ward. This is polling district HPG.

The community hub in this area is the Hemmingwell Community and Skills Centre.

This estate is projected to have 2350 electors.

**(2) Cedar Way, Lime Grove, Pearmain Ave, Cherry Ave, Plumtree Ave and Oakway Mini-Estate**

This mini-estate is south of the brook and runs between it and Gold Street. This area was previously part of the Hemmingwell ward, but is currently in the WTC Rixon ward. We contend that it should be in Hatton Park NNC ward, having been part of this ward when it was a County Council Division. This is polling district HPF.

The community hub here is Sir Christopher Hatton School.

There is no reason to separate this estate from the Pyghtle estate. They were only separated previously because the Pyghtle was in the WTC Hatton ward, whereas Oakway was in the

WTC Rixon ward. By including both these areas in the new Hatton Park NNC ward, we restore the logical connections between them.

This area is projected to have 563 electors.

### **(3) Gainsborough Estate**

The area from Niort Way running south to the brook, centred on Gainsborough Road and Bacon Road is another new estate connected to the Hatton Park NNC Ward and should also be included in it. (This is polling district HPE.)

It is projected to have 1,383 electors.

### **The Complete NNC Ward**

Hatton Park ward comprising the areas listed above would have

- Redwell 5586 voters
- WTC Hatton ward 3543 voters
- Hemmingwell estate 2350 voters
- Cedar Way, etc 563 voters
- Gainsborough Estate 1,383 voters

This gives the NNC Hatton Park ward approx.13425 voters, which is 9.4% above the target for a three-councillor NNC ward.

We therefore propose that the parts of Wellingborough Town listed above should form a three-councillor NNC ward to be called Hatton Park.

## **Higham Ferrers**

Higham Ferrers is a town with a rich and proud history. Its fame dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century when Archbishop Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in Higham Ferrers.

At one point, Higham Ferrers had its own MP.

Many of the Town's features date back centuries, with St Mary's Church and the nearby Bede House plus the old Grammar School, which sit near to the heart of the town with its square and the Town Council building.

The town is very distinct from its close neighbour Rushden, which is a more recent community.

Higham Town Council is very active and organises Warm Spaces and a food bank. Activities in Higham are done on a town-wide basis, e.g. the monthly Farmers Market and the Christmas "Sparkle".

Before the recent local government re-organisation in Northamptonshire (2021), Higham Ferrers was split into several wards at District level. However, for NNC, there is no logical reason to split Higham into several wards. We therefore propose making it the core of a single NNC ward.

Higham itself has 7219 voters, which is too many for a 1-councillor NNC ward, but too few for 2 NNC councillors. (A two-councillor ward would need 8180 voters, with a margin of 10%, i.e. between 7362 and 8998.)

We propose adding some small adjacent villages to Higham to bring it up to the threshold for two councillors.

- **Chelveston-cum-Caldecott**

Higham has a strong connection to the nearby village of Chelveston-cum-Caldecott. They have traditionally been linked at both County Council and District Council levels. To retain this historical connection, we propose that Chelveston-cum-Caldecott should be included in the Higham NNC ward.

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott has a projected population of 500, which brings the projected electorate for the Higham NNC ward up to 7719.

- **Newton Bromswold**

This village also has strong connections with Higham. (E.g. the Higham Neighbourhood Plan includes Newton Bromswold.)

Newton Bromswold has a projected population of 66, which brings the projected electorate for the Higham NNC ward up to 7785.

### **Clarifying the Border With Rushden**

From 2013 until 2021, Rushden Town Council's Spencer North ward was part of the Higham Ferrers NCC Division. Since 2021, RTC's Spencer North has been part of the NNC Higham ward.

Including RTC's Spencer North ward with its 2901 voters within the NNC Higham ward would increase the projected electorate of the Higham NNC ward to 10686. This would be too many electors for a 2-councillor ward and too few for a three-councillor NNC ward. (It would be well outside the 10% margin in both cases.)

We therefore propose relinking RTC's Spencer North ward to a Rushden-based NNC ward.

Also, there are very compelling community reasons to move RTC's Spencer North ward back into a Rushden ward. Spencer North has most of Rushden's infrastructure including:

- Rushden Lakes (a world famous retail, leisure and wildlife centre - the subject of a recent one-hour BBC documentary)
- Rushden's Household Waste Recycling Centre
- Rushden's Gateway site
- Rushden's only secondary School (the Rushden Community College)
- Historical site of Rushden's Hayway Memorial clinic
- 4 of Rushden's 5 supermarkets
- Rushden's Police Station
- Rushden's Fire Station
- Site of historic Rushden bus station (known as Birches garage)
- Rushden's Catholic Church
- Rushden's Spencer Park, run by Rushden Town Council
- Rushden's annual Feast, the oldest in the County (held in Rushden's Spencer Park)

Historically, the border between Rushden and Higham was the Tollbar. Putting RTC's Spencer North ward into Higham's NCC division meant that this boundary was in the middle of Higham Ferrers. This made no sense.

We suggest therefore that RTC's Spencer North ward should return to Rushden and that Higham's NNC ward should have 2 councillors.

The Higham NNC two-councillor ward will cover the entirety of the Parishes of Higham Ferrers, Chelveston-cum-Caldecott and Newton Bromswold. Its borders will be the outer envelope of these three parishes.

It will have a projected electorate of 7785, which is within 4.9% of the target for a 2 member NNC ward

## **Irchester Ward**

Within North Northamptonshire, there are a number of villages to the south of Wellingborough. They have a similar heritage, with many community and economic links. We propose grouping them together to make a NNC ward to be called “Irchester” ward.

We considered inserting parts of this area (e.g. Knuston) into Rushden, but there are few community links with Rushden. (E.g. Rushden residents shop in Rushden, whereas the villagers shop in Wellingborough.) Also this would make it difficult to keep the Rushden wards within the 10% error margin.

We also looked at moving parts of Rushden into Irchester, but the internal community links within Rushden made this highly inadvisable. The nearest parts of Rushden to Irchester are estates that identify strongly with the rest of Rushden (inherited from their collective shoe-making days). Breaking up these communities would therefore be very unwise.

We therefore propose constructing an NNC ward based on Irchester and other villages. The most obvious ones are the neighbouring villages of Little Irchester, Wollaston, Grendon, Strixton, Bozeat and Easton Maudit.

Rural communities have quite a separate sense of identity compared to urban communities. It is therefore best not to link urban communities with rural ones. It is more difficult for councillors to serve them, given their different problems and priorities.

On occasion, such mergers are necessary in order to manage the electoral numbers, but we believe that it should be a last resort.

Fortunately, such mismatches are not necessary for the Irchester NNC ward. We will therefore avoid them.

The central spine of Irchester NNC ward will be the southern branch of the A509, which runs from Wellingborough to Milton Keynes. The main villages of the Irchester NNC ward lie on either side of the A509 with the River Nene as a major local feature.

Each of these villages is a distinct community, but linked to the others.

It would be unreasonable to break up any of these communities, with an NNC ward boundary running through the middle of any village. We therefore propose that each village should be included as a whole unit. Jointly, they will form a single NNC ward (to be called Irchester ward).

The W8 bus service, run by Stagecoach Midlands, runs up and down the southern branch of the A509, with 11 services in a typical day. It starts at Wellingborough, then runs through Little Irchester, Irchester and Wollaston, before terminating at Bozeat.

In addition, there is a “village hopper” (VH1), a bus service (supported by the parish councils) that serves Wollaston, Grendon, Easton Maudit and Bozeat.

The core of the Irchester ward will be the villages that are served by the W8 and VH1 bus services.

- **Irchester**

Irchester (including Knuston) is the largest village in the proposed NNC ward, with 3,915 electors projected. This is sufficient for a one-councillor ward, but making it one would “orphan” the villages to the south and west of it.

- **Little Irchester**

This hamlet is on the edge of Wellingborough and has a projected electorate of 297. It is within the Parish of Irchester. (It elects three parish councillors to Irchester Parish Council.) It is separated from Wellingborough by the River Nene, London Road, the Embankment, the A45 and some open fields. Despite its proximity to Wellingborough, Little Irchester does not have any community connection to the Town (despite residents shopping in the Town). Little Irchester is linked to Irchester by Irchester Country Park, which sits between them. Little Irchester has traditionally been linked to Irchester, being part of the same parish. It therefore makes sense to keep Little Irchester in the same ward as the rest of the Irchester Parish.

- **Wollaston**

The projected electorate for Wollaston is 2,951. Wollaston is another shoe making town, which was, and still is, the headquarters of Airwair, the makers of the world famous Dr Martens shoes.

- **Grendon**

The projected electorate for Grendon is 500. It is very closely linked to Wollaston, being its neighbour across the A509. The residents of Grendon use the GP practice in Wollaston and the children mostly go to school at Wollaston school.

- **Strixton**

Strixton is a tiny hamlet near to Wollaston. It is projected to have 34 electors.

- **Bozeat**

This village has a projected electorate of 1,828. This is the most southerly of these villages. Shoe making was Bozeat's main trade until 1982 when its last shoe factory closed. It borders both Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

- **Easton Maudit**

This village will have 86 electors. This is another small hamlet to the west of Bozeat.

These seven villages have traditionally been grouped together and have a number of community links. E.g.

- Wollaston School provides secondary education for them.

- They share the Irchester, Wollaston and Bozeat GP practice.
- The Wollaston-and-Bozeat-in-Kind community group. It is linked to the Irchester-in-Kind group.
- WEBS – a group of Church of England churches covering Wollaston, Easton Maudit, Bozeat and Strixton.
- A single Methodist Minister covers Wollaston and Irchester.
- The community-run library in Wollaston co-ordinates its opening times with the similar library in Irchester. They jointly provide library services for the villages on the southern branch of the A509.
- The primary schools in Irchester and Bozeat are run by the Nene Valley Partnership. (It also runs the Wollaston secondary school.)

Excluding any of these villages to reduce the ward size down to a one-councillor or a two-councillor ward would be unwise because of the strong linkages between the villages (bus services, schools, GP surgeries, etc.)

The only villages that could be reasonably transferred to another ward are Irchester and Little Irchester. However, without them, the ward would have 5399 electors, which is too big for a single-councillor ward, and too small for a two-councillor ward. (It is 29.4% above the target electorate for a 1-councillor ward, and 34.3% below the target for a 2-councillor ward.) We have therefore discounted this option.

These seven villages jointly have a projected electorate of 9611. This is too high for a two-councillor NNC ward, and too low for a three-councillor NNC ward.

We conclude that the Irchester NNC ward cannot be either a one or two councillor ward. We therefore propose increasing it to a three-councillor NNC ward.

We propose including Wilby, Great Doddington and Millers Park in the Irchester NNC ward.

- **Great Doddington**

This village overlooks the River Nene. Including it into the Irchester NNC ward adds 1,023 electors to the ward. Great Doddington is linked to Irchester and the other A509 corridor villages by HMP Five Wells. This newly built prison provides employment for the villages and sits on the border of Great Doddington and Irchester parishes. As a further community link with the Irchester NNC ward, many of the children from Great Doddington attend Wollaston secondary school.

- **Millers Park**

This small estate has a projected electorate of 118. It abuts Great Doddington and logically should be in the same ward. It was originally built to provide homes for the prison staff, although today, recruitment is more widespread.

- **Wilby**

Wilby has a projected electorate of 584. It lies on either side of the A4500, and to the north of Great Doddington. The A509 forms the eastern boundary of the Parish. Thus it clearly sits in the A509 corridor.

Wilby's CE Primary School has very close links with St Mary's Church, which is situated in the next door Benefice of Great Doddington and Wilby and Ecton

With Great Doddington and Wilby added plus Millers Park, the Irchester NNC ward has an electorate of 11336. This is 92.4% of the ideal figure for a three-councillor NNC ward.

We therefore propose forming an NNC ward to be called Irchester ward, consisting of the following ten settlements.

Irchester  
Little Irchester  
Wollaston  
Strixton  
Grendon  
Bozeat  
Easton Maudit  
Great Doddington  
Wilby  
Millers Park estate

## **Irthlingborough Ward**

Irthlingborough is an ancient settlement on the River Nene. Evidence of pre-historic and Roman occupation has been found, together with an Iron-Age hill-fort on Crow Hill. (It is the second largest hill-fort discovered in Northamptonshire).

Irthlingborough was also mentioned in the Domesday Book with the name Erdiburne, which later became Artleborough.

Iron ore was mined at Irthlingborough from 1918. The ore was extracted from a system of horizontal tunnels running northwards from Irthlingborough towards Finedon. The tunnels are sometimes close to the surface, and sinkholes occasionally form, when the voids left by the mining collapse.

More recently, the area near the River Nene was quarried for gravel. The quarries were later left to fill with water, to produce artificial lakes. Some of this area has been turned into “Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows”, a nature reserve. Other lakes were incorporated into Rushden Lakes, the innovative Retail/Leisure/Wildlife scheme.

One of Irthlingborough’s claims to fame was that, at the 2011 census, it was the smallest town in England to have had a football League team, Rushden and Diamonds, though sadly the club closed and the ground has been demolished.

The community hubs in Irthlingborough are the Day Centre in College Street and the Crow Hill Community Centre run by Irthlingborough Town Council.

The Irthlingborough division under the County Council included five nearby villages, but there is no strong community link between the town and the three furthest villages (viz. Ringstead, Woodford and Denford). The two other villages within the old NCC Division are Little Addington, Great Addington, and these **do** have strong links to Irthlingborough.

The town itself is split in two parts by the A6, with the Crow Hill settlement quite some distance away from the main town. The town itself was previously split into 2 wards, though there was no good reason for this. It was only done to get District wards of the correct size.

The town itself, including Crow Hill, has 7484 voters, which is too small for a 2-councillor NNC ward. (The ideal size of a 2-councillor ward NNC is 8180.)

There is no reasonable way to split Irthlingborough into several wards. It has a distinct identity, and a strong sense of community.

We propose to keep Irthlingborough as a 2 member ward and to add the two nearest villages of Little and Great Addington to it. These two villages are linked to Irthlingborough by a spine road (Addington Road) that runs through them and into Irthlingborough.

The communities are linked by their shopping habits. (The residents of the Addingtons normally shop in Irthlingborough). They also share the Spinneybrook Medical Centre in the centre of Irthlingborough.

Further, many children from these villages will attend Huxlow Academy, in Irthlingborough.

We propose that the other villages that are currently in the old NCC Division of Irthlingborough should be transferred to other NNC Wards. Ringstead and Denford should be moved to the Raunds NNC ward, while Woodford should go into the Thrapston NNC Ward.

With the addition of the two Addingtons, the proposed Irthlingborough NNC ward will have 8030 voters, which is very close to the ideal number for a two-councillor NNC ward

## **Victoria Ward**

The existing Finedon ward of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is an illogical construct that was inherited from the defunct County Council.

The current NNC Finedon ward consists of 2 separate and unrelated parts, Finedon village and the eastern part of Wellingborough. The two parts are some distance apart, separated by open fields, and have no joint community identity. We therefore believe that it is more sensible for them to be in separate NNC wards.

We propose that the eastern part of Wellingborough should form a new two-councillor NNC ward to be called “Victoria Ward”.

The core of Victoria NNC ward has a distinct identity, and a notably different character to the rest of Wellingborough Town. It has several community hubs.

- The Victoria Centre is at the heart of this ward and many activities take place there, including a Friendship-and-Lunch club for the over 50s, Have-a-Go club, nursery, after school club, holiday club for children, providing help and English classes for new settlers etc.
- Several Hindu temples including the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir on Mill Road and the Hindu Mandir on Highfield Road.
- The Wellingborough District Hindu Centre on the corner of Highfield Road.
- Wellingborough Mosque is in Winstanley Road in the heart of the NNC Victoria Ward. It offers Islamic classes and has plans for expansion.

The ward will be constructed from several estates.

- **Mill Road Estate**

The largest estate in the proposed ward is one of the oldest in Wellingborough, having been mostly built in the early 1900s. It is the heart of the Victoria ward and should not be split. It is an urban area bordered by Cannon Street in the west, by Finedon Road in the north, by Eastfield Road/Elsden Road in the east, and by Midland Road in the south.

In the northern half of this estate, the roads run north-south down to Mill Road (e.g. Alexandra Road and Albert Road). South of Mill Road, the roads run east-west (E.g. Newcomen and Winstanley etc.)

- **Ladywell Park**

A new estate has been built to the east of Elsdon Road, with street names taken from the planets (Neptune, Mars etc). This is a distinct community of its own called Ladywell Park. The residents of this estate have a private Facebook group and help each other out, especially with queries to do with the builders and finishing off the estate.

Together, the Mill Road and Ladywell estates form the polling district FIF. They have 5220 voters, which is too big for a one-councillor NNC ward. We therefore suggest adding other linked areas to it as follows.

- **Burrows Bush**

An estate off Finedon Road to the north is called Burrows Bush. It includes Burywell Road/Flowerhill Drive/Pym Close etc. We propose to add to it Finedon Road and Hillside.

The Burrows Bush area (polling district FIC) also includes roads up to Cross Road in the west, plus the east side of Nest Lane and the turnings off it. (E.g. Swallow Close, Kingfisher Close, etc). This area is closely linked with the rest of this Victoria ward.

- **Chester/Chace/etc**

Between Irthlingborough Road and Midland Road, and bordered on the east by Senwick Road, is another estate. It includes Chester Road/Chace Road/Colwell Road etc. Again this is a close community. It has been extended more recently with a new estate off Chester Road called the Waterside estate. It will exclude Saxby Close, which will go into Croyland ward.

- **Senwick Drive**

Another area on the west of Senwick Road is Senwick Drive, which is an estate in its own right.

- **Irthlingborough Road**

We also propose including Irthlingborough Road eastwards from the junction of Senwick Road and the Embankment until it meets Sidegate Lane. It will include turnings off Irthlingborough Road e.g. Prescod Close and Corn Mill Road.

- **Stanton Cross**

The area to the east of Wellingborough railway station is expanding fast. The latest addition is Stanton Cross. This estate will eventually have over 3000 houses, several hundred of which are already built.

Stanton Cross is a new community and already has a unique character. It should therefore be in a single ward and not split. Currently, Stanton Cross is too small to be a single-member ward of its own, but we anticipate that it will eventually reach sufficient size. When it does, it will be centred on the new primary school that has just opened.

Stanton Cross is a SUE (Sustainable Urban Extension). Logically, therefore, it should be in an urban ward. Victoria is the only urban ward that abuts Stanton Cross.

Thus, until Stanton Cross is large enough for a standalone ward, it logically goes into Victoria ward.

### **Boundaries of the NNC Victoria Ward**

The western boundary of the new NNC Victoria ward will start at the junction of Stewarts Road and Rixon Road. It will then run along the eastern side of Nest Lane (including all the properties on that side of Nest Lane). It will then cut south through Eastfield Park to reach Cannon Street.

It will run south down Cannon Street and Victoria Road, until it reaches Midland Road. It will then run a short distance eastward along Midland Road, until it reaches Castle Street.

It will then run past the junction with Castle Street and across the Castle Fields to reach Irthlingborough Road. It will then run eastwards along the northern side of Irthlingborough Road, until it reaches Saxby Crescent. It then loops around the north of Saxby Crescent, before returning to Irthlingborough Road.

It then continues along Irthlingborough Road until it reaches the Embankment and then south until it reaches the A45.

The southern boundary of the Victoria Ward will be the A45.

The eastern boundary of the Victoria Ward will start at the Ditchford Lane junction on the A45. It will then run north along Ditchford Lane, until it reaches Mill Road (the B571). At that junction, the eastern boundary runs westwards along the B571, until it reaches Sidegate Lane. It then runs north along Sidegate Lane, until it reaches Wellingborough Road (A510).

The northern boundary then runs south-west along the A510 until it reaches the junction with Rixon Road. It then runs north along Rixon Road until it reaches the junction with Stewarts Road.

### **Components of the Victoria NNC Ward**

The areas included in the proposed NNC Victoria ward are:

- (1) the central area (Albert, Alexandra, Winstanley, Newcomen Roads etc)
- (2) the Ladywell Park estate
- (3) the Burrows Bush estate with Finedon Road and Hillside
- (4) the Waterside estate
- (5) Chace/Colwell/Chester Road mini-estate, but excluding Saxby Crescent
- (6) Senwick Drive
- (7) Irthlingborough Road eastwards from the junction of Senwick Road and the Embankment until it meets Sidegate Lane, including turnings off it, plus Corn Mill Road and Prescod Close.
- (8) the Stanton Cross Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE)

The breakdown of voters in these estates is as follows:

- (1) and (2) are polling district FIF with 5220 voters.
- (3) is polling districts FIC and FID with 578 voters

- (4) to (8) are polling districts FIB and FIE with 1677 voters

Jointly, these estates have a projected total of 7475 electors. This is 8.6% below the ideal figure for a two-councillor ward, which is comfortably within the 10% margin for a 2-councillor NNC ward.

Stanton Cross is expanding fast, so this area is going to grow. Being slightly below the ideal figure will give room for that expansion to be added.

We therefore propose that these estates jointly form NNC's Victoria ward.

## **Putting Rushden Back Together**

In the previous County Council boundary review (2013), there was a problem getting the right numbers in each division. It was solved by cutting the northern end of Rushden off the Town and putting it into the Higham Ferrers Division.

This split the pre-existing Rushden Town Council (RTC) ward called Spencer Ward and created a truncated one, called Rushden Spencer North. This was then added to the Higham Ferrers NCC Division solely to make the numbers work.

This artificial ward had no cultural or community links with Higham Ferrers. It was (and remains) a deeply unpopular move. It meant that much of Rushden's unique heritage (and most of its infrastructure) was in a Division outside the town.

Rushden Spencer North Ward includes:

- Rushden's SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)
- Rushden's major outdoor sports area, including public tennis courts, football pitches, BMX track, children's play area (Spencer Park)
- Rushden Lakes, a major retail, wildlife and leisure centre attracting over 5m visitors annually.
- Rushden Town Bowls Club
- Rushden Gateway Site
- Rushden Household Waste Recycling Centre
- Site of Rushden Memorial Clinic (which has significant historic importance to the town)
- Rushden Community College (the Town's only secondary school)
- The longstanding annual Rushden Feast (in Spencer Park) - believed to be the largest week-long fair in Northamptonshire
- Rushden's Waitrose, M&S, Primark, Next, ASDA, Lidl, Home Bargains, etc
- Rushden's fishing club
- Rushden Fire Station
- Rushden Police Station
- Rushden's 14-screen cinema

Rushden Spencer North Ward elects councillors to Rushden Town Council (RTC), but to the Higham Ward of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC). This causes difficulties.

Few town councils deliver many services. A local resident, who has a problem with council services, will therefore usually contact the councillor for the upper-level council.

In Rushden Spencer North, it is not so simple. Rushden Town Council is very proactive. It operates

- the town centre CCTV system
- the public toilets
- the public open spaces and parks (including the Town Green)
- around 20 children's play areas (each with swings/climbing frames, etc)
- the public tennis courts
- the Town's Skateboard Park
- some street lighting

- a local bus service
- bus shelters
- the cemetery
- a local newsletter (“Rushden Matters”) delivered to each household
- some car parks
- Maintains Grade II listed Rushden Hall (with office space rented by local companies)
- Public events attracting thousands of visitors to the town (e.g. High Street fairs, open-air concerts, soap-box derby, dog shows, Party-in-the-Park, Remembrance Day Parade, Christmas Light Switch On event)
- Supports community groups in running significant annual town events, such as Armed Forces Day, fireworks displays, classic car show
- Hosting various local charities within Rushden Hall (e.g. Pensioners Parliament, U3A, “Warm Rooms”) as well as providing a venue for weddings and funerals
- Wrote and maintains the Rushden Neighbourhood Plan which covers all of Rushden, including the artificial ward of Rushden Spencer North

Someone living in Rushden Spencer North would not naturally turn to Higham Ferrers for assistance and would need to know which service is delivered by which council. Does he go to a Higham NNC councillor or a Rushden RTC councillor?

If Rushden Spencer North is re-united with Rushden, this problem is greatly reduced. The resident would go to one of the NNC councillors for Rushden. If the issue was a Town Council matter, the NNC councillor will direct the resident to the Town Council.

There will no longer be the complication caused by having to contact the neighbouring town’s NNC councillor if RTC’s Spencer North ward is included within a Rushden NNC ward.

## **NNC Wards within Rushden**

Rushden is the southernmost Growth Town of North Northamptonshire, and the only one that directly borders another Region.

Rushden is quite different from the other NNC towns. It has a very high level of out-commuting, but retains a local community identity. (It even has a recognisable local accent/dialect).

Rushden has connections to the neighbouring NNC towns, but also to Bedford to the south. For secondary education, many local children travel from Rushden to Sharnbrook School in north Bedfordshire.

Rushden was for many years a single-industry town. It made boots and shoes for the whole world, with around 120 factories making them or supporting their manufacture. Young people would go straight from school into a shoe factory and spend their entire working lives making shoes.

Housing estates were built for the shoe-factory workers and still dominate the older parts of the Town. (E.g. the Glassbrook Road estate.) Later, council housing estates were built to support the expansion of the boot-and-shoe industry.

One of the supporting factories for the boot-and-shoe industry was Strong-&-Fisher in Irchester Road, on the western edge of the Town. It supplied leather for the shoe factories. Many of its workers lived in the purpose-built estates in Highfield Road, Westfield Road and westwards to Boundary Avenue.

These Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century estates still have the strong community cohesion that developed when they served factories like Strong-&-Fisher. (N.B. The Strong-&-Fisher factory was demolished and replaced by a modern estate in the early part of this century.)

As the more modern estates have been built (e.g. Greenacre and Barrington Road), they have absorbed the Rushden traditions and culture.

Like a Yorkshire mining town, Rushden has a brass band, a very active local council, and active participation in local events and groups. (E.g. thousands line the streets when Rushden holds its annual Remembrance Day parade, and around ten thousand attend Rushden's annual fireworks display.)

Rushden's community spirit is not just a historic matter. A local group recently came together to set up and run a local radio station. "Beat Route Radio" is growing and now broadcasts from 09:00 to midnight 3 days a week.

Given Rushden's strong community spirit, we propose that Rushden should be warded as an entity. In other words, we propose that Rushden should be split into wards that are not shared with neighbouring areas.

This implies excluding parts of Higham Ferrers and Newton Bromswold, both of whom have shared wards with Rushden in the recent past.

In the last Local Government Boundary Review (2013), a piece of Rushden was carved off, and added to the NCC Higham Division. The section (Rushden Spencer North) was given to Higham in order to justify Higham having its own NCC councillor. This is no longer necessary.

A ward consisting of Higham Ferrers plus the villages of Chelveston and Newton Bromswold would have 7,785 electors. (Higham is projected to have 7,219 electors, Chelveston 500 electors and Newton Bromswold 66 electors.) This is just 4.8% under the ideal for a 2 councillor NNC ward.

Adding Rushden Spencer North to Higham, lifts Higham to 10,686 electors (7,785 from Higham/Chelveston/Newton-Bromswold and 2,901 from Rushden Spencer North.) This would produce a NNC ward of the wrong size.

With 4,090 electors per councillor, an ideal three-councillor NNC ward should have 12,270 electors. At 10,686, Higham with Rushden-Spencer-North, would be well below the target for a 3-councillor NNC ward. (It is only 87.1% of the target figure.)

Given that Higham/Chelveston/Newton Bromswold are almost the perfect size for a 2-councillor NNC ward, this is an obvious solution. We therefore propose that Higham, Chelveston, and Newton-Bromswold should jointly form a two-councillor NNC ward.

Newton Bromswold has strong links with Higham and Chelveston and almost no links to Rushden. (Despite this, until now it has been in the Rushden South NNC ward). See the Higham Ferrers section of this report for a more detailed explanation.

Assuming that Rushden Spencer North returns to Rushden, the projected electorate for Rushden is 25,889 electors.

With a target of 4,090 electors per councillor, this indicates that Rushden (including Spencer North) is within 5.5% of the ideal figure for 6 councillors (viz. 24,540).

We therefore propose that Rushden should recover Spencer North ward, and should have 6 councillors.

We assume that no NNC ward should have more than 3 councillors. With 6 councillors for Rushden, this implies that Rushden should have at least two NNC wards.

Rushden has nearly doubled in size during the last few decades. It is designated as a Growth Town, with work on the Rushden East SUE due to start shortly. This will add roughly 2,750 new homes, but is unlikely to be the end of housing development adjacent to Rushden. We therefore reject the option of two wards for Rushden, as they would each soon grow too big.

Instead, we propose three 2-councillor NNC wards for Rushden. This will allow the Town to grow without a complete re-warding in the future.

For simplicity, we suggest that the three NNC wards should be equally-sized in terms of electors.

Rushden does not have any clear sub-communities. (It has grown fast from a medium-sized

village to a town in a relatively short period.) It is a single large community, with a clear identity.

We therefore suggest splitting up the Town roughly using the existing Rushden Town Council (RTC) wards.

### **Rushden Lakes Ward**

The first ward would be the combination of RTC's Spencer North ward plus RTC's Hayden ward.

The Rushden Lakes Retail/leisure/wildlife Park (RL) is the most well-known and popular part of the Spencer North ward. We propose therefore that it should be the basis for one of Rushden's NNC wards. Logically, this should be named the "Rushden Lakes" NNC ward.

The most noticeable landmark of this area is the white footbridge across the A45, at the northern entrance to the Town. It is unmissable and well-known. Surprisingly, it is a very recent arrival. (It was built to service the Rushden Lakes retail and leisure scheme.)

We took advice from a local historian, Clive Wood, author of "Rushden Hall, Northamptonshire" and a founder member of the Rushden Amenities Society (now sadly defunct).

Following that discussion, we propose also including RTC's Hayden ward in the NNC Rushden Lakes ward.

The community hubs for the NNC Rushden Lakes ward would be Rushden Lakes, Hayden Road Football club and the "Splash" swimming pool.

The previous boundary review (in 2013) created a tiny, artificial RTC ward called Hayden Central. We propose splitting up Hayden Central and restoring parts of it to the Hayden RTC ward. (This will necessitate a minor revision to the Town Council's wards).

With parts of Hayden Central included in the Rushden Lakes NNC Ward, some minor adjustments are needed to make the Rushden Lakes Ward a two-councillor NNC ward (to within 10%).

After discussions with local people, we suggest that the Rushden Lakes NNC Ward should include Duck Street, Midland Road and Station Road from Hayden Central.

To achieve the necessary electoral balance, we suggest excluding Newton Road, Dell Place, Russell Court and the recently built Alnwick estate (Alnwick Close, Bamburgh Close and Carisbrooke Road).

The eastern boundary of the NNC Rushden Lakes ward will be the Rushden parish boundary, where Rushden meets Higham Ferrers and, further south, where Rushden meets Newton Bromswold.

North of the A45, the boundary of the NNC Rushden Lakes ward will be the parish boundary, where Rushden meets Irchester Parish, Irthlingborough Parish and Higham Ferrers Parish.

The western boundary of the NNC Rushden Lakes ward will run from the Ditchford Lane junction on the A45, along the Northampton Road, before cutting south-east. It will run behind Paddocks Road (and the Closes off it). It will continue to the east of Oakley Road and the roads off it, before crossing Washbrook Road and running to the east of Moor Road.

The boundary will include Station Road and run along its southern boundary, until it reaches High Street. It will run down Duck Street and eastwards along Skinners Hill.

The southern boundary of the NNC Rushden Lakes ward will be Newton Road, running from the Town Centre to Avenue Road. (There are two different roads locally named “Newton Road”. This is the one that is within the Rushden Parish.) It will then meet the parish boundary between Rushden and Newton Bromswold.

With the inclusion of the RTC Spencer North and Hayden wards, plus the additions and exclusions listed above, the NNC Rushden Lakes ward will have roughly 8676 voters. This is 6.1% over the theoretical 8180 target for a 2-councillor NNC ward.

To the east of Rushden, a major Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) is scheduled to be built (around 2750 houses). The SUE will run along, and to the east of the A6 bypass round Rushden. The housing component of the Rushden East SUE will be within Rushden Lakes NNC ward.

We anticipate that the Rushden Lakes NNC ward will grow sufficiently to become a 3-member ward when the Rushden East SUE is fully built-out.

### **Sartoris Ward**

For the second Rushden NNC ward, we propose to base it on the Town council wards called Sartoris East, Sartoris West and Bates. It seems only reasonable to call this NNC ward “Sartoris Ward”.

These three RTC wards are named after two famous names from the Town’s past: the celebrated author H. E. Bates and Squire Sartoris, whose family owned Rushden Hall (now the home of Rushden Town Council).

In addition to these RTC parish wards, we propose including several additional roads in NNC’s Sartoris Ward. These are the roads that are on the boundary between NNC’s Sartoris Ward and NNC’s Rushden Lakes Ward.

The roads that we propose adding to NNC’s Sartoris ward are Newton Road, Dell Place, Russell Court and the Alnwick/Carisbrooke estate. This creates a strong boundary between the NNC Rushden Lakes and Sartoris wards, along Newton Road.

Roughly speaking, the NNC Sartoris ward will cover the area south of Newton Road in the east, and south of St. Margaret’s Avenue in the west.

The boundary to the west will run between St Margaret's Avenue and St Mary's Avenue, then continue south of Hall Avenue, run along the middle of Ashby Drive and continue to the Bedfordshire border.

The NNC ward will be bounded by the Rushden Lakes NNC ward to the north, by the Bedfordshire border to the south, the Newton Bromswold Parish to the east and by Pemberton ward to the north-west.

With the three RTC wards named above, and the extra roads listed above, NNC's Sartoris ward will have approximately 8,609 electors. This is 5.2% of the theoretical 8180 target for a 2-councillor NNC ward.

The community hubs for the Sartoris NNC ward will be Rushden Hall, and the Heritage Church in Park Road.

### **Pemberton Ward**

The remainder of Rushden naturally forms an NNC ward in the west of the Town. It includes the Town Council's Pemberton ward and the Town Council's Spencer South ward.

It seems logical to name this NNC ward, "Pemberton Ward", given that it includes RTC's Pemberton ward.

The choice of name for this ward harks back to the Town's historical connection to the Pemberton family. (Robert Pemberton MP was the High Sheriff of Northamptonshire).

The skyline in Pemberton ward is dominated by the water tower in the west of the NNC ward, just off the Irchester Road. The tower is visible on the horizon from several miles away to east of the Town.

Pemberton NNC ward will be bounded by the NNC Rushden Lakes ward to the north, by the NNC Sartoris ward to the east, and by the parish boundary to the west (where it meets the Parish of Irchester). For a short distance, on its southern side, it will be bounded by the Bedfordshire border.

As well as the two RTC wards named above, this NNC ward will also include the RTC ward called Hayden Central, (with the exception of Duck Street, Midland Road and Station Road, which will all go into the NNC Rushden Lakes ward).

This brings NNC's Pemberton Ward to a total of approximately 8606 voters. This is 5.2% over the theoretical 8,180 target for a 2-councillor NNC ward.

The community hubs in NNC's Pemberton Ward will be Highfield Road Church and St Peters Church. The ward also includes the Pemberton Leisure Centre and Highfield Road Baptist Church, which are important local community hubs.

## Appendix A – Rushden Wards



In this plan, Ward 1 is Sartoris Ward, Ward 2 is Pemberton Ward, and Ward 3 is Rushden Lakes Ward.





**Appendix D – Map of Hatton Park Ward**



**Appendix E – Map of Victoria Ward**

