

New electoral arrangements for Coventry City Council Draft Recommendations

October 2023

Translations and other formats:

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Licensing:

The mapping in this report is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Keeper of Public Records © Crown copyright and database right. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and database right.

Licence Number: GD 100049926 2023

A note on our mapping:

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

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Coventry City Council

Electoral review

October 2023

Translations and other formats:

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Licensing:

The mapping in this report is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Keeper of Public Records © Crown copyright and database right. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and database right.

Licence Number: GD 100049926 2023

A note on our mapping:

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

Contents

	1
Introduction	1
Who we are and what we do	1
What is an electoral review?	1
Why Coventry?	2
Our proposals for Coventry	2
How will the recommendations affect you?	2
Have your say	3
Review timetable	3
Analysis and draft recommendations	5
Submissions received	5
Electorate figures	5
Number of councillors	6
Ward boundaries consultation	6
Draft recommendations	7
North and north east Coventry	8
North West Coventry	11
South East and Central Coventry	15
South West Coventry	19
Conclusions	22
Summary of electoral arrangements	23
Parish electoral arrangements	23
Have your say	24
Equalities	29
Appendices	30
Appendix A	30
Draft recommendations for Coventry City Council	30
Appendix B	32
Outline map	32
Appendix C	33
Submissions received	33
Appendix D	34
Glossary and abbreviations	34

Introduction

Who we are and what we do

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

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Why Coventry?

7 We are conducting a review of Coventry City Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2003, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.² Additionally, some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

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

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

Our proposals for Coventry

9 Coventry should be represented by 54 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Coventry should have 18 wards, the same number as there are now.

11 The boundaries of most wards should change; three (Binley & Willenhall, Foleshill and Longford) will stay the same.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

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

² Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 31 October 2023 to 22 January 2024. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

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

16 You have until 22 January 2024 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 25 for how to send us your response.

Review timetable

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

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
16 May 2023	Number of councillors decided
23 May 2023	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
31 July 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
31 October 2023	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
22 January 2024	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
7 May 2024	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

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

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

	2023	2029
Electorate of Coventry	233,963	249,249
Number of councillors	54	54
Average number of electors per councillor	4,333	4,616

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Coventry are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2029, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2024. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 6.5% by 2029.

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

³ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

⁴ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Number of councillors

26 Coventry City Council currently has 54 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

27 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 54 councillors.

28 As Coventry City Council elects by thirds (meaning it has elections in three out of every four years) there is a presumption in legislation⁵ that the Council have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. We will only move away from this pattern of wards should we receive compelling evidence during consultation that an alternative pattern of wards will better reflect our statutory criteria.

29 We received two submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns. One submission supported the maintenance of 54 councillors for the city. The other submission, received from a representative of Coventry Peace Orchard, objected to an increase in the number of councillors. This has not been proposed as part of this review. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a 54-councillor council.

Ward boundaries consultation

30 We received 44 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included city-wide proposals from Coventry City Council, Coventry Labour Party, Coventry Conservative Federation and Coventry Conservative Party Group (joint submission) (the 'Conservatives') and Coventry Green Party. The submissions from Coventry City Council and Coventry Labour Party were identical. In addition, we also received submissions from Colleen Fletcher MP, Taiwo Owatemi MP and Zarah Sultana MP with comments on the wards that fall within their respective Coventry constituencies. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the city.

31 The three city-wide schemes all provided uniform patterns of three-councillor wards for Coventry. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

32 Our draft recommendations also take into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the

⁵ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 2(3)(d) and paragraph 2(5)(c).

best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries. Our draft recommendations for Coventry use aspects of the proposed warding patterns in all three city-wide schemes but are predominantly based on the scheme proposed by Coventry City Council for most of the city and from the Conservatives in the Lower and Upper Stoke areas.

33 We visited the city in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Coventry helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

Draft recommendations

34 Our draft recommendations are for 18 three-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

35 The tables and maps on pages 8–22 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Coventry. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁶ criteria of:

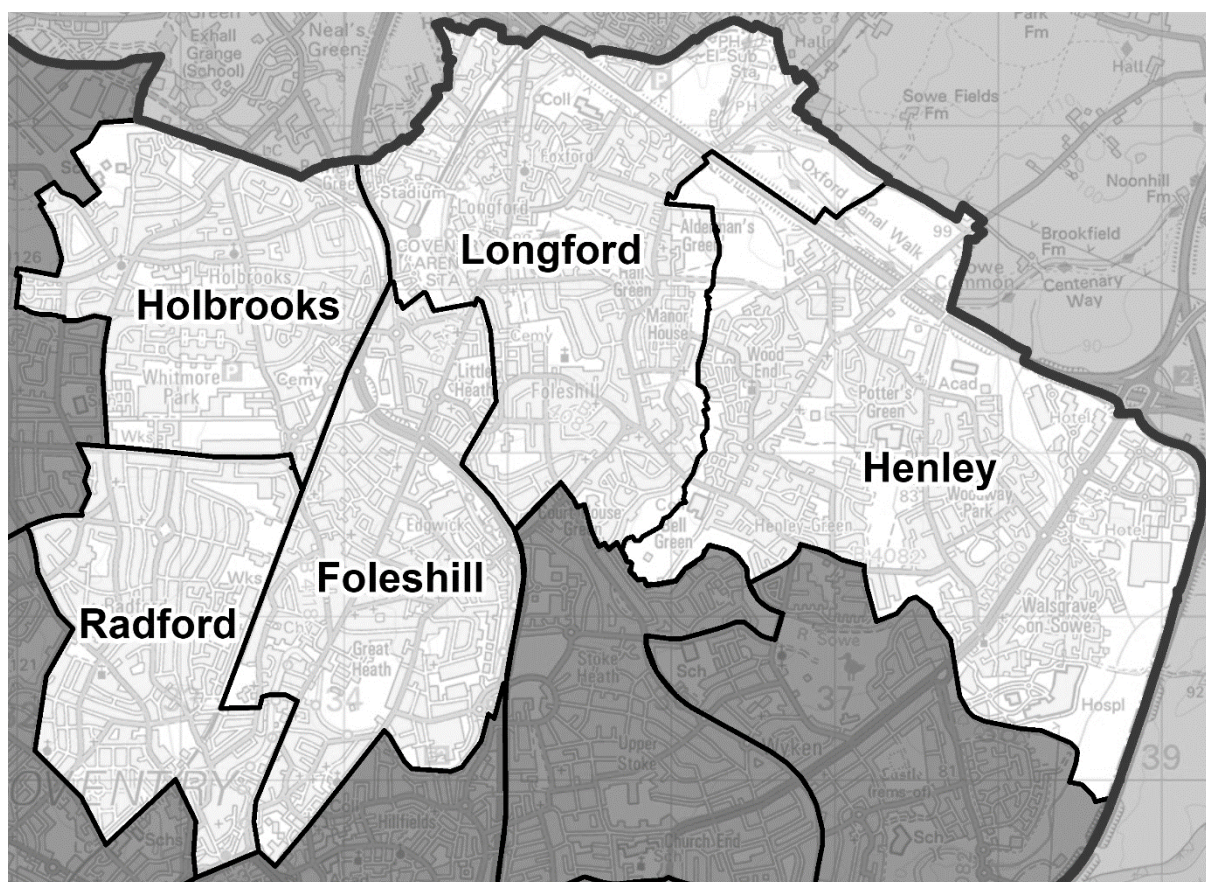
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

36 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 30 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

⁶ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

North and north east Coventry



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Foleshill	3	2%
Henley	3	5%
Holbrooks	3	-1%
Longford	3	6%
Radford	3	6%

Foleshill, Henley and Longford

38 The four city-wide submissions we received for this area proposed substantially similar boundaries. All four submissions proposed that Foleshill ward remain unchanged from the existing ward. The Council, Labour Party and the Conservatives all proposed that Longford ward is also left unchanged from the existing ward whilst the Green Party proposed a small amendment to the boundary between Longford and Henley so that it followed the M6 and included a small number of electors living in Sowe Common in their proposed Longford ward.

39 The proposals for Henley ward from the Council and Labour Party proposed to maintain the existing ward save for a small amendment to move the areas of Manor Farm Estate and New Green Park to Wyken ward. The Council stated that electors in this area identify more with Wyken than Henley and were included in the same

ward until the previous electoral review in 2003–4. This proposal also provided good electoral equality for Henley ward. The Green Party proposed a similar arrangement, but they suggested retaining New Green Park in Henley ward.

40 The Conservatives did not propose to move this area to Wyken but instead proposed to move Walsgrave on Sowe from Henley ward to a renamed Sowe ward using the A4600 as a boundary between the two wards. The Conservatives stated that the area is separated from the rest of its existing ward by Hinckley Road. They argued that the road forms a strong boundary that, for example, is not crossed by school catchment areas.

41 The warding arrangements proposed by the Council and the Labour Party were supported by Colleen Fletcher, the MP for Coventry North East, and Councillor Ruane. A local resident stated that the River Sowe is a stronger boundary in the area than the A4600.

42 Having considered the various warding proposals and the other submissions in this area, we propose to adopt the Council's suggested warding pattern for these three wards. The proposals for Foleshill and Longford also match the proposal from the Conservatives to maintain the arrangements.

43 We considered the small amendment from the Green Party to include the small number of electors in Sowe Common in Longford ward. However, our view at this stage is that their links to Henley ward, via Shilton Lane, are stronger than their ties to Longford ward via Lentons Lane. We are, however, interested to hear further evidence from electors in Sowe Common as to where they see their community ties.

44 We do not propose to adopt the Conservatives' proposal to include Walsgrave on Sowe in a ward with electors to the south of the River Sowe. We consider that it is more appropriate to maintain their connection to Potter's Green and Woodway Park. We would also welcome further evidence from electors in this area as to where they consider their community identity to be focused.

45 We are convinced that the Council and Labour Party proposals have made a well-evidenced case for the inclusion of Manor Farm Estate and New Green Park in a Wyken ward, and we propose to adopt these arrangements as part of our draft recommendations.

46 Our draft recommendations for this area are for three three-councillor wards of Foleshill, Henley and Longford with electoral variances of 2%, 5% and 6%, respectively, by 2029.

Holbrooks and Radford

47 The proposals for these two wards differed in a number of ways. The Council and the Labour Party proposed an unchanged Holbrooks ward, with the exception of adding an 's' to the existing name of Holbrook, something proposed by all four city-wide schemes. They suggested a small amendment to the existing Radford ward to move the existing boundary from Sadler Road to Keresley Road and Wallace Road.

48 The Conservatives proposed to include an area between Halford Lane and Bennetts Road South, currently located in Holbrook ward, in Bablake ward. They also proposed that the boundary between Holbrooks and Radford wards should follow Burnaby Road rather than Yelverton and Rollason roads, as Burnaby Road forms a stronger and more identifiable boundary. The Conservatives also suggested that part of the western boundary of Radford ward should run along Moseley Avenue rather than Three Spires Avenue, as it currently does.

49 The Green Party also proposed to use Burnaby Road as the boundary between Holbrooks and Radford, as well as including an area between Halford Lane and Beake Avenue in Holbrooks ward rather a Bablake ward. They proposed a more substantial change to Radford ward to extend its boundary westwards, including the Draper's Fields area in a city centre ward.

50 The proposal made by the Council and Labour Party was supported by Taiwo Owatemi, the MP for Coventry North West, and Councillor Ruane. A local resident also wrote in support of the proposal to move the existing boundary from Sadler Road to Keresley Road and Wallace Road.

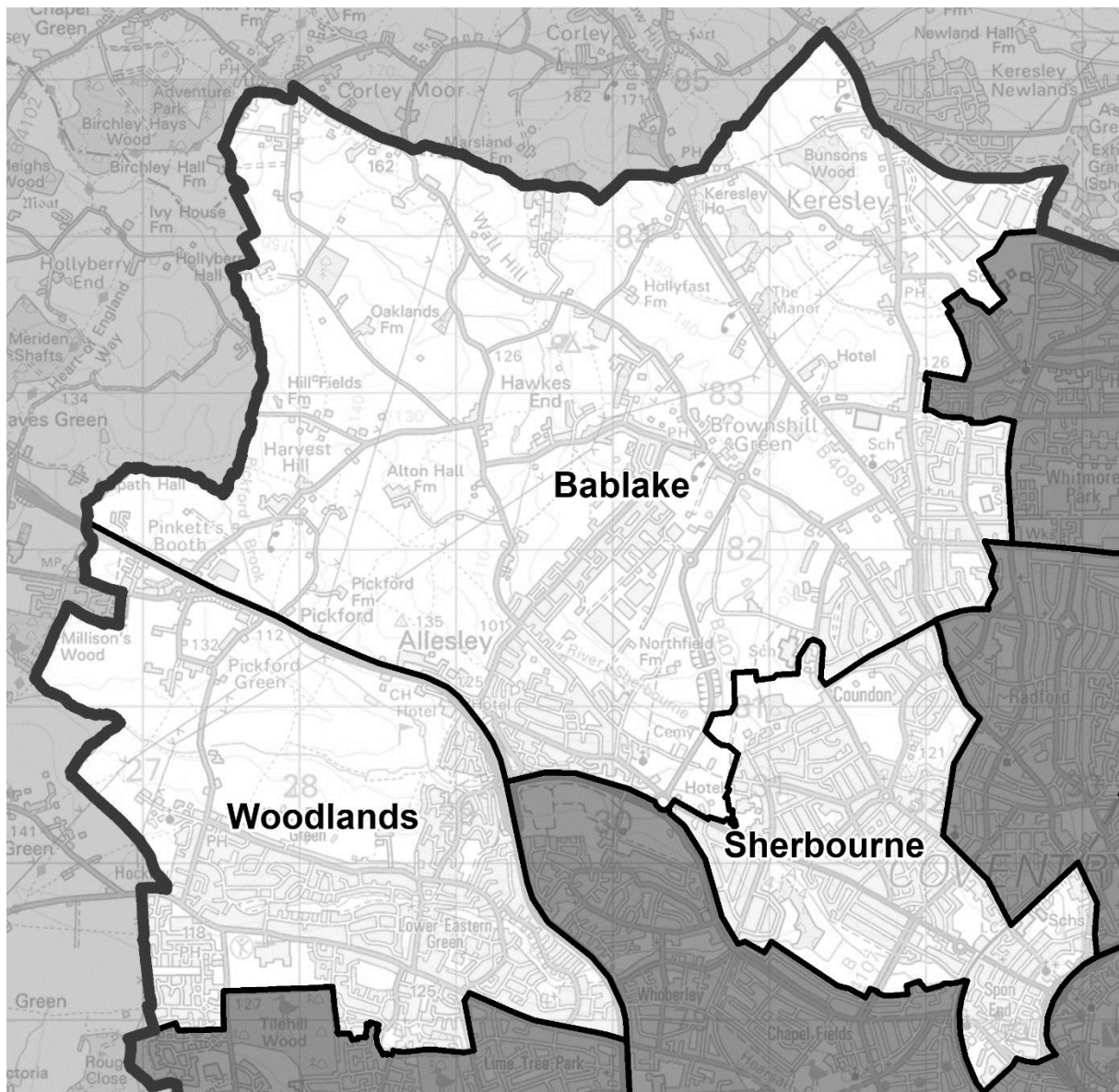
51 Having visited the area as part of our tour of Coventry and having considered the various options suggested, we propose to adopt the Council's proposal for these two wards subject to two small amendments we consider provide more identifiable boundaries.

52 We agree with the Conservatives and the Green Party that Burnaby Road forms a more identifiable boundary between Holbrooks and Radford wards. We also agree that Holbrooks is a more identifiable name for this ward than Holbrook. In addition, we propose to use the Keresley Brook as the boundary between Holbrooks and Bablake so that the electors on Keresley Brook Road and the streets to its south are moved to Bablake ward.

53 We would like to hear the views of residents in this area as to what they consider to be the extent of the Holbrooks community.

54 Our proposed draft recommendations for this area are for two three-councillor wards of Holbrooks, with an electoral variance of -1%, and Radford, with a variance of 6%, by 2029.

North West Coventry



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Bablake	3	3%
Sherbourne	3	2%
Woodlands	3	3%

Bablake and Woodlands

55 The existing Bablake ward contains the large housing development known as the Eastern Green sustainable urban extension (SUE). This will see the ward grow by approximately 1,700 electors by 2029. This increase would leave Bablake ward with 31% more electors than the average for Coventry on its current boundaries.

56 The four city-wide submissions all proposed to address this proposed increase in the electorate. The Council and the Labour Party proposed to decrease the

electorate in Bablake ward by using the A45 as the new southern boundary and by including the Eastern Green SUE in Woodlands ward along with the existing Eastern Green area. They stated that the A45 will form a very strong boundary between the new development and the remainder of Bablake ward. This proposal would necessitate parish wards for the parish of Allesley, which would be divided between Bablake ward and Woodlands ward. The Council and the Labour Party suggested that the emerging community in the Eastern Green SUE forms a community in its own right with ties to the remainder of Eastern Green, and as such a warded parish council would better represent the changing nature of the area. They also proposed to move an area around Coundon from Bablake ward to Sherbourne ward to provide for electoral equality in the area.

57 The Conservatives proposed a significantly different configuration. They proposed to maintain the existing Woodlands ward and to keep the Eastern Green SUE in Bablake ward. They suggested creating a new ward of Coundon using parts of the existing Bablake, Radford and Sherbourne wards, utilising the A4114 as its southern boundary. They argued that the SUE will be self-contained and will not share services with existing communities but will develop its own services that will likely be used by areas to its north and that the A45 will form a spine road for the community.

58 The Green Party proposed a warding pattern that comprised an Allesley & Eastern Green ward and a Keresley & Coundon ward. Their Allesley & Eastern Green ward included all of the Eastern Green SUE as well as the existing Eastern Green community in a ward with the western half of Allesley parish. They also proposed that the eastern half of Allesley parish be included with Keresley parish and Coundon in a ward that also uses the A4114 as its southern boundary.

59 The proposal from the Council and Labour Party was supported by Taiwo Owatemi, the MP for Coventry North West, and Councillor Ruane. Two local residents wrote in support of the use of the A45 as a boundary in this area.

60 Having visited the area as part of our tour of Coventry, we were persuaded by the Council's argument that the A45 forms a strong boundary and will do so in the future. We acknowledge that in the absence of any electors at present it is difficult to assess the likelihood of future community ties and their direction.

61 The A45 at this point is a large dual carriageway with very limited access across it and consequentially feels like the most appropriate boundary in the area. We do, however, welcome any further evidence to help us understand where community ties for this area lie now and in future. Any such evidence should also bear in mind the need to provide electoral equality for the area and also ensure that any proposals provide effective and convenient local government by using clear and identifiable boundaries.

62 Our decision to incorporate the A45 as the southern boundary of Bablake ward and the northern boundary of Woodlands ward means that we are unable to use the Conservatives' and Green Party's proposals in this area. We have noted the arguments in these submissions and will continue to consider them alongside any further evidence that we receive.

63 In addition, we considered that the proposals from the Conservatives and Green Party would split the Sherbourne community, discussed below.

64 Our proposals for these two wards are for a three-councillor Bablake ward and a three-councillor Woodlands ward, both of which have good electoral equality by 2029.

Sherbourne

65 The existing Sherbourne ward is based around the A4114, including the community of Spon End which lies just outside the city centre.

66 The Council and Labour Party proposed to maintain the existing ward, with the addition of an area along Scots Lane to allow for electoral equality in Sherborne and Bablake wards. The Council and Labour Party both stated that this proposal further strengthens the links between Spon End and Coundon along the River Sherbourne and the green spaces in this part of the city.

67 The Conservatives and the Green Party both proposed warding patterns which would split the existing Sherbourne ward and move parts of it to different wards. The Conservatives proposed to add Spon End to their city-centre focused St Michael's ward. They suggested that the A4114 should form a boundary for wards in this area, with electors to the north being included in their proposed Coundon ward and electors to the south moved to Whoberley ward. The Green Party proposed a very similar arrangement.

68 The Council and Labour Party proposal for Sherbourne ward was supported by Taiwo Owatemi, the MP for Coventry North West, and Councillor Ruane. Councillor Welsh also wrote in support of the proposals submitted by the Council and Labour Party, which he stated recognises the historic links between Coundon and Spon End. We also received submissions from local residents supporting the addition of the Scots Lane area of Coundon to Sherbourne.

69 Having considered the submissions and having visited the area on our tour of Coventry, we were persuaded that the existing Sherbourne ward is reflective of the community in that area and that the addition to the ward of the Scots Lane area of Coundon was appropriate and reflects the community identity of those electors.

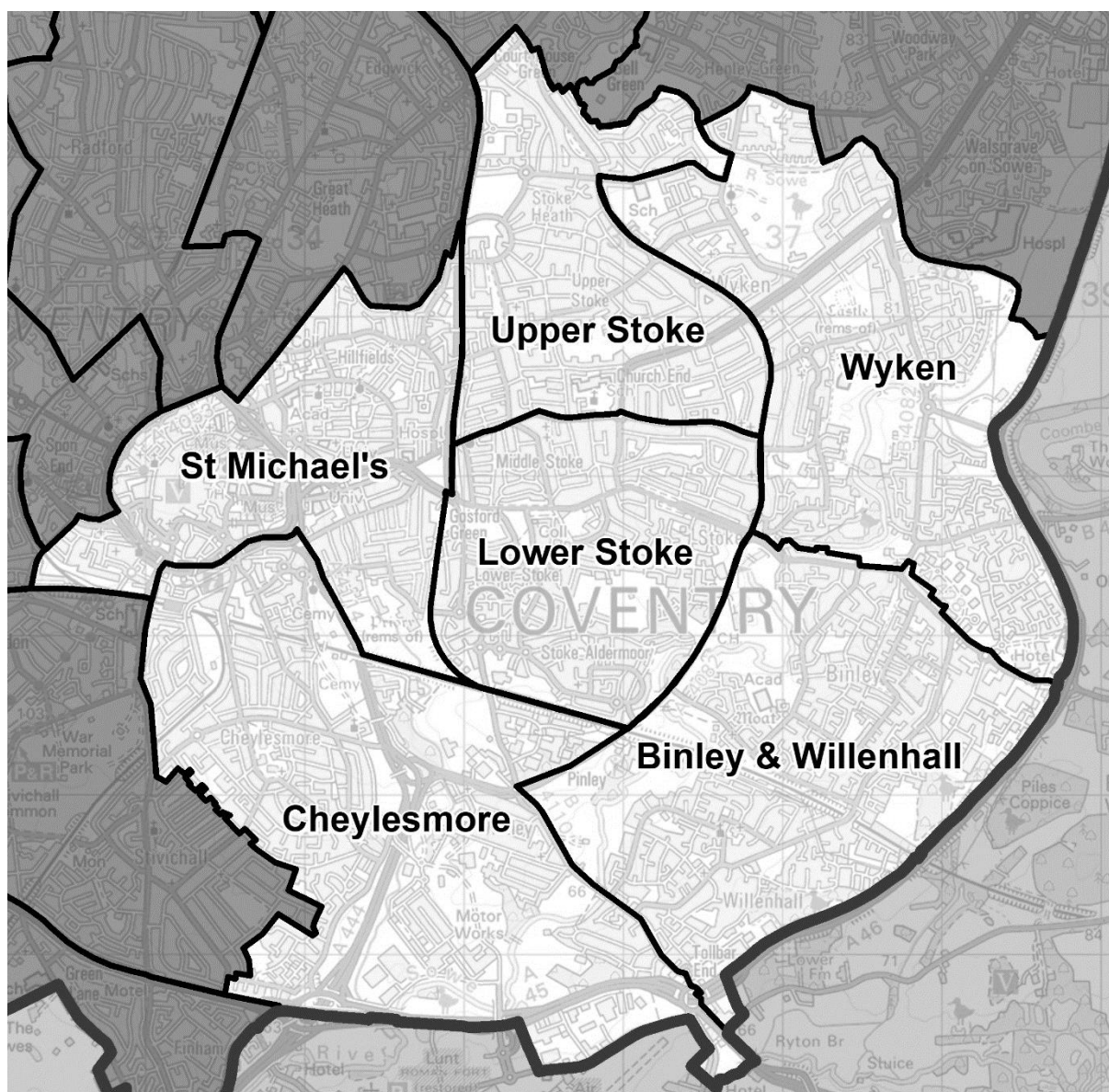
70 We do not believe that a division of the area, as proposed by the Conservatives and the Green Party, would reflect the make-up of communities in this part of

Coventry. We do welcome further evidence from local residents to assist with our consideration of the most appropriate ward boundaries in this area.

71 We do propose to make a small amendment to the proposal from the Council and Labour Party for Sherbourne. The current ward boundary and proposed boundary suggested by the Council and Labour Party between Sherbourne and Whoberley follows Allesley Old Road for part of its length. This means that 26–140 Allesley Old Road, Sunnyside Close and Rushmoor Drive, and streets off Rushmoor Drive, are currently included in Sherbourne ward but separated from most of the ward by the River Sherbourne and the open space surrounding it. We propose to include these electors in Whoberley ward but would like to hear from electors living in these properties if this is an appropriate realignment given where they see their community ties.

72 Our proposed Sherbourne ward will be represented by three councillors and will have an electoral variance of 2% by 2029.

South East and Central Coventry



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Binley & Willenhall	3	-1%
Cheylesmore	3	-8%
Lower Stoke	3	3%
St Michael's	3	-5%
Upper Stoke	3	8%
Wyken	3	-1%

Binley & Willenhall

73 All four city-wide schemes proposed that the existing Binley & Willenhall ward be retained either wholly or with only very minor changes. The Council and Labour Party proposed no changes. The Conservatives proposed a minor amendment to

move a handful of electors at Tollbar End from Binley & Willenhall ward to Cheylesmore ward. The Green Party proposed that the River Sowe, rather than the A4082 and B4110, form the boundary between Binley & Willenhall and the Cheylesmore area. This proposal affects no electors.

74 The proposal to maintain the existing ward is supported by Zarah Sultana, the MP for Coventry South, and Councillor Ruane. Four local residents wrote with views on the existing ward. One stated that pairing Binley and Willenhall in a ward does not work and the ward should be divided, while another two suggested that Binley be paired with Wyken but did not suggest any proposed boundaries. The final submission suggested that the Brinklow Road and properties on it, as well as properties to its south, be included in Binley & Willenhall.

75 The latter proposal would not provide good electoral equality, with Binley having 12% more and Wyken 14% fewer electors than the average for the city based on the 2029 electorate forecasts.

76 Given the strong support for the existing ward and the lack of suitable alternatives suggested by those who do not support the existing ward, we propose to leave Binley & Willenhall ward unchanged.

77 Our proposed Binley & Willenhall ward will have three councillors and an electoral variance of -1% by 2029.

Cheylesmore and St Michael's

78 The city-wide proposals for these two wards varied greatly. The Council and Labour Party proposed to revise the Cheylesmore ward, with the inclusion of an area bounded by the Ringway, A4114 London Road and the mainline railway line that currently lies in St Michael's ward.

79 The Council proposed to revise St Michael's ward by moving an area bounded by the Ringway, Albany Road and Warwick Road from St Michael's ward to Earlsdon ward. They also proposed to divide the Lower Stoke area by amending the boundary between St Michael's and Lower Stoke, currently following the former railway line. Their revised boundary would run along the B4110 Humber Road, the rear of properties on the south side of Bolingbroke Road, Aldermoor Lane and the rear of properties on Paladine Way. All properties to the west of this boundary would be included in the Council's proposed St Michael's ward. The Council and Labour Party stated that electors in new developments, built on the old factory sites alongside the old railway line, share similar characteristics to those electors on the other side of the railway line.

80 The Conservatives' proposed St Michael's ward also moves the area bounded by the Ringway, Albany Road and Warwick Road to Earlsdon ward that the Council propose to move. In addition, they proposed to move the Spon End community to St

Michael's and maintain the existing eastern boundary with the Stoke area. Their proposed Cheylesmore ward included more of the Stivichall area in Cheylesmore, effectively dividing that community between wards. In addition, they proposed to move an area to the south of the station into Earlsdon ward.

81 The Green Party proposed to move the focus of the St Michael's ward northwards to include Spon End and Draper's Fields. They then proposed to divide the Cheylesmore area between two wards, with the north being paired with the Gosford Green area adjacent to the city centre and the Whitley community in a ward called Whitley & North Cheylesmore. They proposed that the south of the Cheylesmore area be paired with Stivichall and Finham in a Finham & South Cheylesmore ward. Based on our calculations, these wards would have electoral variances of -13% for Whitley & North Cheylesmore and 5% for Finham & South Cheylesmore by 2029.

82 The proposals from the Council and Labour Party for St Michael's and Cheylesmore were supported by Zarah Sultana, the MP for Coventry South, and Councillor Ruane.

83 Having visited the area as part of our tour of Coventry, we were not persuaded that the division of the Cheylesmore area as proposed by the Green Party was justified by the evidence presented. This community appears to be coherent, centred around Quinton Park with strong community ties.

84 We were also not persuaded by the Council's proposal to divide the Lower Stoke community between St Michael's and Lower Stoke wards. Whilst we accept the Council's argument that the electors in new developments on the former factory sites will share characteristics with electors in St Michael's ward, we are concerned that running a boundary along Alder Moor Lane would divide the community that exists in that area. Our view at this stage is that the old railway line remains a more identifiable boundary between the two wards. We would, however, like to hear further evidence from all interested parties in this area to help us understand where the various communities see their links.

85 We note that the Conservatives proposed to maintain the railway line as a boundary in Lower Stoke and we propose to adopt their suggested arrangement for Lower Stoke, which we discuss fully below.

86 We agree that it is logical to include the area bounded by the Ringway, A4114 London Road and the mainline railway line in Cheylesmore and have adopted this proposal as the sole change to the existing Cheylesmore ward.

87 If we do not include part of the Lower Stoke area in St Michael's ward, this leaves the ward significantly undersized. To resolve this issue, we propose to retain the area bounded by the Ringway, Albany Road and Warwick Road in St Michael's

ward. We also propose to add Winifred Avenue, and the development site to its north, in St Michael's ward to provide for electoral equality.

88 We are conscious of the conflicting evidence and various proposals for the city centre area. We would like to hear further evidence that demonstrates the community ties and links of these city centre adjacent communities to help inform our final recommendations for these areas.

89 Our proposed wards for this area are for a three-councillor Cheylesmore ward with an electoral variance of -8% and a three-councillor St Michael's ward with a variance of -5% by 2029.

Lower Stoke, Upper Stoke and Wyken

90 As mentioned above, the Council and Labour Party proposed to move an area of Lower Stoke to St Michael's ward. In addition to this, as well as the inclusion of Manor Farm Estate and New Green Park in Wyken ward, they proposed to retain the other existing boundaries for these three wards.

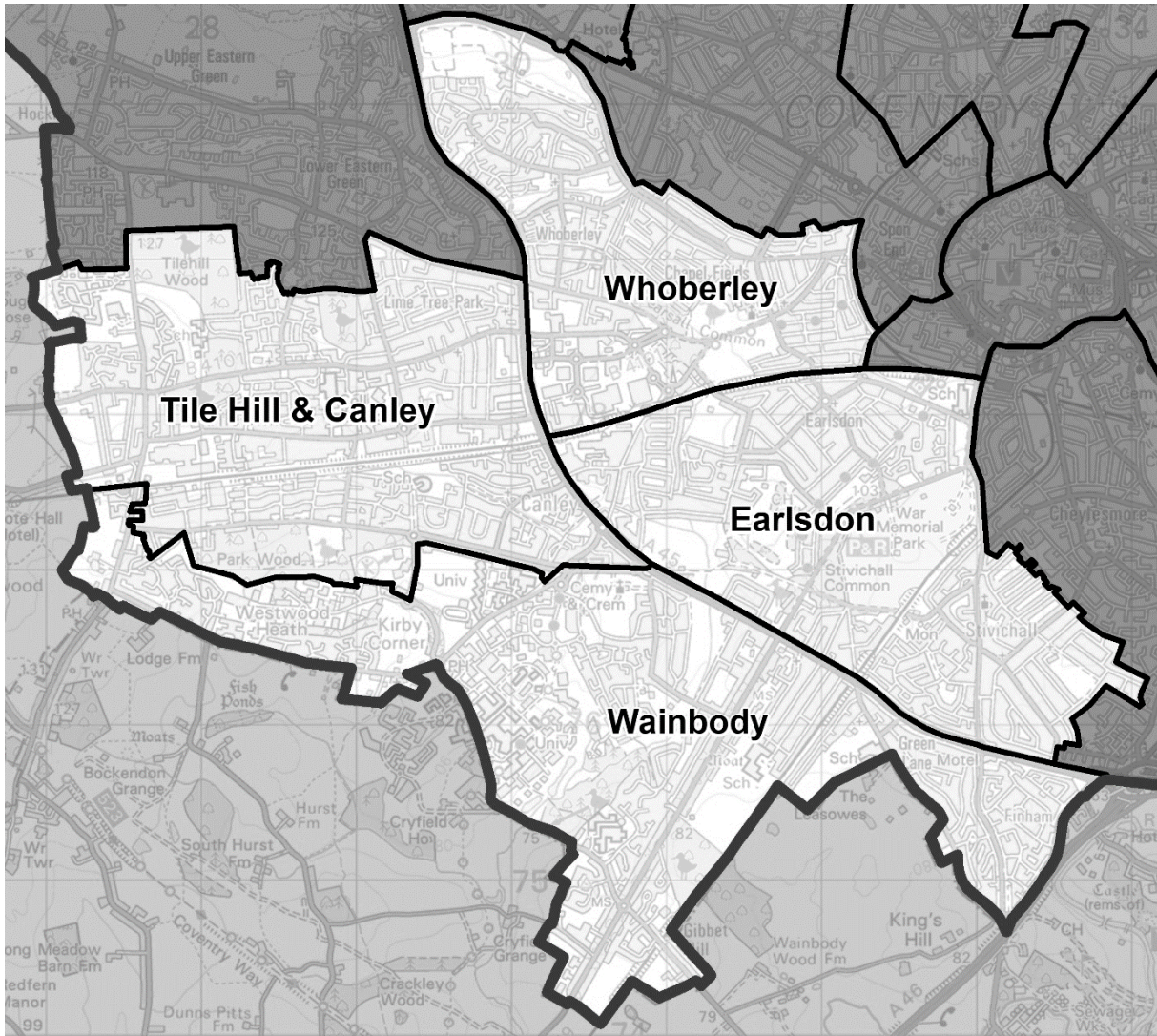
91 The Conservatives proposed to make some amendments to the existing Lower Stoke and Upper Stoke wards. They proposed to revise the boundary between the two wards to follow Walsgrave Road from its junction with Jimmy Hill Way until its junction with Longfellow Road, at which point they suggested it continues to the junction with Hipswell Highway. This proposed boundary means that a number of streets to the west of Marlborough Road move from Upper Stoke to Lower Stoke, and electors in an area bounded by Walsgrave Road, Ansty Road, Hipswell Highway and Longfellow Road move from Lower Stoke to Upper Stoke. In addition, the Conservatives proposed to amend the boundary between Upper Stoke ward and Wyken ward (which they named 'Sowe') to follow Blackberry Lane. The Green Party proposal divided the Lower Stoke area to include part of it in their suggested Whitley & North Cheylesmore ward.

92 As previously stated, we do not propose to adopt the Green Party's proposals for Cheylesmore, which would include part of the Stoke area in a ward with parts of Cheylesmore. We were also not persuaded by the Council's division of the Lower Stoke area, as mentioned above.

93 We propose to adopt the Conservatives' proposal for Lower Stoke and Upper Stoke as we consider these to best reflect the Stoke community and use the most identifiable boundaries. Our proposed Wyken ward is as per the existing ward, subject to the amended boundary between Wyken and Henley discussed earlier in this report and the amendments to the boundary suggested by the Conservatives to use Blackberry Lane as a boundary and to use the entirety of Hipswell Highway as the boundary between Wyken ward and Lower Stoke and Upper Stoke wards.

94 We do not propose to include Walsgrave on Sowe in Wyken ward, as mentioned earlier in this report; nor do we propose to adopt the name of Sowe for Wyken ward as we considered the current name of Wyken is well recognised locally.

95 Our draft recommendations for these three wards are for three three-councillor wards of Lower Stoke, Upper Stoke and Wyken with electoral variances of 3%, 8% and -1%, respectively, by 2029.



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Earlsdon	3	-9%
Tile Hill & Canley	3	1%
Wainbody	3	-7%
Whoberley	3	-6%

Earlsdon and Whoberley

96 The four city-wide schemes for these two wards had some notably different boundaries. The Council and Labour Party proposed to amend the existing Whoberley ward to add, from Earlsdon ward, the residential area around Broad Lane and Tile Hill Lane. They stated that this area is ‘currently geographically separated from the rest of Earlsdon by an industrial estate and the site of the former Triumph works’. They also stated that this area was in Whoberley ward previously and retains strong ties to the area. The Council and Labour Party also proposed to include the area bounded by the Ringway, Albany Road and Warwick Road in Earlsdon ward, as discussed under St Michael’s ward in the section above. Other than that amendment, they proposed to retain the existing Earlsdon ward.

97 The Conservatives' proposal for Whoberley and Earlsdon ward included the area to the south of the A4114 (currently in Sherbourne ward) in Whoberley ward, along with the Broad Lane and Tile Hill Lane area that the Council suggested being moved from Earlsdon to Whoberley. They proposed to move the northern boundary of Earlsdon ward from the railway line to instead run along Hearsall Common and Hearsall Lane. This would mean all the properties to the south and east of those streets move from Whoberley to Earlsdon. This was supported by a local resident in their submission. They also suggested that the entirety of the Stivichall community be moved from Earlsdon ward and instead divided between Cheylesmore and Wainbody wards.

98 The Green Party's proposed wards are similar to those proposed by the Conservatives, with Whoberley ward taking in parts of the old Sherbourne ward and Hearsall Common and Hearsall Lane forming the northern boundary of Earlsdon.

99 The proposals from the Council and Labour Party for Earlsdon and Whoberley were supported by Zarah Sultana, the MP for Coventry South, and Councillor Ruane.

100 Having toured the area and considered all the submissions we have received, we propose to adopt the Council's proposal to move the Broad Lane and Tile Hill Lane area from Earlsdon to Whoberley. We also propose to make the two amendments to Whoberley, discussed in the Sherbourne and St Michael's ward sections, to use more identifiable boundaries and provide for good electoral equality.

101 We are not able to adopt the Conservative or Green Party suggestions for Earlsdon or Whoberley based on our view that their proposals would split the Sherbourne community.

102 We propose to make an additional change to Earlsdon ward. Having used the A45 to traverse the city as part of our tour, we are of the view that it forms a very strong boundary through the city. Having agreed that the A45 should form the boundary between Bablake and Woodlands wards, we also looked at whether it should be used as the boundary between Earlsdon and Wainbody wards and concluded that it should. We propose to include the Green Lane area in our proposed Earlsdon ward but given the limited evidence we have received so far for this area we are eager to hear if this proposed change reflects community identities.

103 Our proposed draft recommendations are for two three-councillor wards of Earlsdon and Whoberley with electoral equality of -9% and -6% by 2029, respectively.

Tile Hill & Canley and Wainbody

104 In this area, the Council and the Labour Party proposed a Wainbody ward comprising the existing ward with the addition of the Westwood Heath area currently

located in Westwood ward. This area is forecast to see a large amount of housing development over the next six years and means that the current Westwood ward will have 14% more electors than the average for the city by 2029. To allow for electoral equality in Westwood ward, the Council proposed that this area be moved to Wainbody ward. They stated that the properties around Westwood Heath share a great deal more similarities in terms of tenure and the services they use with other properties in Wainbody, than with the Canley area to their north.

105 As discussed in the section on Bablake and Woodlands, the inclusion of the Eastern Green SUE in Woodlands ward increases the electorate of that ward significantly and, in order to provide for electoral equality in both Woodlands and Westwood ward, it is necessary to transfer electors from Woodlands ward to Westwood ward. The Council and the Labour Party proposed that this area should be the street around Bushbery Avenue, which they stated already has good links to the remainder of Westwood ward. They also proposed that Westwood ward be renamed Tile Hill & Canley to better reflect the composition of the ward.

106 As discussed in the earlier section we are unable to adopt the Conservative and Green Party proposals in this area, as they proposed a ward that crosses the A45 between Bablake and Woodlands.

107 We propose to adopt the Council's proposals for these two wards, including the renaming of Westwood to Tile Hill & Canley, subject to two amendments. We visited the area around Bushbery Avenue, and we agree it is appropriate to include this area in Tile Hill & Canley ward. We propose to slightly amend the Council's proposed boundary so that it runs to the north of Tile Hill Wood rather than through it. We consider this to be a more identifiable boundary. We also propose to run the boundary to the north of all the properties on Empire Road and to include them in Tile Hill & Canley. This ensures that the road is not divided between wards.

108 In addition, we also propose to include the new housing development to be built to the south west of Tile Hill station in Wainbody ward. This allows us to provide good electoral equality for Wainbody ward, given our decision to include Green Lane in Earlsdon ward. We would be interested to hear from interested parties in this area about the likely future community identity of this development to assist us with further stages of this review.

109 Our proposed draft recommendations for this area are for two three-councillor wards of Tile Hill & Canley and Wainbody with electoral variances of 1% and -7% by 2029, respectively.

Conclusions

110 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Coventry, referencing the 2023 and 2029

electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2023	2029
Number of councillors	54	54
Number of electoral wards	18	18
Average number of electors per councillor	4,333	4,616
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Draft recommendations

Coventry City Council should be made up of 54 councillors serving 18 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

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

Parish electoral arrangements

111 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.

112 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, Coventry City 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.

113 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 Allesley.

114 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Allesley parish. The Eastern Green SUE will contain sufficient electors by the next Allesley Parish Council election that is entitled to six parish councillors. We are interested to hear the views of interested parties in this area on how they think the parish council should be constituted.

Draft recommendations

Allesley Parish Council should comprise eight councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Allesley	2
Eastern Green	6

Have your say

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

116 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you do not think our recommendations are right for Coventry, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

117 Our website is the best way to keep up to date with progress on the review and to have your say www.lgbce.org.uk

118 Each review has its own page with details of the timetable for the review, information about its different stages and interactive mapping.

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

Review Officer (Coventry)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
PO Box 133
Blyth
NE24 9FE

120 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Coventry City Council which delivers:

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

121 A good pattern of wards should:

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

122 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of electors as elsewhere in Coventry?

123 Community identity:

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

124 Effective local government:

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

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

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

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

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

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Coventry in 2026.

Equalities

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

Appendices

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Coventry City Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bablake	3	11,044	3,681	-15%	14,195	4,732	3%
2	Binley & Willenhall	3	13,176	4,392	1%	13,709	4,570	-1%
3	Cheylesmore	3	12,512	4,171	-4%	12,791	4,264	-8%
4	Earlsdon	3	12,410	4,137	-5%	12,613	4,204	-9%
5	Foleshill	3	13,464	4,488	4%	14,077	4,692	2%
6	Henley	3	13,926	4,642	7%	14,581	4,860	5%
7	Holbrooks	3	12,597	4,199	-3%	13,646	4,549	-1%
8	Longford	3	14,183	4,728	9%	14,631	4,877	6%
9	Lower Stoke	3	14,030	4,677	8%	14,264	4,755	3%
10	Radford	3	14,163	4,721	9%	14,615	4,872	6%
11	Sherbourne	3	13,662	4,554	5%	14,139	4,713	2%

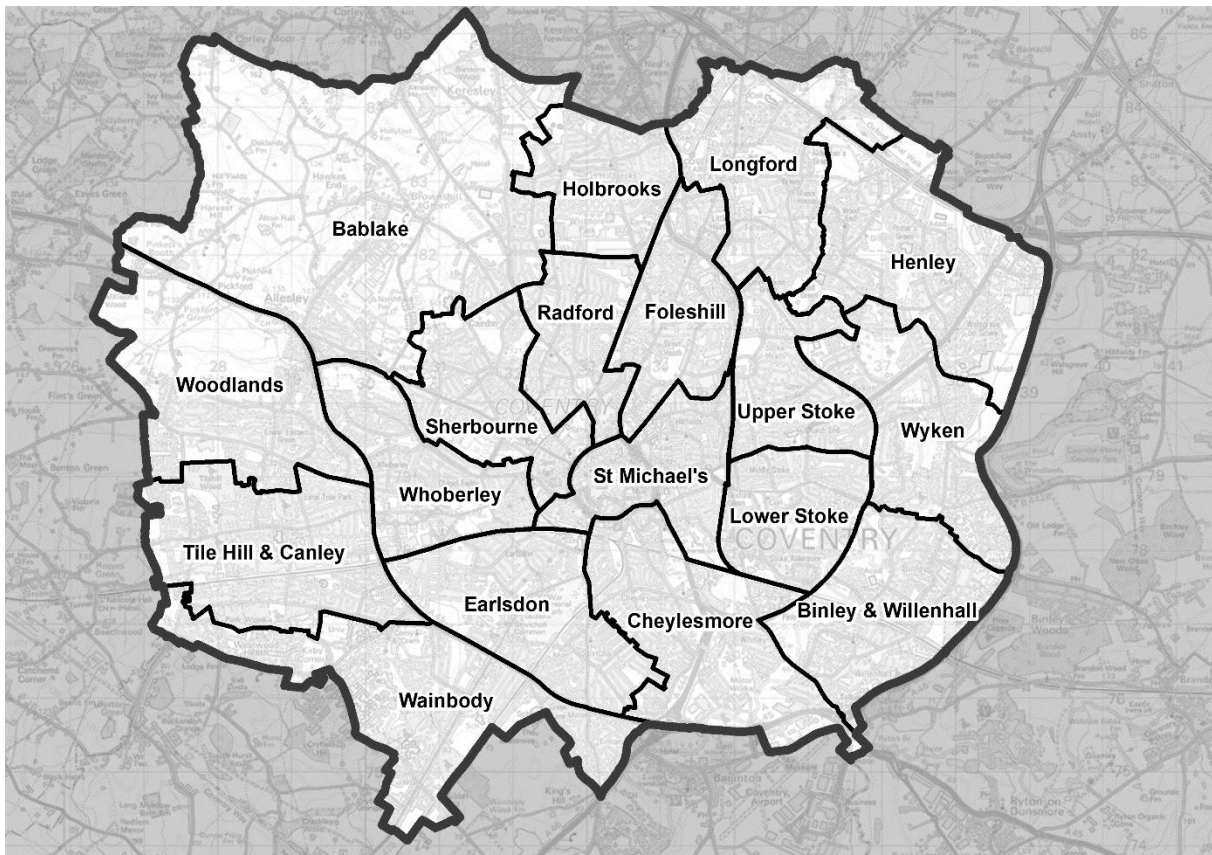
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12 St Michael's	3	11,672	3,891	-10%	13,153	4,384	-5%
13 Tile Hill & Canley	3	13,747	4,582	6%	14,014	4,671	1%
14 Upper Stoke	3	14,666	4,889	13%	14,927	4,976	8%
15 Wainbody	3	10,165	3,388	-22%	12,922	4,307	-7%
16 Whoberley	3	12,744	4,248	-2%	12,978	4,326	-6%
17 Woodlands	3	12,289	4,096	-5%	14,271	4,757	3%
18 Wyken	3	13,513	4,504	4%	13,724	4,575	-1%
Totals	54	233,963	–	–	249,249	–	–
Averages	–	–	4,333	–	–	4,616	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Coventry City 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 city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower-than-average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



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

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/coventry

Local Authority

- Coventry City Council

Political Groups

- Coventry Conservative Federation and Coventry Conservatives Group
- Coventry Labour Party
- Coventry Green Party
- Coventry Citizens Party

Councillors

- Councillor E. Ruane (Coventry City Council)
- Councillor D. Welsh (Coventry City Council)

Members of Parliament

- Colleen Fletcher MP (Coventry North East)
- Taiwo Owatemi MP (Coventry North West)
- Zarah Sultana MP (Coventry South)

Local Organisations

- Coventry Peace Orchard

Local Residents

- 33 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative, and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral 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. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
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 can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative, and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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

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

Telephone: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Online: www.lgbce.org.uk

www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Twitter: @LGBCE