

New electoral arrangements for Walsall Council Draft Recommendations

January 2024

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Walsall Council

Electoral review

January 2024

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A note on our mapping:

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

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

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

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- Ailsa Irvine (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 further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Walsall?

7 We are conducting a review of Walsall 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 Walsall 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 Walsall.

Our proposals for Walsall

9 Walsall should be represented by 60 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Walsall should have 20 wards, the same number as there are now.

11 The boundaries of 13 wards should change; seven 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 and which other communities are in that ward. Your ward name may also change.

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

Have your say

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

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 30 January to 8 April 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 8 April 2024 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 23 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 Walsall. We then held a period of consultation with the public on warding patterns for Walsall. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
15 August 2023	Number of councillors decided
22 August 2023	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
30 October 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
30 January 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
8 April 2024	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
2 July 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 Walsall	200,210	225,019
Number of councillors	60	60
Average number of electors per councillor	3,337	3,750

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 Walsall are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

23 Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP (Walsall South) questioned our definition of good electoral equality, noting that the Boundary Commission for England, which recommends parliamentary constituency boundaries, used a 5% deviation from the mean electorate size as a maximum limit. Ms Vaz argued wards that are forecast electoral variances up to $\pm 10\%$ vary by 20% of the mean, and 'could not possibly be described as having good electoral equality'. While we note the observation made by Ms Vaz, we are not legally obliged to adhere to a 5% deviation from the average, as per the Boundary Commission for England. Our statutory obligation is to ensure that the ratio of local government electors to the number of councillors elected is 'as nearly as possible' equitable five years after the publication of the recommendations. Furthermore, we balance this with our two other statutory criteria of ensuring wards reflect community identities and interests and provide for effective and convenient local government. We consider that our definition of 'good electoral equality' allows us to create wards that better align with our statutory guidelines, as it provides us with increased flexibility to reflect all three of our statutory criteria.

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.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

25 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 12%.

26 Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP and a local resident noted wards which are forecast to be over- or under-represented appeared to have a correlation with political representation. However, we are content that the methodology used by the Council to produce the electorate forecast is underpinned by sound evidence and that these observations appear to be coincidental. We do nonetheless agree with Ms Vaz and the local resident that those wards forecast to have electoral inequality will require modifications to minimise these variances.

27 We are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations.

Number of councillors

28 Walsall Council currently has 60 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.

29 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 60 councillors.

30 Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP pointed out that the Council's use of election by thirds 'reduces the flexibility of the process and effectively prohibits the use of wards with differing numbers of councillors, which can often be a solution to under and over representation in wards'. However, for a local authority that elect by thirds (meaning that it has elections in three out of every four years) there is a presumption in legislation⁵ that it be served by a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. We must therefore aim to deliver a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards for Walsall. However, we recognise that this consideration must not override our other statutory criteria – we will not recommend a uniform pattern of three councillors per ward if, in

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

our assessment or based on evidence provided, such a pattern conflicts with our other statutory obligations.

31 We received one submission about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. Ms Vaz supported the retention of 60 councillors for the authority.

Ward boundaries consultation

32 We received 26 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These did not include any detailed borough-wide proposals. We received representations from Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP, nine borough councillors and 16 local residents.

33 Our draft recommendations are based upon the local evidence that we did receive, which provided us with good evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas, we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria, so we identified alternative boundaries.

34 We also visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Walsall helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

35 Ms Vaz stated that she had seen ‘very little publicity for the consultation’ and was ‘not aware that every household has been contacted’. In terms of how we consult during electoral reviews, we do not contact each individual household within a local authority under review. However, for all reviews we undertake, we obtain from the Council a key list of stakeholders across the area and will contact them via e-mail or letter. We supply the local authority with posters and other promotional material to place in council buildings and information points. We issue press releases at each stage of a review to local media and local authorities so they can help us publicise reviews. We also publicise our reviews on social media.

Draft recommendations

36 Our draft recommendations are for 20 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.

37 The tables and maps on pages 9–20 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Walsall. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁶ criteria of:

⁶ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

38 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 29 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

Darlaston and Willenhall



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Bentley & Darlaston North	3	-4%
Darlaston South	3	9%
New Invention	3	-9%
Short Heath	3	1%
Willenhall	3	6%

Bentley & Darlaston North and Darlaston South

40 Both of these wards are projected to maintain good levels of electoral equality by 2029. Consequently, we propose no alterations to either ward and recommend the retention of both in our draft recommendations.

41 A local resident requested that Darlaston South ward remain within Walsall borough for the purpose of electing borough councillors. This review is solely concerned with the internal ward boundaries of Walsall Council and we cannot propose any modifications to the external borough boundary as part of this review.

New Invention

42 We received a single submission pertaining to the current Willenhall North ward. Councillor Hicken presented us with compelling evidence emphasising the unique character of the New Invention community, thereby proposing that we rename the ward New Invention to recognise its distinct nature. We were persuaded by the evidence received and have renamed the existing Willenhall North ward as New Invention as part of our draft recommendations. We welcome input on this name change, noting that Councillor Hicken also expressed an interest in hearing feedback from local residents on this proposed ward name.

43 A local resident suggested that the ward be enlarged, by moving the boundary southwards to follow the entirety of the Wyrley & Essington Canal. We decided not to adopt this proposal as we were concerned, based on our visit to the area, that this would move a substantial part of the Short Heath community from the existing Short Heath ward. In particular, we were concerned that it would result in the transfer of facilities such as the Short Heath Clinic and Short Heath Dental Practice into adjoining wards. We concluded that this proposal would not be reflective of community identities and interests, based on the evidence received so far during the review.

44 We therefore propose no changes to the boundaries of this ward, with our proposed New Invention ward forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

45 A local resident from the Coppice Farm area expressed a preference for the area to move into Wolverhampton Council. However, as previously outlined, this review is solely concerned with the internal ward boundaries of Walsall Council and we cannot propose any modifications to the borough boundary as part of this review.

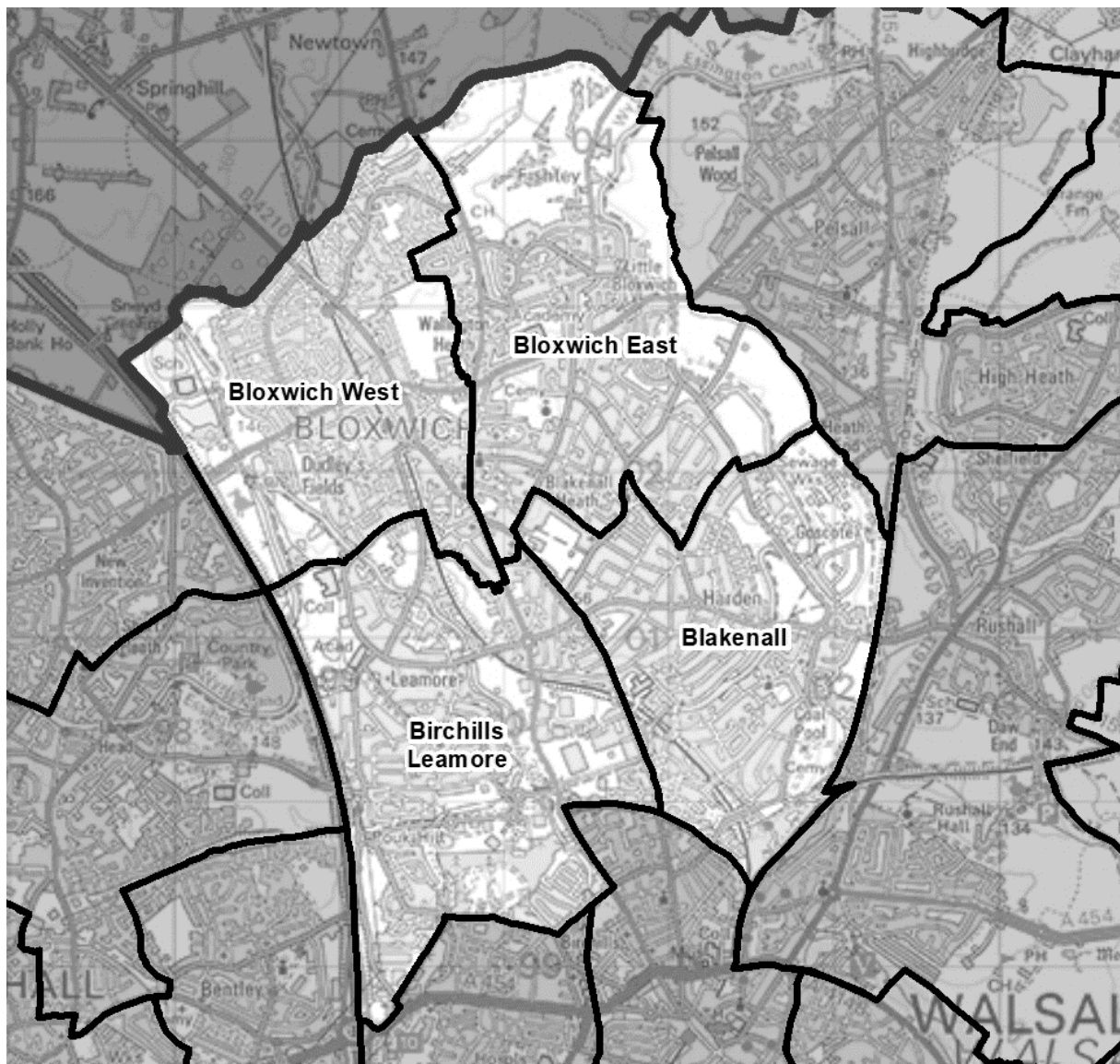
Short Heath and Willenhall

46 We received three submissions in relation to the existing Short Heath and Willenhall South wards. Councillor Garcha and Councillor Whitehouse both provided us with strong community evidence with regard to the distinct identity of the Short Heath community, also outlining the natural boundaries of the community.

47 However, the current Short Heath ward is forecast to be over-represented by 2029. Consequently, we must expand the ward to ensure good electoral equality for the ward. We have therefore decided to adopt a suggestion submitted by a local resident to incorporate part of the current Willenhall South ward, which would in turn remedy the projected under-representation of that ward. This has been caused by a considerable level of anticipated residential development in Willenhall town. This proposal involves extending the current Short Heath boundary southwards towards the junction of Clarkes Lane, Walsall Road and Wolverhampton Road. We examined this proposal on our visit to Walsall and are content that it will reflect community identities. This modification also ensures good electoral equality for both wards. We nonetheless welcome comments on this decision during the current consultation.

48 Given our decision to rename our Willenhall North ward to New Invention, we propose removing the 'South' suffix from Willenhall South ward.

Birchills Leamore, Blakenall and Bloxwich



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Birchills Leamore	3	-10%
Blakenall	3	0%
Bloxwich East	3	-9%
Bloxwich West	3	-2%

Birchills Leamore

49 We received one submission with regard to this ward, from Councillor Jukes. They requested that the ward be renamed as Beechdale, Birchills & Leamore, citing local resident support. We were not persuaded to adopt this ward name change as we consider the community evidence provided to be insufficient. Nevertheless, we encourage the submission of additional evidence to help us assess whether a

change in ward name would more accurately represent local community identities and interests.

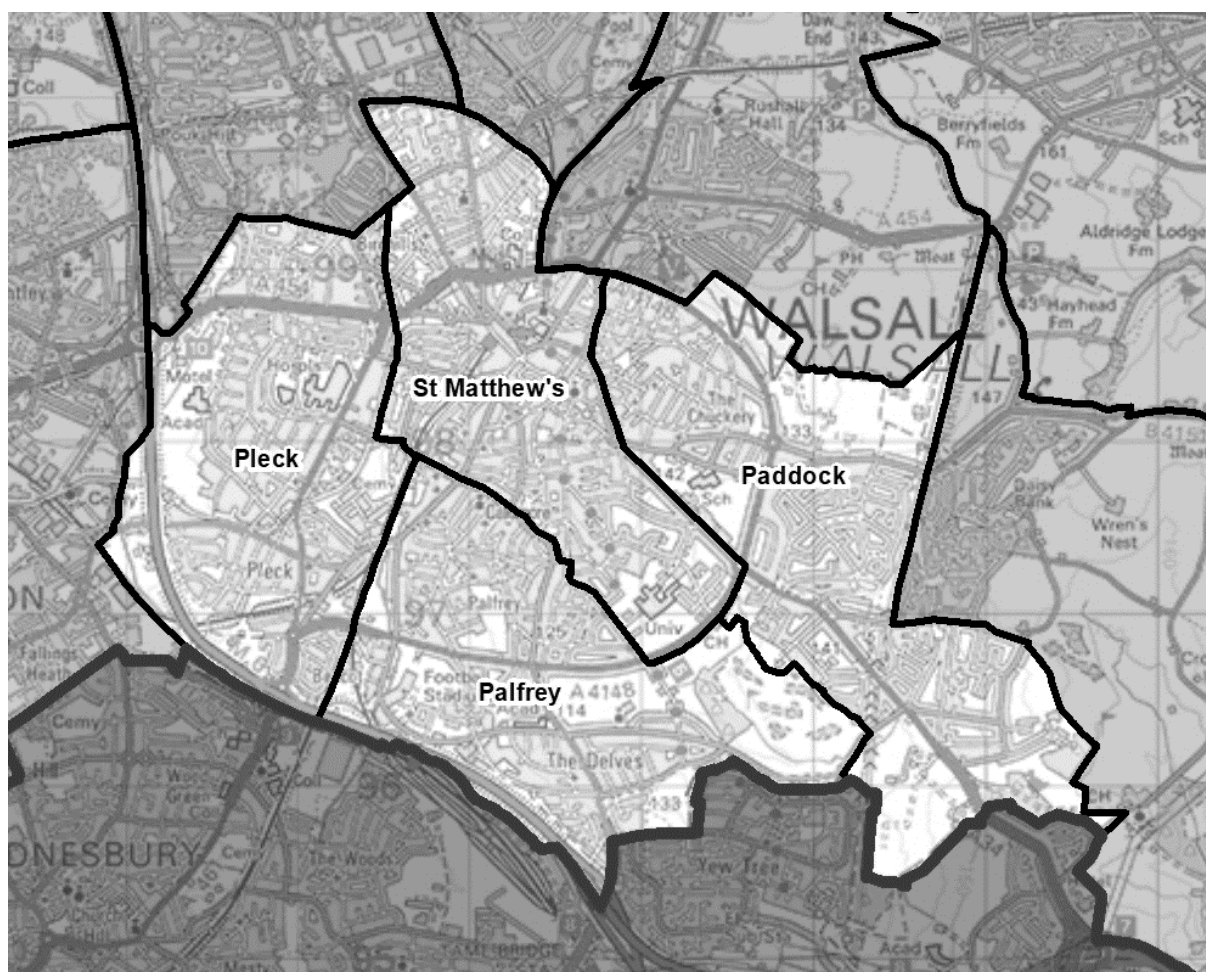
50 As detailed in the St Matthew's section, we have transferred the southernmost part of the existing Birchills Leamore ward into our St Matthew's ward so that the boundary follows the former Walsall and Wolverhampton railway line. This change ensures good electoral equality across wards and we consider the proposed boundary to be clear and identifiable.

Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Bloxwich West

51 The three submissions we received in response to these wards all proposed the same modifications. Councillor Flint, Councillor C. Statham and Councillor M. Statham proposed that we transfer Irvine Road, Nursery Road, Somerfield Road, Reeves Street, Stuart Street and Stokes Street from Bloxwich East ward to Bloxwich West ward. It was also proposed that all the roads to the west of Stafford Road, from The Bell public house to the Turnberry estate junction, be transferred from Bloxwich West to Bloxwich East ward. They also proposed that Henley Close and the new residential development at the former Elkington Works and Cerro EMS site move from the current Blakenall ward to Bloxwich East ward.

52 Having carefully considered the evidence received, we have decided to adopt these proposed modifications as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that these adjustments use clearly defined boundaries and reflect community identity, based on the evidence received. These wards will also have good electoral equality, with our Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Bloxwich West wards forecast to have electoral variances of 0%, -9% and -2%, respectively, by 2029.

Walsall town



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Paddock	3	-4%
Palfrey	3	6%
Pleck	3	5%
St Matthew's	3	-1%

Paddock

53 One submission was received in relation to Paddock ward from a local resident, who provided us with community-based evidence about the Chuckery area. They stated that the Chuckery is bounded by Broadway North, Lower Rushall Street, Sutton Road and Ablewell Street/Springhill Road, and is therefore currently divided between Paddock and St Matthew's wards. They stated that the division of the community across wards is harmful to the Chuckery's community identity and also causes problems for councillors when dealing with local issues.

54 We have been persuaded by the evidence received and have decided to place the entirety of the Chuckery into Paddock ward. We consider that uniting the Chuckery area into a single ward will better reflect community identities. This

change, in our view, will also result in our Paddock ward following boundaries that are clearer and more identifiable.

55 We have also transferred the residential area with roads named after places in Cornwall from Paddock ward into Pheasey Park Farm ward. This is discussed in more detail later in this report.

Palfrey and Pleck

56 Given that both wards are projected to maintain good levels of electoral equality by 2029, we recommend retaining the current ward boundaries for these two wards as part of our draft recommendations.

St Matthew's

57 The current St Matthew's ward is forecast to be considerably under-represented by 2029, which means the ward requires a significant amount of change to ensure a good level of electoral equality. We have decided to place the area north of the Walsall Ring Road, which contains Hatherton Lake and the Arboretum, in our Rushall-Shelfield ward. This decision aligns with a submission made by a local resident who requested that this area be transferred from the predominantly town-centre focused St Matthew's ward.

58 We have also transferred the area bounded by Broadway North, Lower Rushall Street, Ablewell Street/Springhill Road, Eldon Street, Selborne Street, Tantarra Street and Charlottle Street from the current St Matthew's ward to our proposed Paddock ward. As discussed earlier, this is to ensure that the Chuckery is placed entirely within a single ward.

59 Finally, we propose including the southernmost parts of the existing Blakenall and Birchills Leamore wards in our recommended St Matthew's ward so that its boundary follows the former Walsall and Wolverhampton railway line. We determined from our visit that electors residing below the former railway line have good links to the town centre. These changes in totality ensure that our proposed St Matthew's ward will have good electoral equality in 2029. We are content that the ward will also reflect local communities and follow identifiable boundaries.

Pelsall and Rushall-Shelfield



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Pelsall	3	7%
Rushall-Shelfield	3	5%

Pelsall

60 To address the anticipated over-representation of the current Pelsall ward, Councillor Lee and Councillor Perry proposed that we extend the ward to incorporate the OF polling district area, which would position the boundary along Broad Lane and behind the properties on the south side of Leighs Road. They argued that this modification would be appropriate as this area was previously part of Pelsall ward before the last electoral review of Walsall in 2003. However, we were concerned that the boundary along Broad Lane was not particularly identifiable. Therefore, we have adopted a local resident's suggestion to place the boundary further eastwards, to follow the former Pelsall and Hatherton-Rushall ward boundary along part of Lichfield Road and the rear of Leighs Road. We consider this boundary to be more easily

identifiable and it will ensure that our Pelsall ward will have good electoral equality by 2029.

Rushall-Shelfield

61 The consequence of extending Pelsall ward to follow Lichfield Road and the rear of Leighs Road means we must propose a significantly modified Rushall-Shelfield ward to ensure good electoral equality. We have therefore transferred the area north of the Walsall Ring Road, which contains Hatherton Lake and the Arboretum, from St Matthew's ward to our proposed Rushall-Shelfield ward. We consider that this area has good links with Rushall and Shelfield. Additionally, in the absence of further evidence in relation to this area, we also note that these areas were previously linked in a Hatherton-Rushall ward before the previous electoral review.

62 We are content that this ward adequately reflects our statutory criteria. However, we invite feedback on the ward's boundaries and its proposed name during the current consultation period.

Aldridge, Brownhills and Streetly



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Aldridge Central & South	3	1%
Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	3	-2%
Brownhills	3	-3%
Pheasey Park Farm	3	-1%
Streetly	3	6%

Aldridge Central & South and Streetly

63 While no submissions were received during the consultation with regard to these two wards, we propose to transfer electors residing on Little Hardwick Road and its adjacent streets, as well as those residing on Chester Road and its adjacent streets (north of the junction with Little Hardwick Road and Hardwick Road), from the current Aldridge Central & South ward to our proposed Streetly ward. We determined from our visit to Walsall that electors in this area are more likely to share closer ties with communities in Streetly ward than those in Aldridge Central & South ward.

Aldridge North & Walsall Wood

64 A local resident requested that the area around Greenwood Road remain in Aldridge North & Walsall Wood ward. This ward is forecast to have a good level of electoral equality and we are content that it adequately reflects our statutory criteria. We therefore recommend the retention of the existing Aldridge North & Walsall Wood ward.

Brownhills

65 The current Brownhills ward is anticipated to maintain a good level of electoral equality by 2029. We therefore recommend retaining the current ward as part of our draft recommendations.

Pheasey Park Farm

66 We received a single submission regarding Pheasey Park Farm ward from a local resident. Their suggestion was to transfer the 'Orchard Hills' area from Pheasey Park Farm ward to Paddock ward, on the basis that residents in Orchard Hills are more inclined to use facilities and amenities in Paddock ward. They further argued that the Orchard Hills and Pheasey areas lack shared community identities and interests, mainly due to the geographical separation caused by the Barr Beacon Green Belt.

67 We carefully considered the evidence received. However, the current Pheasey Park Farm ward is forecast to be over-represented by 2029, with an anticipated electoral variance of -16%. Pheasey Park Farm ward therefore requires an increase in electors, rather than a decrease, to ensure a good level of electoral equality. Moving the Orchard Hills area from this ward would increase the electoral variance of a three-councillor Pheasey Park Farm ward to -30%, which we consider to be unacceptably high.

68 The local resident suggested that Pheasey Park Farm ward be represented by two councillors, rather than three, to solve this significant level of electoral inequality. They argued that Paddock ward could then be represented by four councillors. However, as stated in paragraph 30, there is a presumption in legislation that the Council have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. In this case, we consider that the evidence received was not strong enough for us to deviate from this presumption. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

69 Therefore, to ensure that the Council retains a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards, while securing good electoral equality for Pheasey Park Farm ward, we propose to extend the ward by incorporating the residential area comprised of roads named after places in Cornwall. This change will result in a three-councillor Pheasey Park Farm ward with a forecast electoral variance of -1% by 2029.

Conclusions

70 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Walsall, 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	60	60
Number of electoral wards	20	20
Average number of electors per councillor	3,337	3,750
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	0	0

Draft recommendations

Walsall Council should be made up of 60 councillors serving 20 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

You can also view our draft recommendations for Walsall on our interactive maps at www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/walsall

Have your say

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

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

73 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

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

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

Review Officer (Walsall)
LGBCE
PO Box 133
Blyth
NE24 9FE

76 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Walsall 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.

77 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.

78 Electoral equality:

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

79 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?

80 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?

81 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.

82 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.

83 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.

84 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 Walsall Council in 2026.

Equalities

85 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 Walsall 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	Aldridge Central & South	3	10,408	3,469	4%	11,364	3,788	1%
2	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	3	10,076	3,359	1%	11,000	3,667	-2%
3	Bentley & Darlaston North	3	9,720	3,240	-3%	10,841	3,614	-4%
4	Birchills Leamore	3	8,804	2,935	-12%	10,116	3,372	-10%
5	Blakenall	3	9,335	3,112	-7%	11,233	3,744	0%
6	Bloxwich East	3	9,147	3,049	-9%	10,191	3,397	-9%
7	Bloxwich West	3	9,825	3,275	-2%	10,990	3,663	-2%
8	Brownhills	3	9,727	3,242	-3%	10,891	3,630	-3%
9	Darlaston South	3	10,888	3,629	9%	12,271	4,090	9%
10	New Invention	3	9,236	3,079	-8%	10,258	3,419	-9%
11	Paddock	3	9,605	3,202	-4%	10,850	3,617	-4%
12	Palfrey	3	11,042	3,681	10%	11,905	3,968	6%

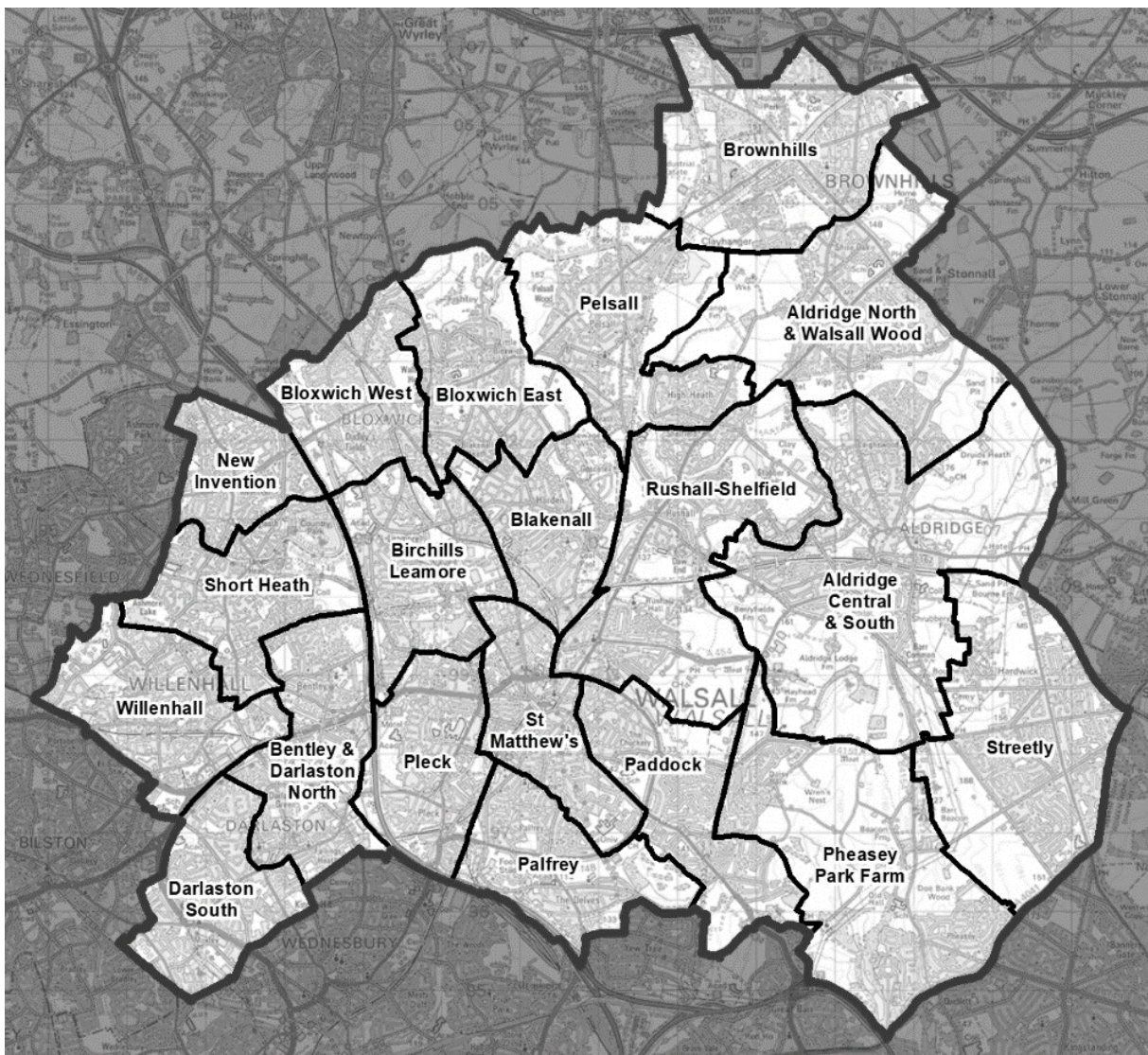
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Pelsall	3	11,105	3,702	11%	12,085	4,028	7%
14 Pheasey Park Farm	3	10,310	3,437	3%	11,155	3,718	-1%
15 Pleck	3	10,367	3,456	4%	11,855	3,952	5%
16 Rushall-Shelfield	3	10,728	3,576	7%	11,787	3,929	5%
17 Short Heath	3	10,372	3,457	4%	11,330	3,777	1%
18 St Matthews	3	8,433	2,811	-16%	11,091	3,697	-1%
19 Streetly	3	10,998	3,666	10%	11,892	3,964	6%
20 Willenhall	3	10,084	3,361	1%	11,914	3,971	6%
Totals	60	200,210	–	–	225,019	–	–
Averages	–	–	3,337	–	–	3,750	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Walsall 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 Walsall. 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/walsall

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

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

Councillors

- Councillor G. Flint (Walsall Council)
- Councillor A. Garcha (Walsall Council)
- Councillor A. Hicken (Walsall Council)
- Councillor T. Jukes (Walsall Council)
- Councillor E. Lee (Walsall Council)
- Councillor G. Perry (Walsall Council)
- Councillor C. Statham (Walsall Council)
- Councillor M. Statham (Walsall Council)
- Councillor J. Whitehouse (Walsall Council)

Members of Parliament

- Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP (Walsall South)

Local Residents

- 16 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

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

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A note on our mapping:

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

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.

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