

New electoral arrangements for Canterbury City Council Draft Recommendations

February 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 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 Canterbury?

7 We are conducting a review of Canterbury City Council ('the Council') as 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 Canterbury 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 Canterbury

9 Canterbury should be represented by 40 councillors, one more than there are now.

10 Canterbury should have 23 wards, two more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of 15 existing wards should change; six 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 Canterbury City Council 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

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 27 February 2024 to 6 May 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 6 May 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 Canterbury. 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
19 September 2023	Number of councillors decided
26 September 2023	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
4 December 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
27 February 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
6 May 2024	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
30 July 2024	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

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 Canterbury	108,398	124,256
Number of councillors	40	40
Average number of electors per councillor	2,710	3,106

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 but one of our proposed wards for Canterbury 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 15% 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.

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

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

26 The Liberal Democrats queried why the number of (forecast) electors was used rather than the number of residents, because there were areas with a high number of unregistered residents. The need to have regard for the forecast electorate is set out in legislation. This is why we are unable to take into account the number of residents or adult population.

Number of councillors

27 Canterbury City Council currently has 39 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 39 councillors: for example, 39 one-councillor wards, 13 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

29 Canterbury Labour Party & City Labour Group ('Labour') proposed a 40-councillor warding pattern. We also received one submission expressing support for the retention of the same number of councillors for the local authority. We did not receive any other comments explicitly on council size.

30 However, in order to adopt locally developed schemes with strong boundaries, based on the evidence we received, our draft recommendations are for a council size of 40 – one more than we announced at the beginning of the consultation. We consider this will allow us to recommend a warding pattern that will reflect the statutory criteria and still allow the Council to carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

Ward boundaries consultation

31 We received 38 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two city-wide proposals from Canterbury & Coastal Liberal Democrats ('Liberal Democrats') and Labour. We also received two partial schemes from the Council's Conservative Group ('Conservative Group') and the Canterbury Conservatives.

32 The city-wide schemes provided a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Canterbury City Council.

33 The Conservative Group proposed eight wards in the northeast of the local authority area while Canterbury Conservatives proposed five wards in the Canterbury city area. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for wards arrangements in particular areas of the local authority area.

34 We carefully considered the proposals received and although we did not receive much evidence in terms of community interests and interactions, we were of the view that local authority area-wide proposed patterns of wards resulted in good

levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

35 One resident expressed the view that there should be no single-councillor wards. However, as Canterbury City Council holds all-out elections every four years, it can have a mix of different size wards including single-councillor wards.

36 Our draft recommendations are based on Labour's proposals in the northeast and the Liberal Democrats' proposals in the rest of the authority area as we considered that these wards would best reflect the statutory criteria that we must consider when making our recommendations.

37 Our 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 best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

Draft recommendations

38 Our draft recommendations are for three three-councillor wards, 11 two-councillor wards and nine one-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.

39 The tables and maps on pages 8–22 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Canterbury. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

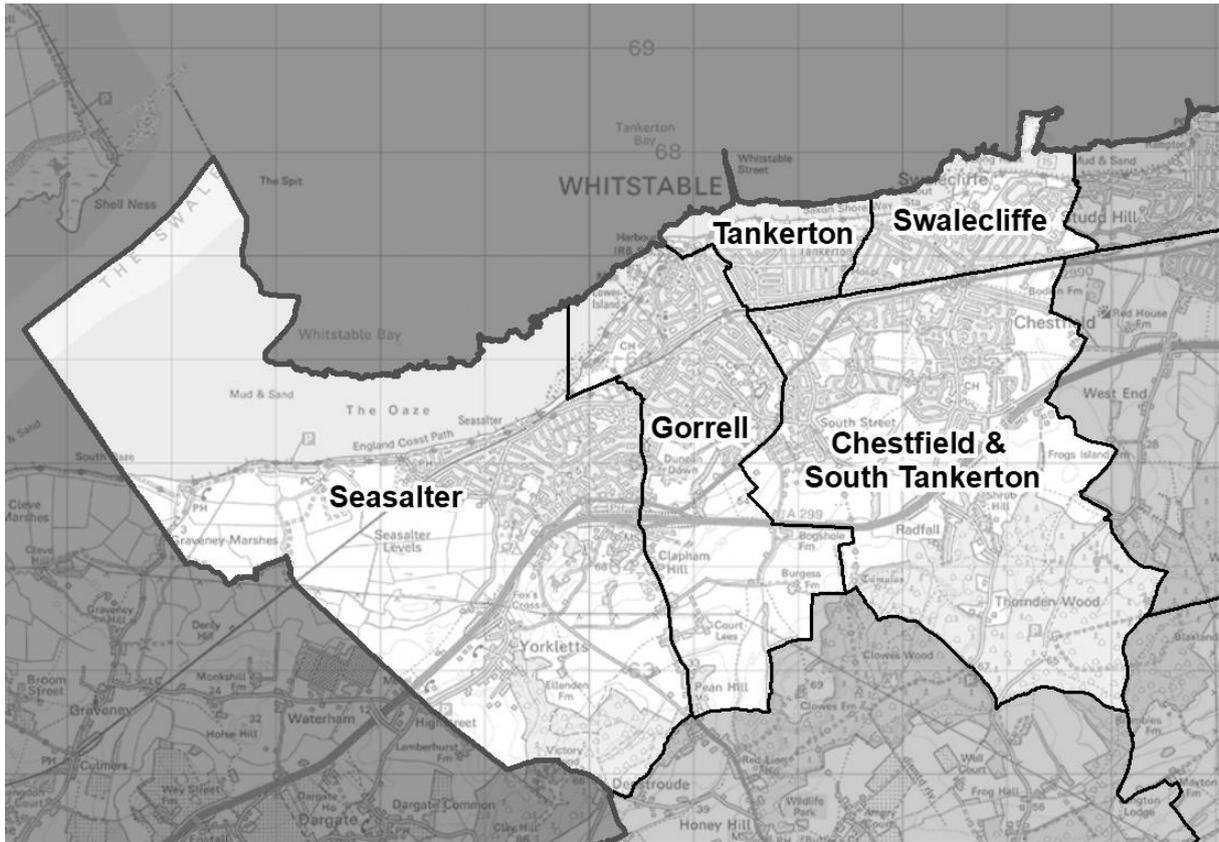
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

40 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 31 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

Northwest

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Chestfield & South Tankerton	2	1%
Gorrell	3	-5%
Seasalter	2	7%
Swalecliffe	1	8%
Tankerton	1	4%

Chestfield & South Tankerton, Gorrell, Swalecliffe and Tankerton

42 We received submissions from Labour, the Liberal Democrats and residents about this area.

43 Labour proposed reconfiguring the wards in this area. Under the Labour proposal, Swalecliffe and Tankerton wards are merged into a two-councillor ward. It stated that this area is a single continuous area of residential housing.

44 The proposal created three wards in place of the existing Chestfield and Gorrell wards. Its Chestfield ward was coterminous with Chestfield parish. This meant that the area between Chestfield parish and the A2990 was excluded from this ward and included in a new Gorrell Valley ward together with the southern part of the existing Gorrell ward. Its proposed Harbour ward was comprised of the northern part of the existing Gorrell ward.

45 The Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, proposed retaining the existing wards in the area.

46 A resident was of the view that Tankerton ward should include the South Tankerton area because it is considered part of Tankerton. This was supported by another resident who suggested that the A2990 (Thanet Way) should be the southern boundary of this ward. We considered doing this but it produced a ward forecast to have 30% more electors than the average for Canterbury City Council, by 2029. Due to the poor electoral equality, we were not persuaded to adopt this proposal.

47 On careful consideration we note that the western boundary of Chestfield parish is defaced, which means that using this as a boundary will split some properties across different city wards and we were not persuaded to use it as a boundary, as proposed by Labour.

48 Instead, we note that the existing boundary between Chestfield and Gorrell wards along parts of Northwood Road, Thanet Way and Crab and Winkle Way is stronger and more identifiable. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on the Liberal Democrats' proposal. We have made one modification by moving the boundary that runs behind properties on the east side of Clare Road to the west, so that it is behind the properties on the east side of Station Road. Residents on Clare Road appear to have more direct access to the east through Atholl Road, and are separated from those to the west by a strip of 'Woodland'. We consider that they most likely look to the east. We welcome comments on this.

49 We note that the Liberal Democrats have renamed Chestfield ward, Chestfield & South Tankerton. We consider this appropriate as the ward includes the area we understand is known as South Tankerton, and we have adopted this name as part of our draft recommendations.

50 In the absence of strong community evidence, we have not been persuaded at this time to create a two-councillor Tankerton & Swalecliffe ward in place of the two single-councillor wards that currently exist. We welcome further community evidence on whether or not a two-councillor ward would better reflect communities in this area.

51 Chestfield & South Tankerton, Gorrell, Swalecliffe and Tankerton wards are all forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

52 A member of the public suggested that these wards, together with Seasalter ward, should be merged to form a single ward. Such a ward would be entitled to eight or nine councillors. It is our view that wards with that many councillors do not aid effective and convenient local government, potentially diluting the accountability of councillors to the electorate. Therefore, we do not create wards with more than three councillors.

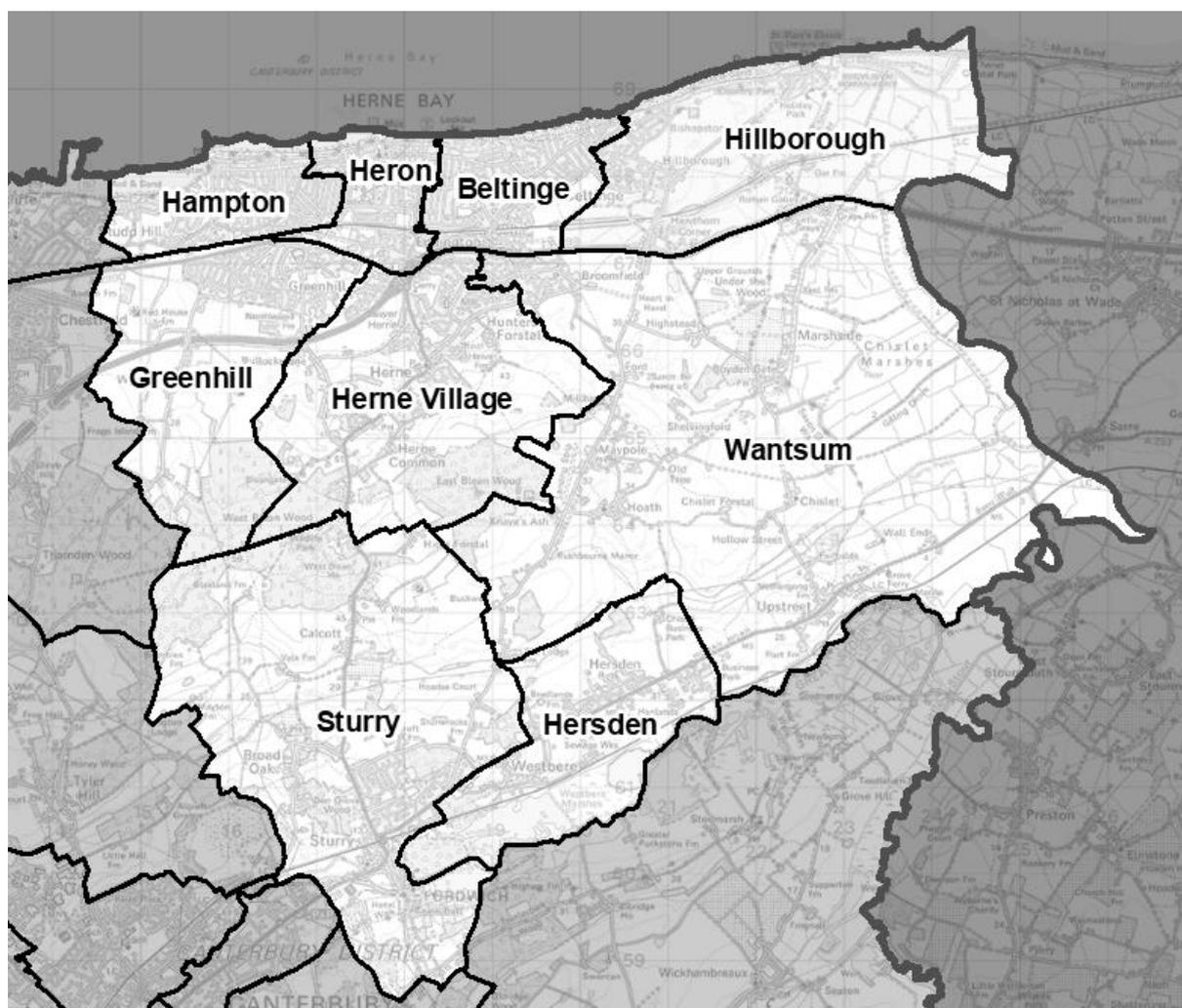
Seasalter

53 The only submissions we received for Seasalter ward were from Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Both proposed the retention of the boundaries of the existing ward.

54 We note that this ward is projected to maintain good levels of electoral equality by 2029. Consequently, we propose no alterations to the ward, and are adopting it as part of our draft recommendations.

55 Seasalter ward is forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Northeast, Hersden and Sturry



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Beltinge	2	4%
Greenhill	2	-11%
Hampton	2	6%
Herne Village	2	-10%
Heron	2	0%
Hersden	1	-3%
Hillborough	1	-5%
Sturry	2	-5%
Wantsum	1	6%

56 We received three proposals for this area, from the Conservative Group, Labour and the Liberal Democrats. We also received comments from some residents.

57 We noted that a number of the Conservative Group's proposed wards had poor electoral equality. For example, its proposed Beltinge, Island Road and Reculver

wards were forecast to have 16%, 16% and 18% more electors, respectively, than the average for the Council area, by 2029. Its Greenhill & Bullockstone and Herne Bay Central wards were also forecast to have 16% and 12% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury. Due to the poor level of electoral equality, we were not persuaded to adopt these proposals.

58 A resident stated that there should be no 'multi-seat' wards in the 'Herne' area. However, they did not provide any community evidence to support this view, or propose any boundaries. Furthermore, as Canterbury has all-out elections, it is able to have a mixed pattern of one-, two- or three-councillor wards.

59 Identifying wards for most of this area was challenging. Labour and the Liberal Democrats proposed very different boundaries in most of this northeastern part of Canterbury City Council area. Therefore, it was not possible to adopt wards proposed by Labour in one area, and the Liberal Democrats in the other areas. We have adopted Labour's proposals here, for reasons explained below, but welcome comments on how these can be improved to provide a better reflection of communities and identifiable boundaries in this area.

Beltinge and Hillborough

60 The area-wide comments were the only ones we received for this area.

61 Labour proposed retaining the existing Beltinge ward. It proposed including Reculver village in a new Hillborough ward together with Bishopstone and Hillborough communities.

62 The Liberal Democrats proposed including Reculver village with Herne & Broomfield and Hoath parishes. Their proposed Beltinge ward included Bishopstone. They expressed the view that this is an urban extension of Beltinge and therefore better included in this ward.

63 On careful consideration we note that while the Liberal Democrats' proposal unites Bishopstone with Beltinge, the southeastern boundary for the proposed ward runs right through a development, splitting it across two different wards. We considered this undesirable. Uniting the development in Beltinge ward produces a ward forecast to have at least 21% more electors than the average for Canterbury City Council. We were not persuaded to create a ward with such poor electoral equality; therefore, we did not do this.

64 We also note that under the Liberal Democrats' proposal, Reculver village is included in ward with Herne & Broomfield and Hoath parishes. This leaves Reculver village isolated from their closest neighbours in Bishopstone and we were not persuaded that it reflected the local community in this area. The boundary on the northern end of Reculver Lane also isolates around two dozen properties from their closest neighbours.

65 We have therefore adopted Labour’s proposals for Beltinge and Hillborough wards as part of our draft recommendations. Both wards are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029. Beltinge ward has two councillors. Hillborough is a single-councillor ward.

Greenhill

66 In addition to the area-wide proposals, we received comments from a resident.

67 Labour’s proposed Greenhill and the Liberal Democrats’ Greenhill & Eddington were very similar. They differed in that the Liberal Democrats continued the use of the railway line as a boundary and included Eddington in its proposals for this ward. Labour moved the boundary on to Thanet Way (A2990) at Greenhill Bridge Road junction. It placed Eddington in a ward to the north.

68 The resident questioned why the boundary between Greenhill and Heron wards currently ran along Greenhill Road (East) placing residents on either side in different wards. They suggested that the boundary be moved to Thanet Way (A2990) ‘from the roundabout to Kingfisher Court’.

69 We considered the proposals and comments carefully. Eddington appears to be a distinct community with access to both the north and south. On balance, we have concluded that Thanet Way (A2990) is a more substantial boundary than the railway line. Access to the north appears easier and avoids having to cross Thanet Way. Therefore, we have based our draft recommendations on Labour’s proposals. We note that it is in line with the resident’s suggestion.

70 Under this proposal Greenhill ward is forecast to have 11% fewer electors than the average for the local authority area. We sought to improve this by including Parkland Road and the roads off it in this ward, but this produced wards to the east which had very poor electoral equality and we were not persuaded to make this modification. We are satisfied that this 11% variance still allows us to recommend wards across the area that provide a good reflection of the statutory criteria.

71 Greenhill ward has two councillors and is forecast to have 11% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury City Council by 2029.

Hampton and Heron

72 In addition to the area-wide proposals, we received comments from two residents.

73 Labour proposed the creation of two two-councillor wards in place of the existing three-councillor Heron and single-councillor West Bay wards. It stated that its Heron ward was comprised of central Herne Bay, and made up of a single urban area of mixed housing and retail properties. It was of the view that the area to the

east and west of Grand Drive (polling districts HH1, HH6 and HWB2) are ‘a continuous community in urban Herne Bay’.

74 The Liberal Democrats proposed the retention of the existing single-councillor West Bay ward. It also proposed extending Heron ward to include an area of the existing Beltinge ward.

75 One of the residents was of the view that the existing boundaries were a reasonable reflection of activities within the Herne Bay area. However, they did not provide any community evidence to support this. The other resident advocated for an increase in the number of councillors (from three to five) representing ‘the Herne Bay area, near the station’. We presume this is referring to the existing Heron ward.

76 On the basis of the limited evidence we have received, we are adopting the proposals put forward by Labour, which unite the Hampton area in a single ward.

77 We have also adopted the names proposed by Labour, but welcome comments, with evidence, on whether West Bay ought to be included in the name of Hampton ward.

78 Hampton and Heron wards are both two-councillor wards, forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Herne Village and Wantsum

79 The area-wide proposals were the only ones we received for these wards.

80 Labour proposed a Herne Village ward comprised of Herne and those residents to the south of Hunters Forstal Road and west of Mill Lane. Its Wantsum ward was a modification of the existing Reculver ward – it excluded Reculver from it and included Broomfield and residents north of Hunters Forstal Road and east of Mill Lane. This, it felt, produced wards with good electoral equality and ‘reduced the geographical scale of the [existing] ward and thus improves community identity to some extent’.

81 The Liberal Democrats included Reculver village in a ward with Herne & Broomfield parish. They also included Hoath parish in this ward. They excluded Bishopstone and Hillborough and placed them in a ward to the west.

82 As mentioned in the section on Beltinge, we were not persuaded to include Reculver in a ward with Herne & Broomfield parish some distance away, instead of with those residents on Reculver Road. The proposed boundary along a narrow stretch of Sweechbridge Road also appears to isolate around two dozen properties from those across the road from them.

83 On the other hand, the Labour proposal splits Herne & Broomfield parish across Canterbury city wards. We considered uniting it in a single ward but it

produced a Wantsum ward to the east with very poor electoral equality. We also considered splitting it differently using Gorse Lane and Margate Road as a boundary. This also produced a ward to the east forecast to have 19% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury, by 2029.

84 After much consideration, we are adopting Labour's proposal as part of our draft recommendations. We are asking for comments about these wards and the others in this area, as we realise that any modifications here will have a knock-on effect on the entire northeastern area of the city.

85 Herne Village and Wantsum are two- and one-councillor wards, respectively. They are both forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Hersden and Sturry

86 The area-wide proposals were the only ones we received for these wards.

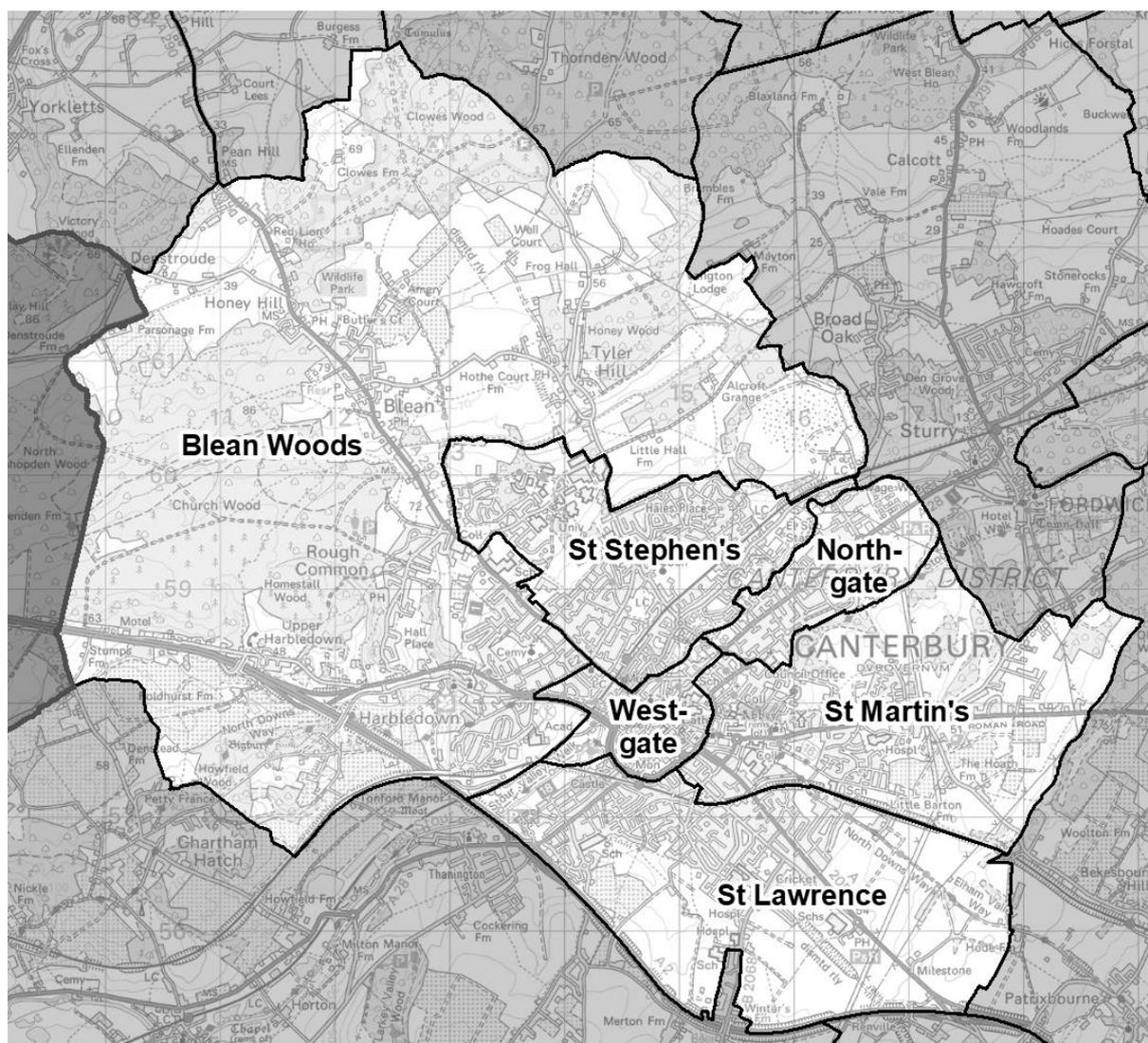
87 Labour proposed splitting the existing Sturry ward into two wards: Hersden ward coterminous with Hersden and Westbere parishes, and Sturry ward, which was comprised of Fordwich and Sturry parishes.

88 The Liberal Democrats included Hersden parish in a ward to the north with Chislet parish stating that there were shared transport issues along the A28. They placed Fordwich, Sturry and Westbere parishes in their proposed Sturry ward.

89 We considered that Hersden parish could be warded either way as residents probably look towards Sturry, but also have some shared issues with Upstreet in Chislet parish, as mentioned by the Liberal Democrats. But, because of decisions we have made elsewhere in the area, we have adopted Labour's proposals. However, we are inviting comments, with evidence, on whether the existing three-councillor ward or the Liberal Democrats' proposals better reflects communities in the area.

90 Hersden and Sturry wards are one-councillor and two-councillor wards, respectively, with both forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Canterbury and Blean



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Blean Woods	2	10%
Northgate	1	1%
St Lawrence	3	-2%
St Martin's	2	-5%
St Stephen's	2	4%
Westgate	1	1%

91 We received three proposals for the entire area, from the Canterbury Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats. We also received comments from some residents.

92 The Canterbury Conservatives' proposals include a Blean Forest ward forecast to have 29% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury by 2029. Their

proposed Wincheap ward also had poor electoral equality with a forecast variance of 33%. These are very high variances which, in order to address, we would have to make significant changes to their neighbouring proposed wards, without any supporting evidence. Therefore, we were not persuaded to adopt these wards as part of our draft recommendations.

Blean Woods and St Stephen's

93 Labour proposed a St Stephen's & The Blean ward which included the existing Blean Forest ward and part of St Stephen's ward. It acknowledged that its proposed ward was made up of a number of distinct communities, but felt that this was the best compromise. It excluded an area around Forty Acres Road from this new ward.

94 The Liberal Democrats proposed two wards in this area: Blean Forest and St Stephen's. Their proposals expand the existing St Stephen's ward, which includes Forty Acres Road. They explained that the existing ward has a high level of student accommodation, and that it made sense to include the University of Kent in that ward. The ward also includes an area between North Lane/St Stephen's Road and the railway line.

95 Their Blean Forest ward was comprised of the whole of Harbledown & Rough Common parish, together with Blean and Hackington parishes and part of Chartham ward, north of the railway line. They also extend the area of urban Canterbury that is included in this ward.

96 Two residents felt that the existing St Stephen's ward was well established, coherent and had good community identity. They pointed to shared amenities including shops, two resident associations and open spaces, in particular Beverley Meadow and St Stephen's Green, where they stated that community celebrations were organised for the Platinum Jubilee and Coronation. Another resident was of the view that St Stephen's should have at least two councillors. One resident asked why Blean Forest has three councillors when St Stephen's ward had only two.

97 Councillor Smith and two residents advocated for the inclusion of the whole of Harbledown & Rough Common parish in Blean Forest ward, on community identity and effective and convenient local government grounds, instead of being split across Blean Forest and Chartham & Stone Street ward, as it currently is. Councillor Smith acknowledged that a part of urban Canterbury would have to be included in this ward in order to provide for an acceptable level of electoral equality and suggested Westgate Court Avenue and St Thomas Hill/Whitstable Road. He also suggested that the ward be renamed The Blean or Blean Woods because, in his view, 'Blean Forest sounds foreign to local people'. Renaming it would reflect the many woods that are in the area.

98 After careful consideration, we have been persuaded not to split St Stephen's ward in the way proposed by Labour. Instead, we have been persuaded by the

community evidence provided by the residents. Additionally, we have also been persuaded that there is merit in including the University of Kent in the same ward where there is a lot of student accommodation. Therefore, we are basing our draft recommendations on the Liberal Democrats' proposals. We note that this unites Harbledown & Rough Common parish in a single ward.

99 We make one modification, to the southern boundary of their proposed Blean Forest ward. We move the boundary north to run along the parish boundary thereby excluding any part of Chartham parish from this ward.

100 As part of our draft recommendations we are also renaming Blean Forest as Blean Woods. We welcome comments on this from residents. We want people to tell us which name is more reflective of the area: Blean Woods, The Blean or Blean Forest.

101 Blean Woods and St Stephen's wards are both two-councillor wards forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Northgate, St Lawrence, St Martin's and Westgate

102 In addition to the area-wide submissions from Labour and the Liberal Democrats, we received submissions from some residents.

103 Labour and the Liberal Democrats proposed wards that, although different, shared several identical boundaries. This applied especially to Northgate ward and to their proposed St Martin's & St Mildred's (Labour) and St Martin's (Liberal Democrats) wards. The main difference was that Labour's proposed wards extended further to the west than the Liberal Democrats'. Another major difference was the exclusion of Thanington parish from a ward with urban Canterbury and the use of the A2 as a boundary, by the Liberal Democrats.

104 Labour proposed two new wards in place of the existing Barton ward. Its St Martin's & St Mildred's ward was in some respect similar to the Liberal Democrats' St Martin's ward. It included Chaucer Close and Pilgrims Way but excluded the area north of Military Road, between Broad Street, Northgate and Tourtel Road. Its proposed Dover Road (or Barton) ward extended from the properties west of Pilgrims Way to Oxford Road, taking in a part of the existing Wincheap ward. It suggested that one of the boundaries of this ward with Northgate ward should run along High Street/Parade in the centre of Canterbury. It included the areas around Forty Acres Road and Westgate Court Avenue in its Westgate ward.

105 The Liberal Democrats kept the use of the A28 as a boundary between Westgate ward and the neighbouring ward to its west. It stated that its St Martin's ward is essentially 'the ward for the A257 corridor and the various developments, old and new, leading off it' and its southern boundary was mainly the Canterbury East railway.

106 One resident told us that the boundaries of the existing Wincheap ward were acceptable but did not say why they thought so. Another resident was of the view that Oaten Hill/Upper Chantry Lane area should be in the same ward with Nunnery Fields and Nunnery Road area due to neighbourhood friendships and use of the same amenities. They suggested the use of New Dover Road as a boundary.

107 Having carefully considered the evidence we received, we note that Labour's proposed boundary on St George's Street/Parade/High Street splits a pedestrianised shopping precinct and street market across two wards. We also note that its St Martin's & St Mildred's ward is forecast to have 14% more electors than the average for Canterbury City Council, by 2029. Furthermore, we considered that its boundary east of Wincheap Foundation Primary School and between Martyrs' Field Road and Oxford Road is not as identifiable as the Liberal Democrats' proposed boundary along the A28 and also along the A2.

108 Taken together with decisions we have made with regards to the western boundary of St Stephen's ward, we have been persuaded to base our draft recommendations in this area on the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

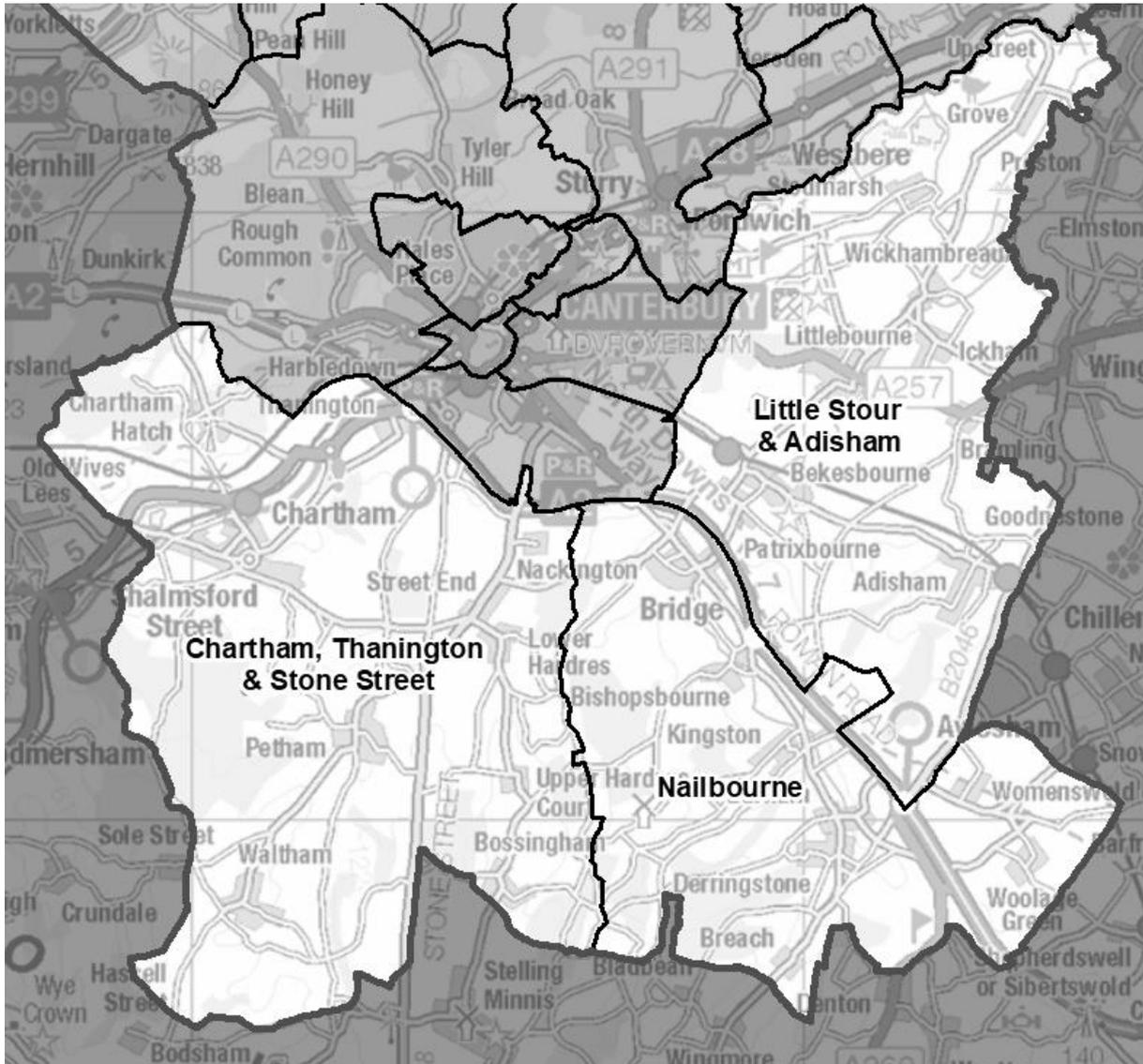
109 We considered the resident's proposal to use New Dover Road as a boundary. Although this produced a St Lawrence's ward with good electoral equality, the neighbouring St Martin's ward was forecast to have 15% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury City Council. We considered that this was poor electoral equality and did not adopt this proposal.

110 However, we were not persuaded by the Liberal Democrats' proposed boundary between Northgate and Westgate wards, along Duck Lane and St Radigund's Place. We have therefore made one modification and moved the boundary to run along Kingsmead Road. This moves the area east of Duck Lane, including St John's Church of England Primary School and St John's Hospital, into Westgate ward. We welcome comments on this.

111 Northgate, St Lawrence, St Martin's and Westgate wards are all forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029. Northgate and Westgate wards each have one councillor. St Lawrence has three-councillors and St Martin's has two councillors.

112 We note that this modification moves the road called Northgate out of Northgate ward, and welcome comments about the name of this ward. We also welcome comments on the names of the other wards.

South and East



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Chartham, Thanington & Stone Street	3	-4%
Little Stour & Adisham	1	9%
Nailbourne	1	7%

Chartham, Thanington & Stone Street

113 In addition to the area-wide comments from Labour and the Liberal Democrats, we received submissions about this area from Councillor Sole and a resident.

114 Labour proposed splitting the existing Chartham & Stone Street into two single-councillor wards. This excluded Thanington parish which it retained in a ward with an area of unparished urban Canterbury. To facilitate this, it split Chartham parish across its two wards and retained the split of Harbledown & Rough Common parish.

115 The Liberal Democrats proposed a three-councillor ward which included Thanington parish in a ward with other parishes in the area. It excluded any parish of

Harbledown & Rough Common parish but like Labour split Chartham parish across wards. It ran the northern boundary of its ward along the railway line, and the northeastern boundary along the A2.

116 Councillor Sole advocated for a Chartham ward coterminous with Chartham parish. He was of the view that Chartham parish had little in common with the more rural parishes to its south.

117 After careful consideration of the submissions, we were not persuaded to split Chartham parish at the junction of Shalmsford Street, The Crescent and The Downs, in the way proposed by Labour in light of the alternative proposal put forward by the Liberal Democrats, which used more identifiable boundaries. We are also reluctant to split two parishes if we do not have to.

118 Therefore, we have been persuaded to base our draft recommendations on the proposals for a three-councillor ward, put forward by the Liberal Democrats. This also facilitates our warding pattern elsewhere in Canterbury. However, we noted that the Liberal Democrats' use of the railway line cut off residents of Nickle Farm House from access to the rest of their proposed ward. We have modified this so that the northern boundary is coterminous with Chartham parish's boundary.

119 We considered creating a ward comprised of Chartham and Thanington parishes and one with the other more rural parishes. However, these wards were forecast to have 15% more and 20% fewer electors than the average for Canterbury City Council by 2029. We consider this poor electoral equality and did not adopt this.

120 We also considered Councillor Sole's comments. Creating a ward made up of Chartham parish only is no longer geographically possible without isolating and cutting off Thanington parish from the parishes to the south.

121 We recognise that this is a geographically large ward which is made up of rural and semi-urban communities. However, we sometimes combine distinct communities in the same ward in order to ensure good electoral equality. We have done so here, but we invite comments with community evidence, on whether splitting this ward would provide a better reflection of our statutory criteria, and if so, specific proposals of how to do so.

122 Chartham, Thanington & Stone Street is a three-councillor ward forecast to have good electoral equality, by 2029.

123 One resident queried why a section of the boundary of the existing Chartham & Stone Street ward crossed the A2 thereby including Nackington Park, north of the A2 in this ward. They were of the view that the A2 was a strong and identifiable boundary. The existing and draft recommendations ward boundary follows the parish boundary in this area. We agree that the A2 is a clear boundary. However, using it

here will create a parish ward with fewer than 100 electors. We consider this unviable. Therefore, our draft recommendations continue the use of the parish boundary as a city ward boundary.

Little Stour & Adisham and Nailbourne

124 Labour and the Liberal Democrats both proposed the retention of the existing wards in this area. Councillor Sole also advocated the retention of these wards, including on electoral equality grounds.

125 We note that they are both forecast to have good electoral equality and include whole parishes. As these were the only submissions we received with specific comments about these wards, we are content to adopt them as part of our draft recommendations.

126 Little Stour & Adisham and Nailbourne are both single-councillor wards, forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Conclusions

127 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Canterbury, 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	40	40
Number of electoral wards	23	23
Average number of electors per councillor	2,710	3,106
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	15	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0

Draft recommendations

Canterbury City Council should be made up of 40 councillors serving 23 wards representing nine single-councillor wards, 11 two-councillor wards and three 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 the Canterbury. You can also view our draft recommendations for Canterbury City Council on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

128 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.

129 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, Canterbury 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.

130 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 Herne and Broomfield parish.

131 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Herne & Broomfield parish.

Draft recommendations

Herne and Broomfield Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
East	4
West	9

Have your say

132 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.

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

134 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

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

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

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

137 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Canterbury 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.

138 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.

139 Electoral equality:

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

140 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?

141 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?

142 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.

143 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.

144 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.

145 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 Canterbury City Council in 2027.

Equalities

146 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 Canterbury

	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	Beltinge	2	5,908	2,954	9%	6,486	3,243	4%
2	Blean Woods	2	6,384	3,192	18%	6,814	3,407	10%
3	Chartham, Thanington & Stone Street	3	7,060	2,353	-13%	8,930	2,977	-4%
4	Chestfield & South Tankerton	2	5,674	2,837	5%	6,305	3,153	1%
5	Gorrell	3	8,072	2,691	-1%	8,880	2,960	-5%
6	Greenhill	2	4,047	2,024	-25%	5,511	2,756	-11%
7	Hampton	2	6,324	3,162	17%	6,608	3,304	6%
8	Herne Village	2	4,765	2,383	-12%	5,593	2,797	-10%
9	Heron	2	5,749	2,875	6%	6,209	3,105	0%

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 %
10 Hersden	1	1,760	1,760	-35%	3,015	3,015	-3%
11 Hillborough	1	2,059	2,059	-24%	2,955	2,955	-5%
12 Little Stour & Adisham	1	3,254	3,254	20%	3,386	3,386	9%
13 Nailbourne	1	3,128	3,128	15%	3,323	3,323	7%
14 Northgate	1	2,739	2,739	1%	3,126	3,126	1%
15 Seasalter	2	6,146	3,073	13%	6,640	3,320	7%
16 St Lawrence	3	7,309	2,436	-10%	9,151	3,050	-2%
17 St Martin's	2	5,092	2,546	-6%	5,916	2,958	-5%
18 St Stephen's	2	6,088	3,044	12%	6,473	3,237	4%
19 Sturry	2	4,485	22,43	-17%	5,906	2,953	-5%
20 Swalecliffe	1	3,209	3,209	18%	3,348	3,348	8%
21 Tankerton	1	3,086	3,086	14%	3,234	3,234	4%
22 Wantsum	1	3,119	3,119	15%	3,295	3,295	6%

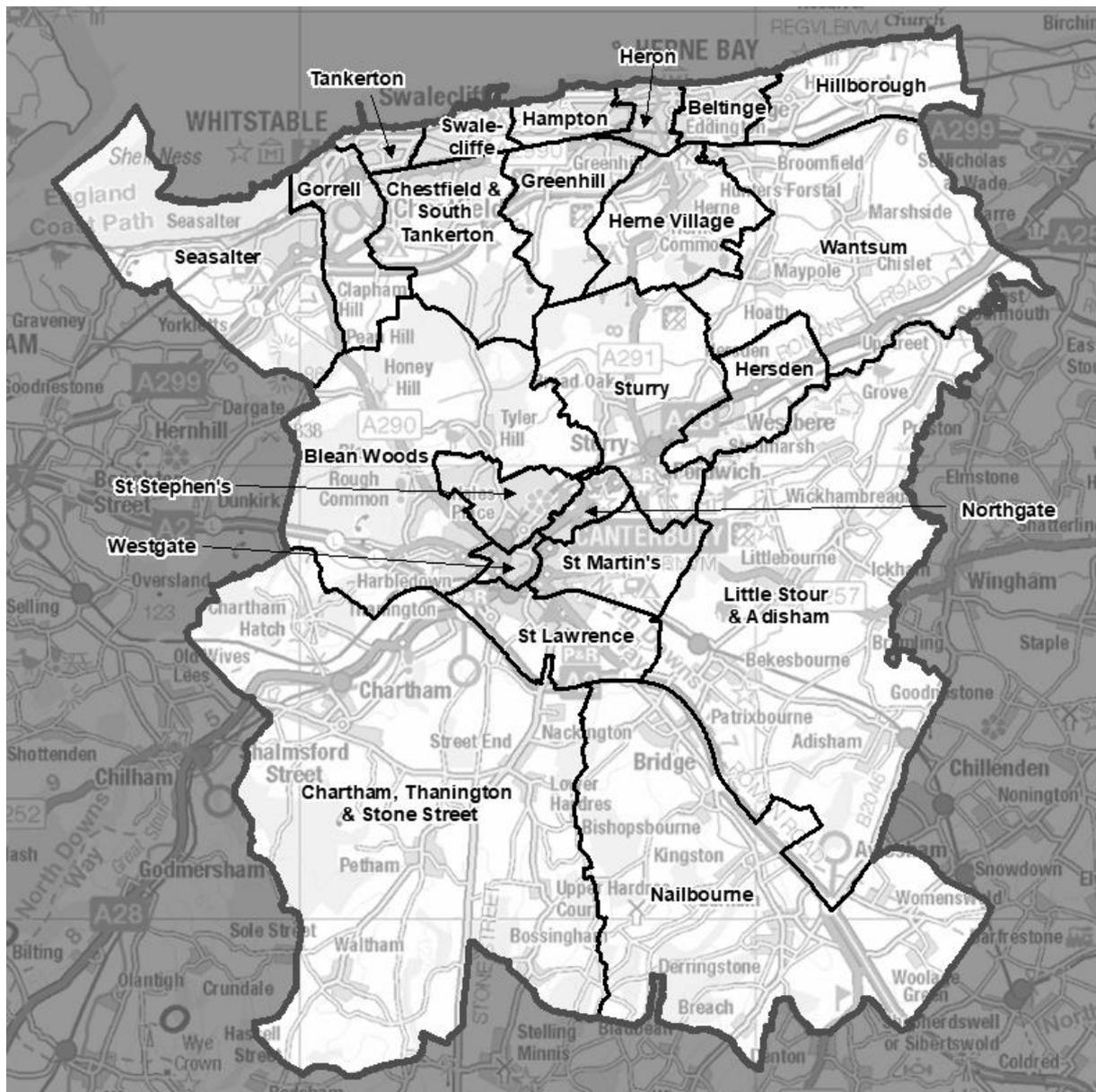
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23 Westgate	1	2,941	2,941	9%	3,152	3,152	1%
Totals	40	108,398	-	-	124,256	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,710	-	-	3,106	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Canterbury 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 local authority area. 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/canterbury

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

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

Political Groups

- Canterbury City Council Conservative Group
- Canterbury Conservatives
- Canterbury Labour Party & City Labour Group
- Canterbury & Coastal Liberal Democrats

Councillors

- Councillor D. Smith (Canterbury City Council)
- Councillor M. Sole (Canterbury City Council & Kent County Council)
- Councillor M. Dawkins (Canterbury City Council)

Local Residents

- 31 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.

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