

Thurrock

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Attached is a full submission from the Thurrock Labour Group.

Attached Documents:

- thurrock-boundary-review---labour-group-submission.pdf

**Thurrock Council – Labour Group
Ward Arrangements Submission**

March 2024

Thurrock Council Electoral Review

Submission by Thurrock Labour Group

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Executive Statement

The Local Government Boundary Commission identified Thurrock Borough Council as a local authority that requires a review of its electoral arrangements for two key reasons. The first is that it had been over twenty years since the council had its last review in 2000. Secondly, there was an evident level of electoral imbalance across a number of wards in the borough, which breaches the acceptable 'levels of equality' endorsed by the Local Government Boundary Commission.

The review commenced towards the end of 2023 and as part of the first stage of the review, a proposal was provided to the Commission seeking to maintain the number of councillors we have in Thurrock, which is 49. The Commission agreed with the Council submission and has set out that Thurrock should maintain 49 councillors.

This document sets out Thurrock's Labour Group submission for a revised warding pattern for the borough of Thurrock, giving due consideration to the three main criteria set by the Commission in determining warding arrangements:

1. Delivering electoral equality for local voters
2. Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities
3. Promoting effective and convenient local government

Overall, we are proposing the establishment of a new ward in the western part of the borough by dividing West Thurrock and South Stifford in half, thereby creating a new ward for the "Purfleet-upon-Thames" community. This adjustment increases Thurrock's number of wards from 20 to 21, with a total of 49 councillors. To accommodate this change, we suggest removing a seat from the Homesteads, which currently exhibits a variance of -15% and a seat from the West Thurrock and South Stifford Ward.

Proposal in detail

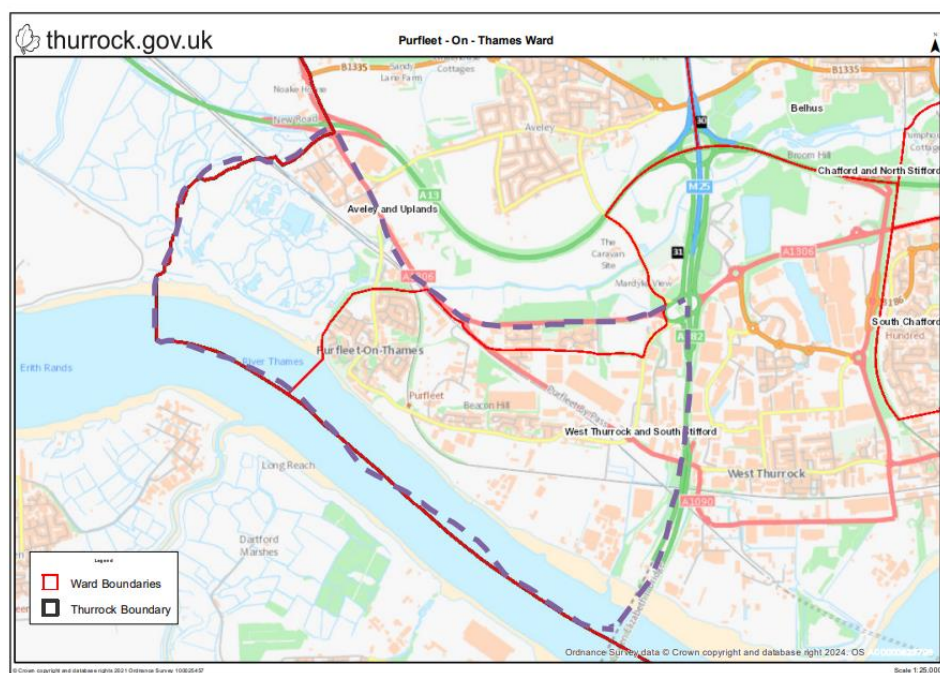
Aveley and Uplands

Proposed changes:

As indicated in the map, we believe it would be appropriate to use Arterial Road Purfleet as the natural boundary. Removing Polling District D from Aveley and Uplands into the newly created “Purfleet-On-Thames” ward. We would propose that the rest of the Aveley ward, which includes all the roads within Polling District A – C should remain the same.

Rationale:

Aveley and Uplands is a distinctive community with no local ties to Purfleet-on-Thames, and we would support retaining the rest of that boundary and its name.



Belhus

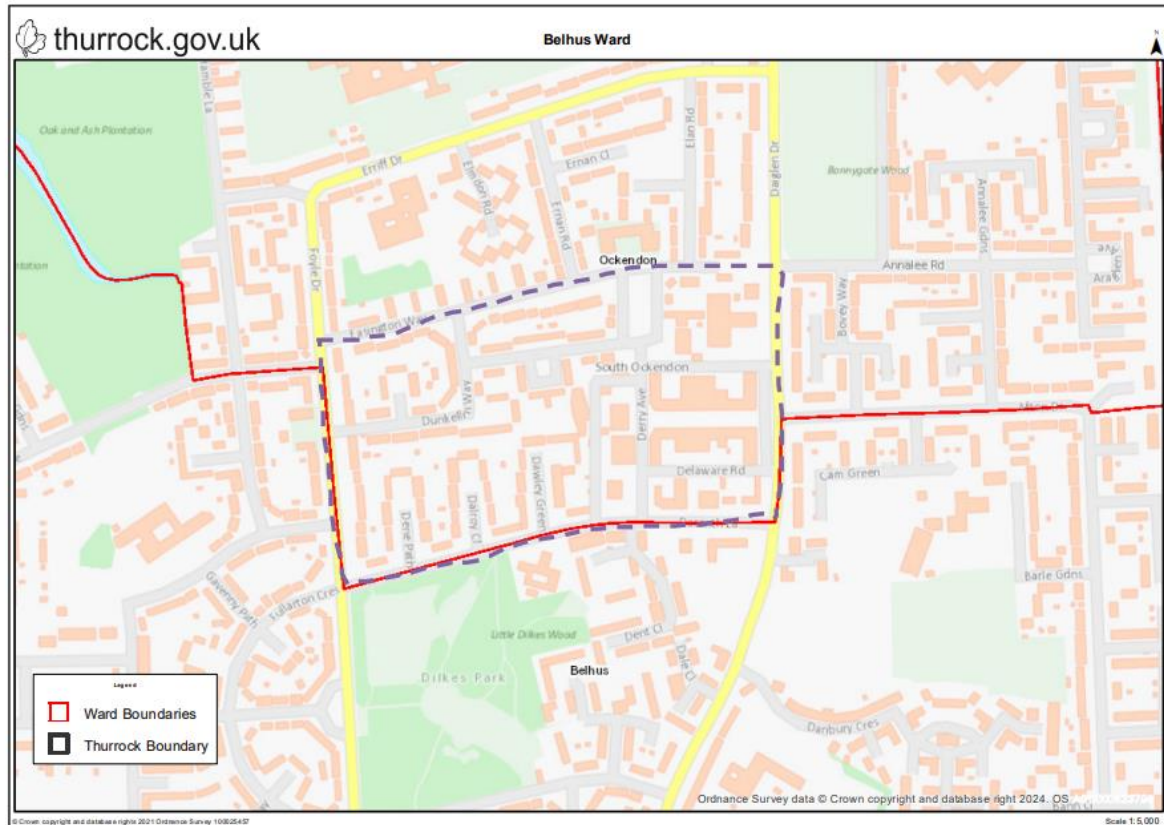
Proposed changes:

Presently, there is a variance of -3% within the ward of Belhus. We endorse the incorporation of the subsequent roads from Polling District AE labelled under "Ockendon" to be reassigned to Belhus: Dalroy Close, Darenth Lane, Dawley Green, Dene Path, Derry Avenue, Derwent Parade, Deveron Gardens, Dunkellin Grove, Dunkellin Way, and Easington Way.

Subsequently, Easington Way will serve as the organic demarcation between Ockendon and Belhus.

Rationale:

The area of Ockendon that shares a border with Belhus is presently marginally underrepresented. Transferring a portion of the electorate into Belhus will enhance electoral fairness within this ward by incorporating approximately 650 electors. Additionally, this adjustment aligns with the interests and identities of the local Belhus community, given that both Belhus Park Chapel and Belhus Library are currently situated in Ockendon.



Chadwell St Mary

Proposed changes:

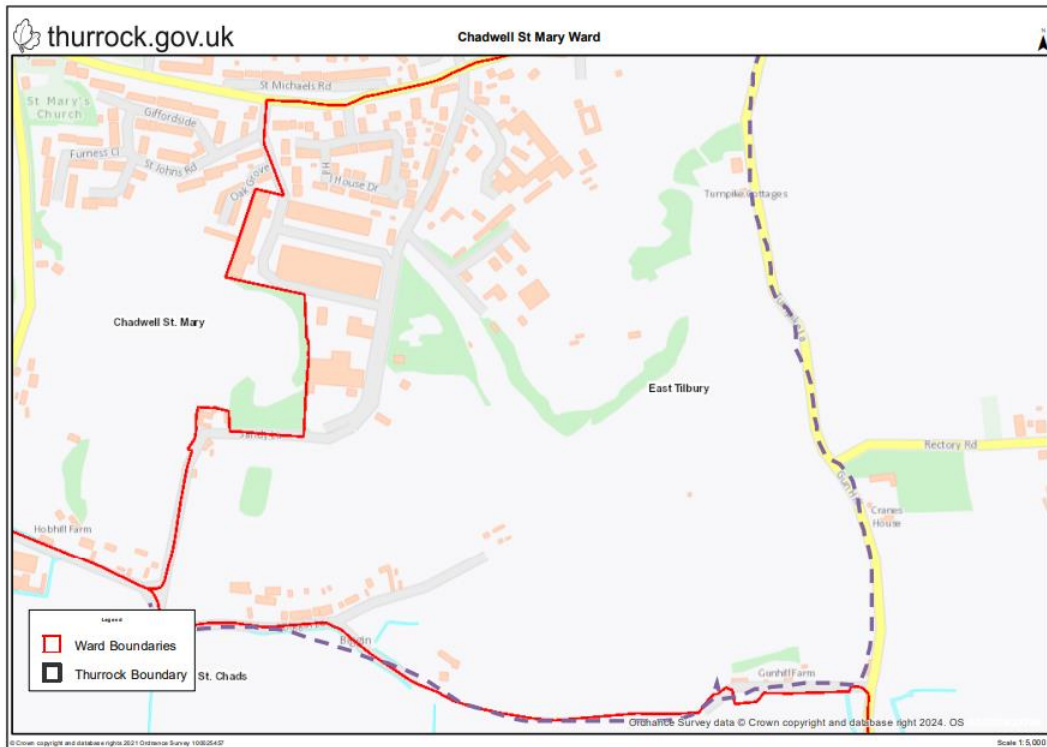
We suggest relocating the subsequent roads from East Tilbury to Chadwell St Mary: Hill House Drive, a section comprising one-third of Linford Road, Sandy Lane, and Turnpike Lane. Specifically, our intention is to transfer only a segment of Linford Road, situated south of St. Michael's Road.

Additionally, we recommend relocating the Orsett Golf Club from Chadwell St Mary.

Rationale:

We advocate for the relocation of about 263 electors from East Tilbury to Chadwell St Mary, a move that would not only promote electoral fairness within the ward but also address a prevalent issue. Many households in these areas face disenfranchisement from voting because the nearest polling station, located in the rural region of East Tilbury, is inaccessible by foot. These households naturally identify themselves as part of the Chadwell St Mary community.

Moreover, the Orsett Golf Club serves as a significant hub for the Orsett community, as indicated by its name. Therefore, it is fitting for it to be situated within the ward it represents.



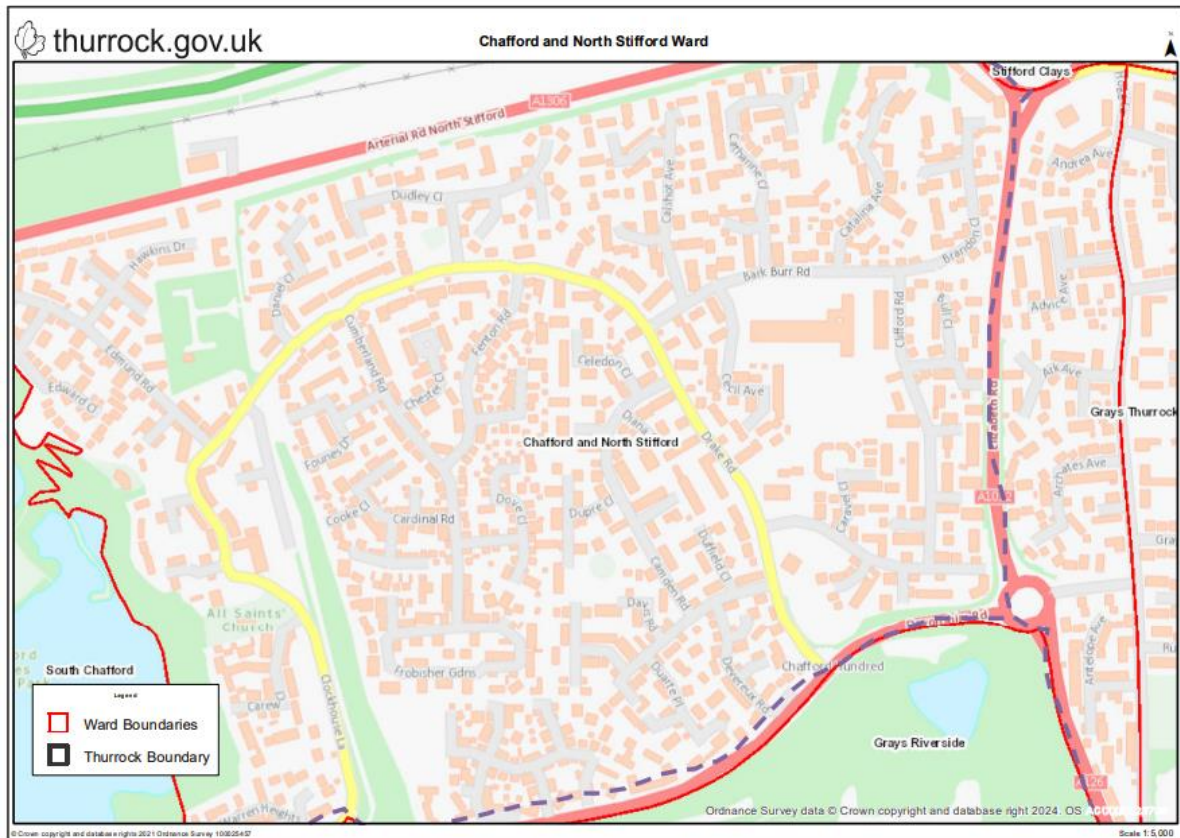
Chafford and North Stifford

Proposed changes:

We have recommended a minor adjustment to the boundary of the Chafford and North Stifford ward. This adjustment entails shifting the boundary in Polling District N from Hogg Lane to the A1012. Additionally, the following roads within Polling District N would also be moved into Grays Thurrock: Armada Court, Antelope Avenue, Ark Avenue, Advice Avenue, Andrea Avenue, and Hogg Lane.

Rationale:

This adjustment achieves improved electoral equality for Chafford and North Stifford and Grays Thurrock. By making the A1012 the boundary between these wards, we establish a clear and recognisable boundary between communities and wards, enhancing their distinct identities.



Corringham and Fobbing

We do not intend to propose any alterations within the Corringham and Fobbing ward and are happy to maintain its current boundaries.

East Tilbury

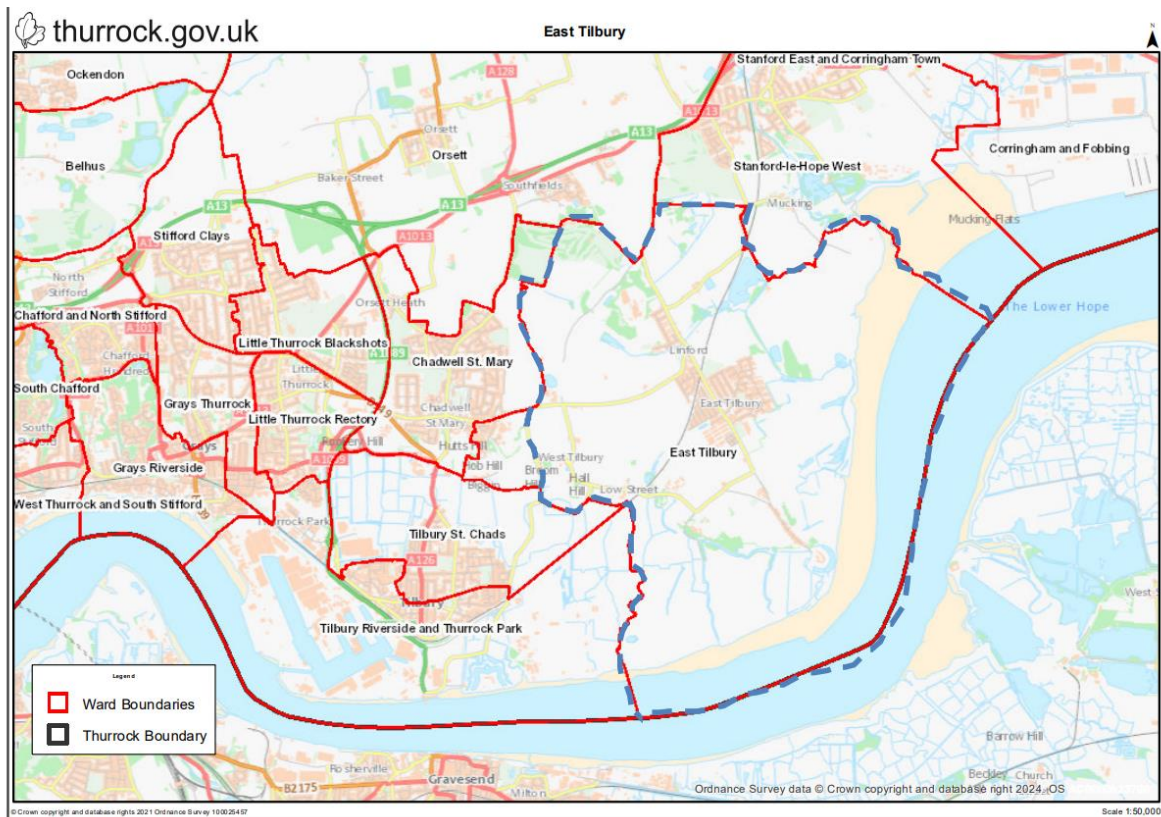
Proposed changes:

We suggest relocating the following roads from East Tilbury to Chadwell St Mary: Hill House Drive, one-third of Linford Road, Sandy Lane, and Turnpike Lane. Specifically, our proposal entails transferring only a portion of Linford Road, specifically the section south of St. Michael's Road.

Furthermore, we endorse maintaining the remainder of the ward unchanged and do not advocate for any additional alterations.

Rationale:

We believe moving approximately 263 electorates from East Tilbury to Chadwell St Mary would not only support the electoral equality within the ward but often the households in those roads are disenfranchised from voting as the closet polling station to them is in the rural region of East Tilbury which cannot be accessed by foot. Naturally those households view themselves as a part of the Chadwell St Mary Community.



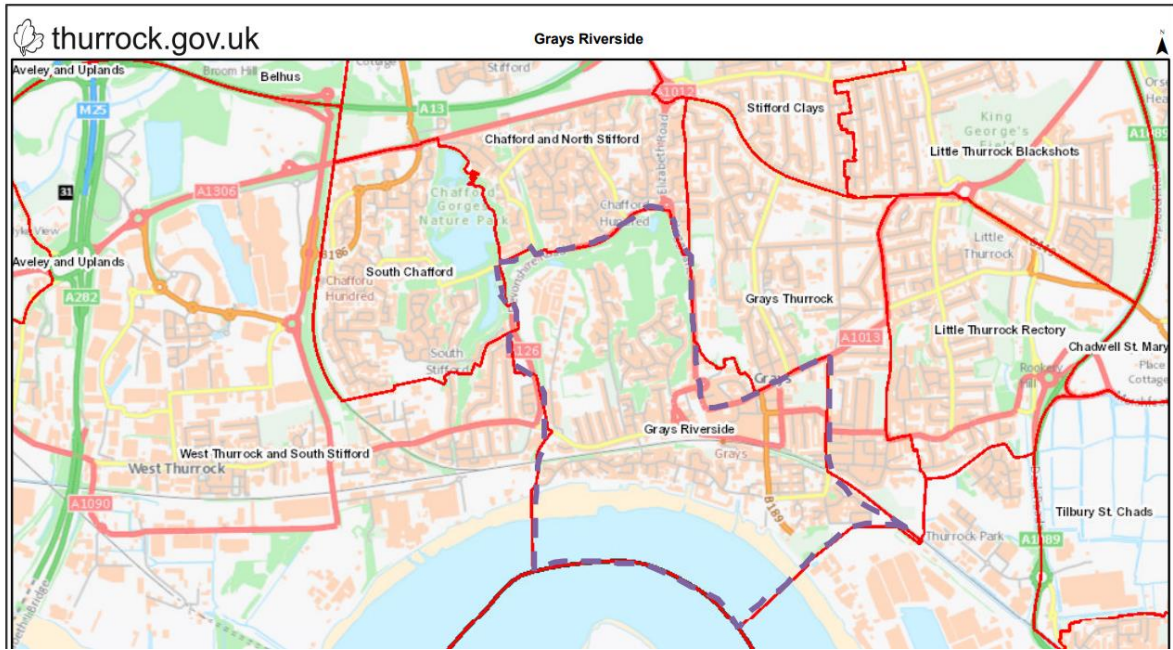
Grays Riverside

Proposed changes:

Currently, Grays Riverside has a variance of 10%, we would propose moving the following roads from Polling District V in Grays Riverside to Grays Thurrock. This includes the following roads: Brooke Road, Argyll Road, Quarry Hill, London.

Rationale:

This produces good electoral equality for both Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock.



Grays Thurrock

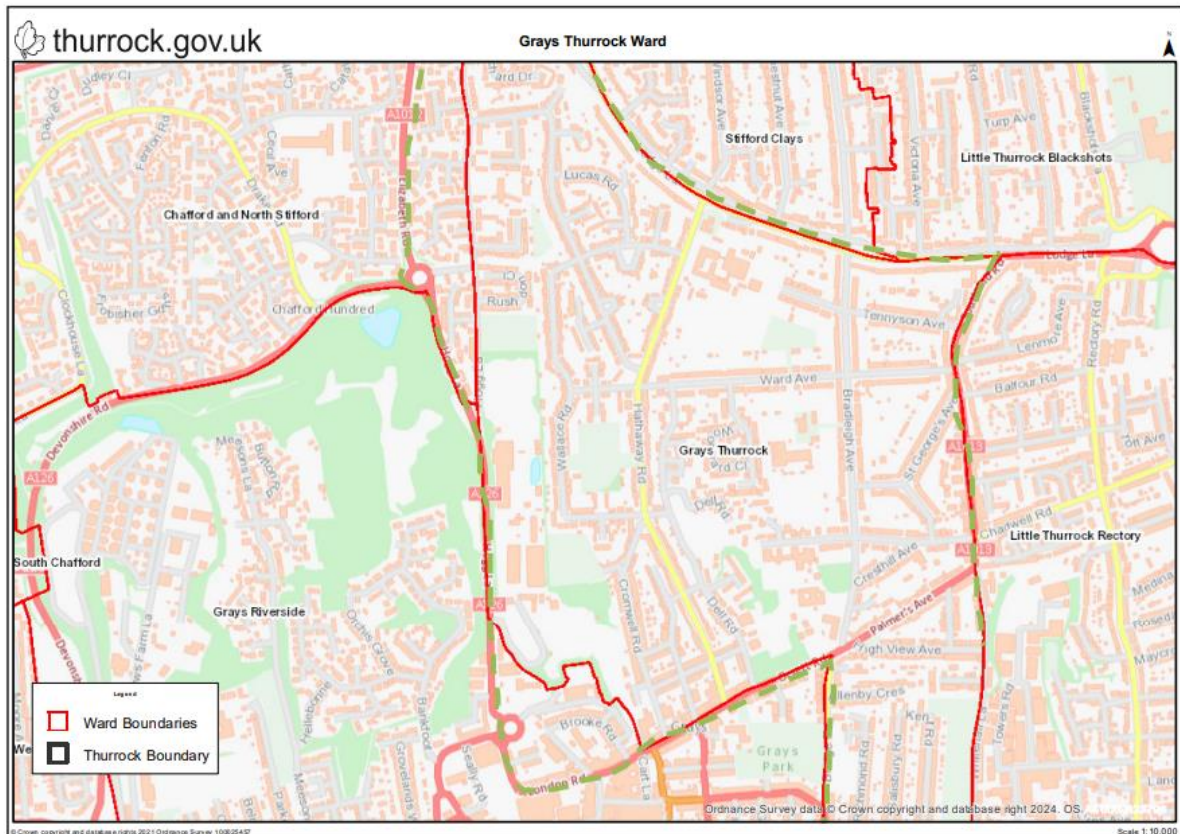
Proposed changes:

Currently, Grays Thurrock has a variance of –11% meaning that there is an overrepresentation within the ward. As mentioned above we would propose moving the following roads from Polling District V from Grays Riverside to Grays Thurrock This includes the following roads: Brooke Road, Argyll Road, Quarry Hill, London.

As mentioned above we would also support shifting the boundary in Polling District N (Chafford and North Stifford) from Hogg Lane to the A1012.

Rationale:

This produces good electoral equality for both Chafford and North Stifford and Grays Thurrock wards.



Little Thurrock Blackshots

We do not intend to propose any alterations within the Little Thurrock Blackshots ward and are happy to maintain its current boundaries.

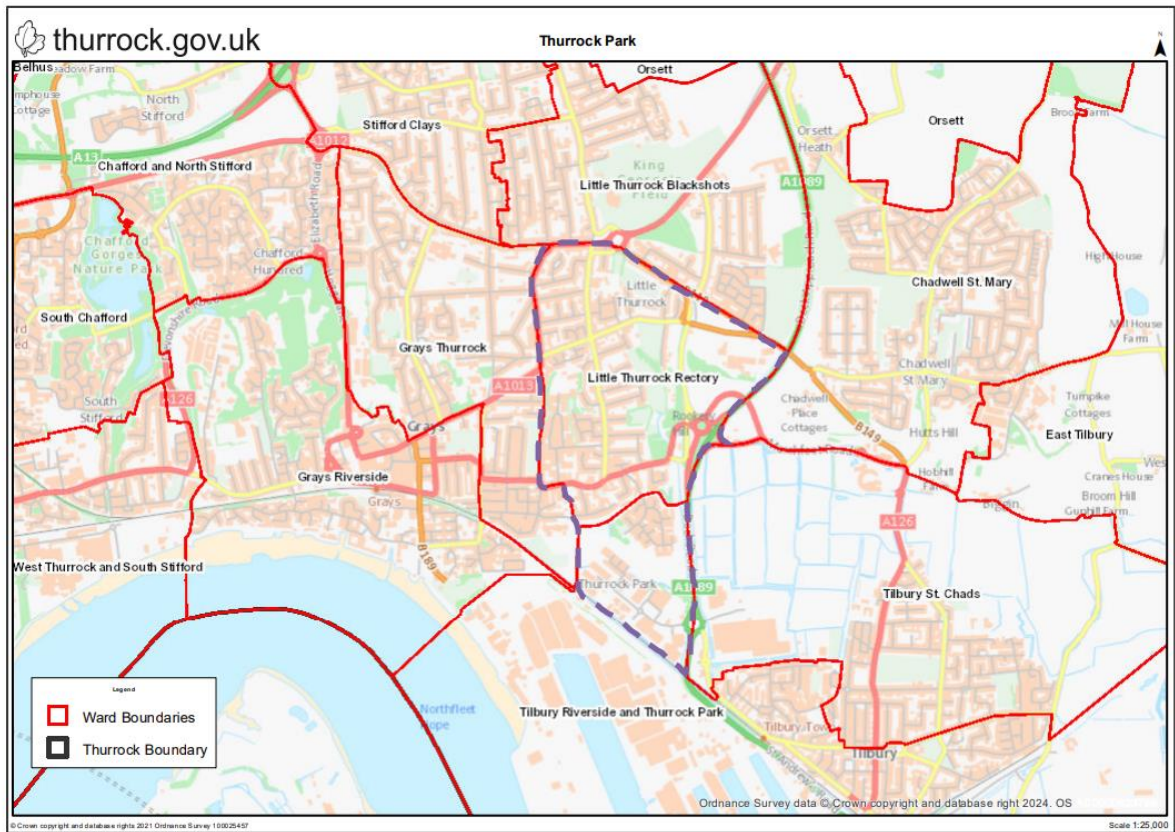
Little Thurrock Rectory

Proposed changes:

We propose removing Thurrock Park from Tilbury Riverside and placing it into Little Thurrock Rectory. This is the entire Polling District AZ; which is approximately 473 electorates.

Rationale:

It could be argued that residents of Thurrock Park have distinct life experiences compared to those in Tilbury, potentially fostering stronger community bonds with Little Thurrock Rectory.



Ockendon

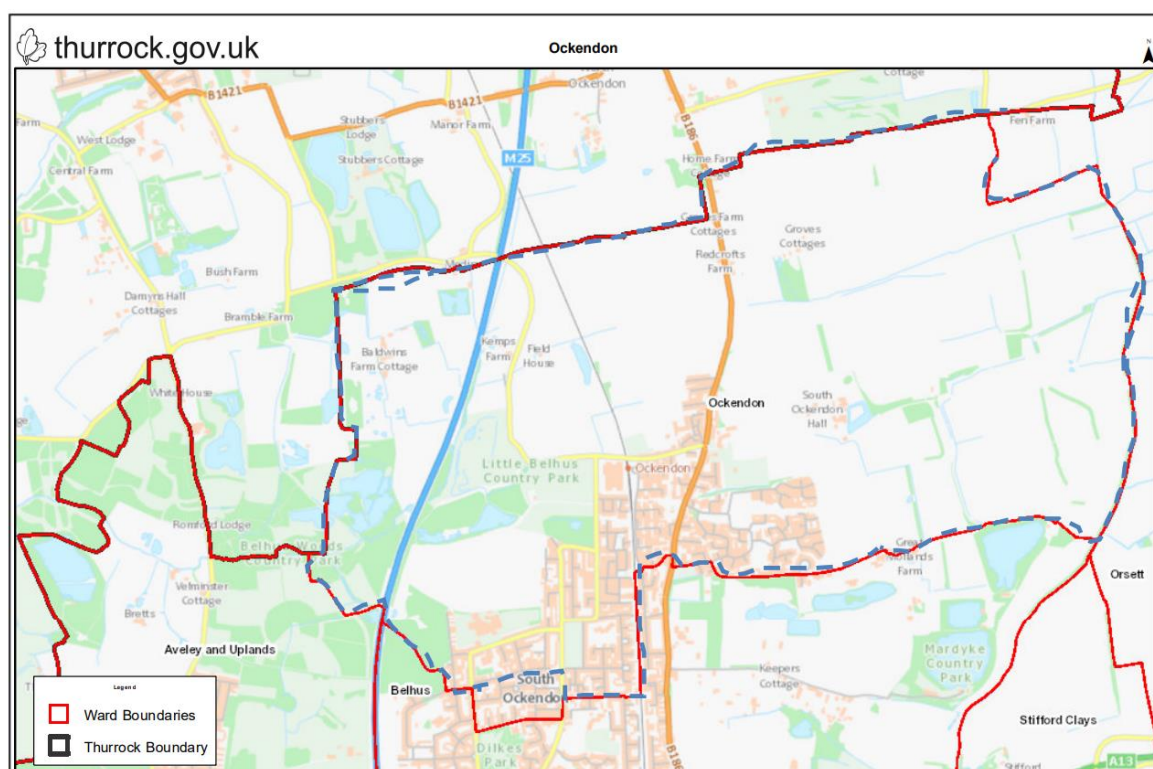
Proposed changes:

Currently, Ockendon has a variance of 12% within the ward. As mentioned above we would support the inclusion of the following roads from Polling District AE in “Ockendon” to be moved into Belhus. This includes Dalroy Close, Darenth Lane, Dawley Green, Dene Path, Derry Avenue, Derwent Parade, Deveron Gardens, Dunkellin Grove, Dunkellin Way and Easington Way.

Easington Way will then act as the natural boundary between Ockendon and Belhus.

Rationale:

Currently, Ockendon is slightly underrepresented, moving several electorates into Belhus will improve the electoral equality within this ward with the removal of approximately 650 electorates but also it reflects the interests and identities of the Belhus local community as both Belhus Park Chapel and Belhus library are currently placed in Ockendon.



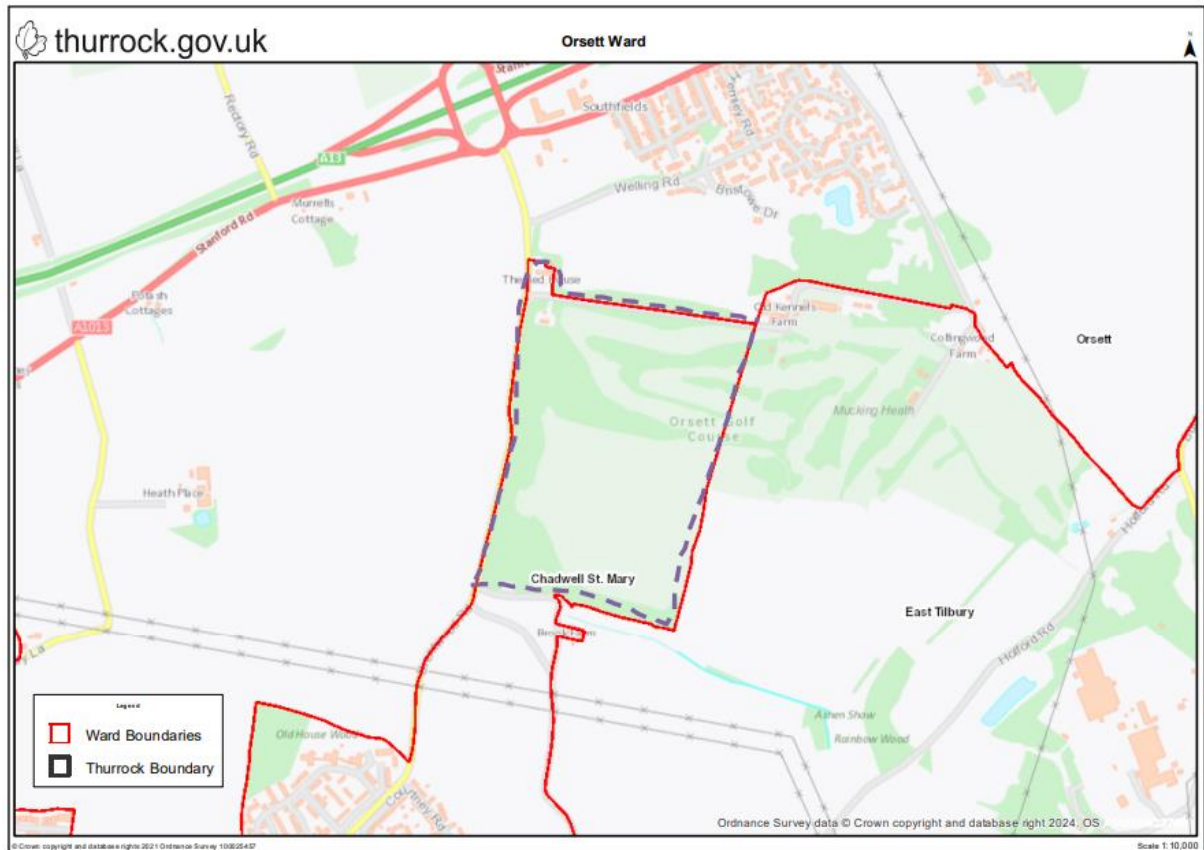
Orsett

Proposed changes:

As mentioned above would also propose moving the Orsett Golf Club from Chadwell St Mary into Orsett.

Rationale:

Orsett Golf Club is often used by the community living in Orsett and the name alludes to the ward it should be placed in.



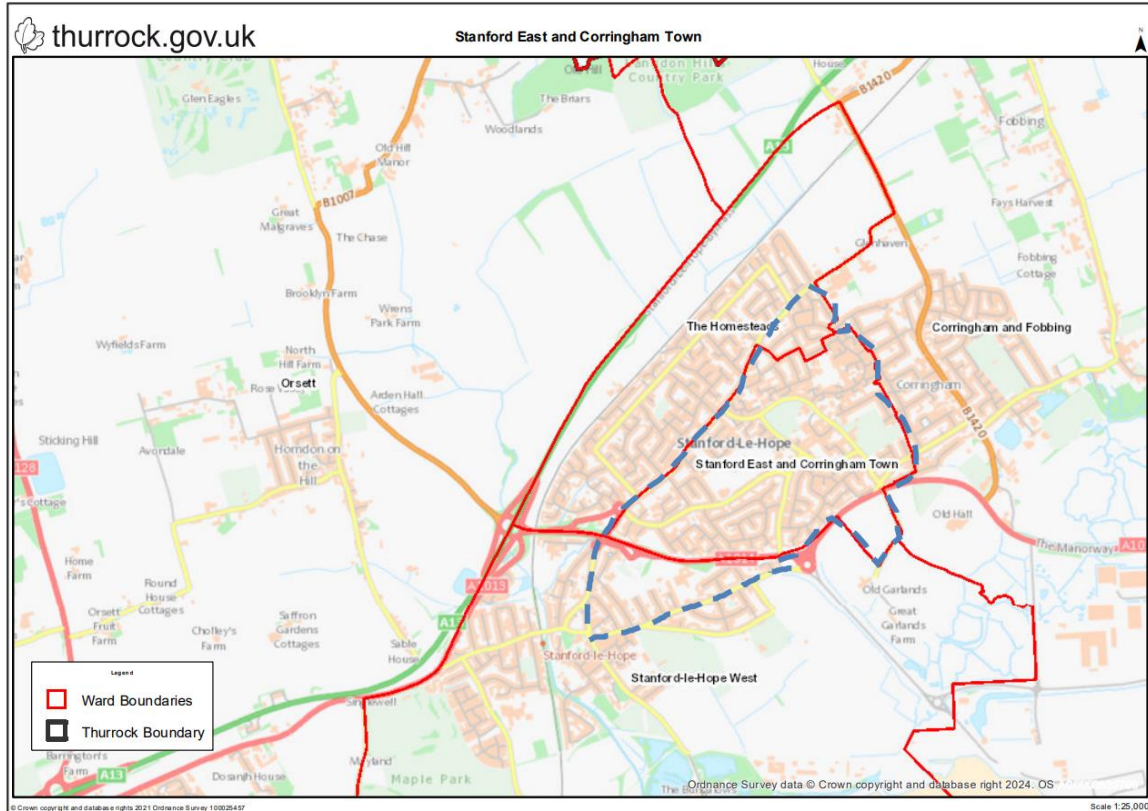
Stanford East and Corringham Town

Proposed changes:

We would propose relocating all roads in Polling District AY from the Homesteads to Stanford East and Corringham Town. This adjustment would establish Southend Road as the natural boundary between the Homesteads and Stanford East and Corringham Town, affecting approximately 837 electors.

Rationale:

Currently the Homesteads has a variance of -15%, removing approximately 837 electors and moving it to Stanford East and Corringham Town will improve the electoral equality in the regions.



Stanford-Le-Hope West

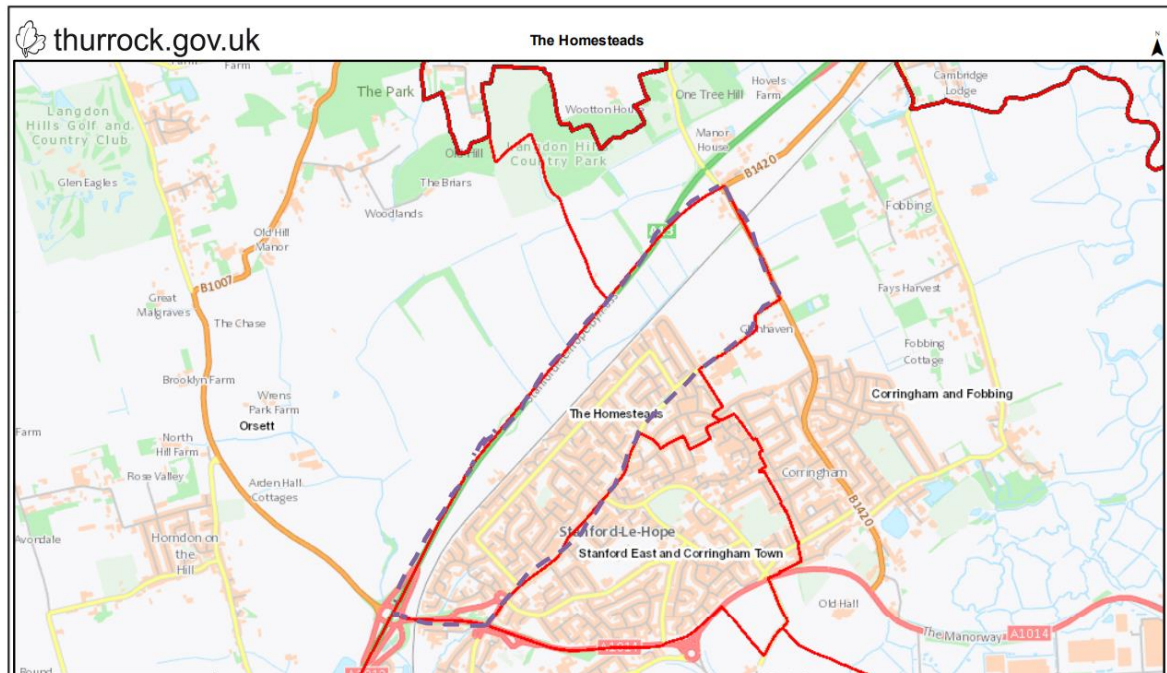
Proposed changes:

We propose relocating a portion of roads and electorates from Polling Districts AS and AR (Stanford-Le-Hope West) to Stanford East and Corringham Town. The roads we suggest moving are as follows: Central Road, Church Hill, Corringham Road, Fetherston Road, High Street, King Street, Victoria Road, Barstable Road, Hardie Road, Manor Road, and Webster Road. This adjustment would affect approximately 1031 electors.

As a result, Corringham Road would serve as the natural boundary between Stanford-Le-Hope West and Stanford East and Corringham Town.

Rationale:

Currently Stanford-Le-Hope West has a variance of 12% removing approximately 1031 electors and keeping it as a 2-member ward will improve the electoral equality in the region.



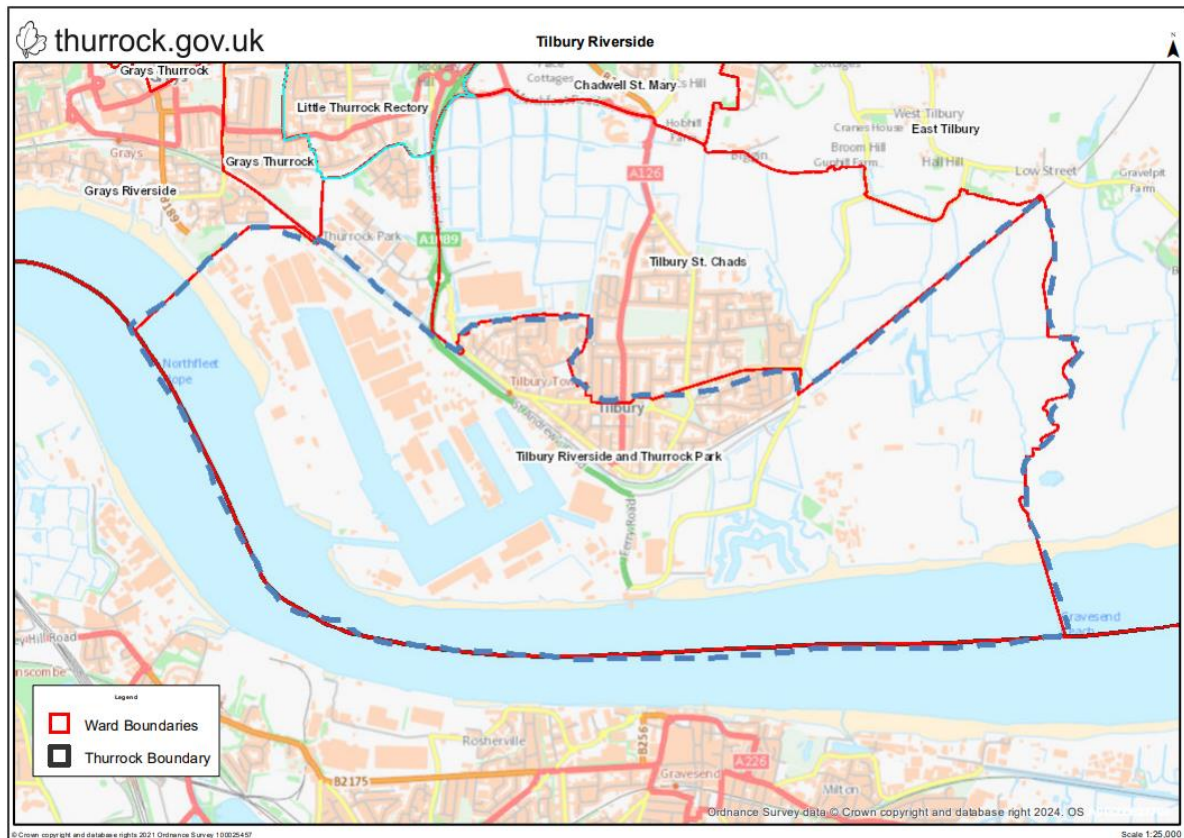
Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park

Proposed changes:

We propose removing Thurrock Park, which is Polling District AZ from Tilbury Riverside and placing it into Little Thurrock Rectory. With the removal of Thurrock Park, we also propose changing the name of this ward to 'Tilbury Riverside'.

Rationale:

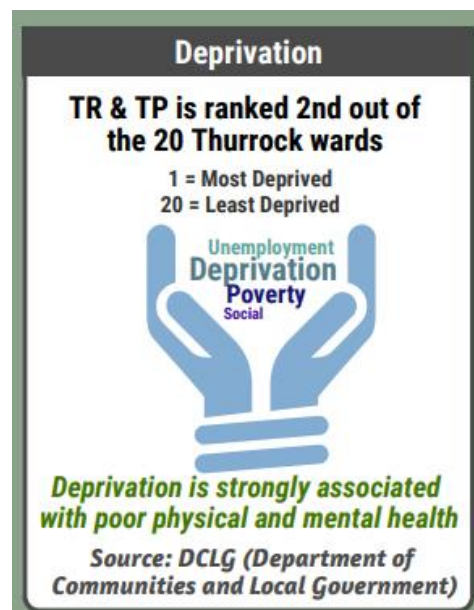
The new name would better reflect the communities it serves and represents. But most importantly Tilbury is a distinctive community, it is the most deprived part of Thurrock, with high unemployment and poor health, and is one of the poorest areas in England. Thurrock Park has different experiences to the people living in Tilbury and therefore would form better community ties with Little Thurrock Rectory.



Tilbury St Chads

Proposed changes:

While we understand that the LGBCE may generally be sceptical about retaining the whole of Tilbury as two 2-member wards. We would like to make a special case, given our earlier proposal to relocate



Thurrock Park to Little Thurrock Rectory, we are aware that the variance's in both Tilbury wards may show an overrepresentation. However, we believe this should be maintained as the residents in Tilbury require tailored representation.

Rationale:

The rationale behind this decision is rooted in the evident levels of deprivation observed within Tilbury in comparison to the broader Thurrock area. It is our contention that the cohesive community bonds present in both Tilbury wards warrant a more substantial representation, consisting of four members. This adjustment would facilitate a more efficient and supportive approach towards addressing the community's diverse needs and overcoming its various challenges.

To substantiate this rationale, we have included a table detailing the period from February 20, 2022, to February 20, 2024. The table outlines the number of enquiries initiated by Tilbury residents and

subsequently progressed through the complaints process. Our assessment reveals that Tilbury casework constitutes 29% of the total case load across the borough.

Case work raised by:	Total	Comparison
Tilbury Wards	1842	21% of total case work raised
Remaining Wards	6902	79% of total case work raised
All Wards	8744	n/a

West Thurrock and South Stifford

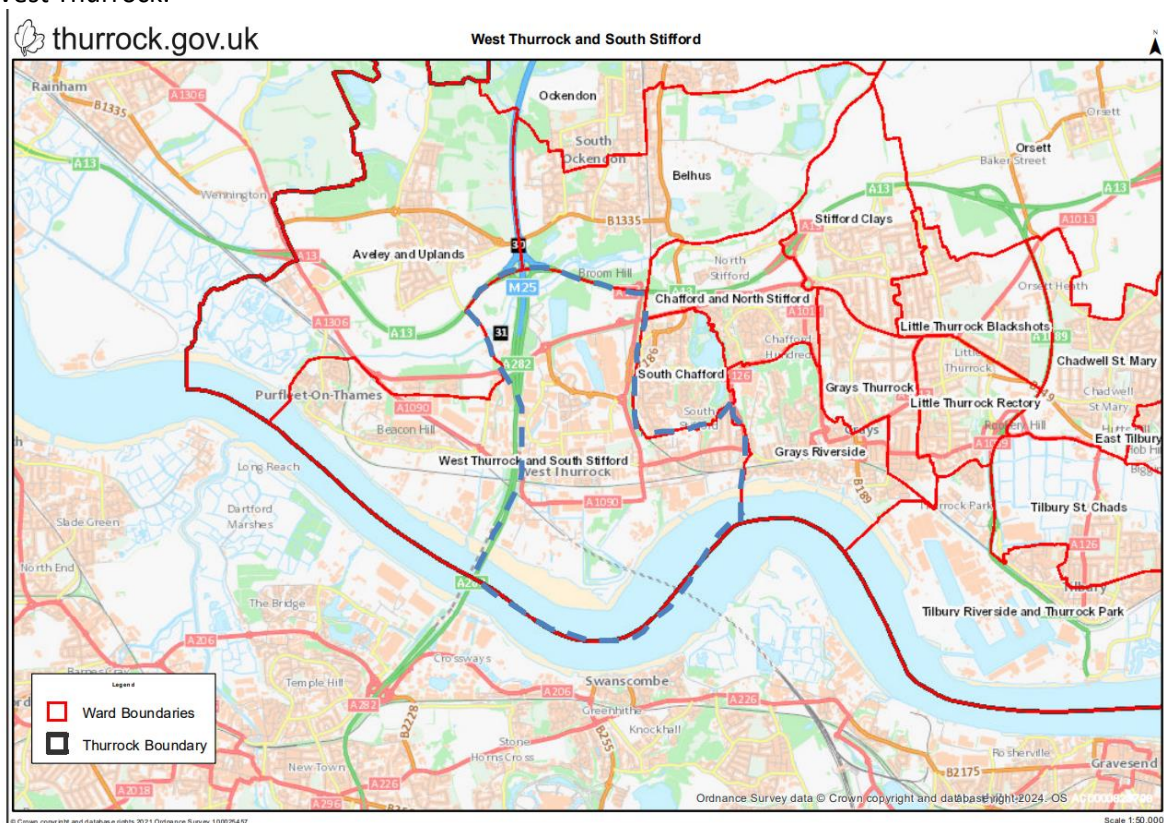
Proposed changes:

Currently, there is a 22% variance in the West Thurrock and South Stifford ward, with only three members representing the community. To address this electoral inequality, we propose splitting this ward into two separate wards, each with two members.

We suggest using Arterial Road Purfleet as the natural boundary for this division. Polling District D would be removed from Aveley and Uplands and incorporated into the newly created "Purfleet-On-Thames & Uplands" ward. The Mardyke View area will also be included in this newly created ward.

Rationale:

The newly formed West Thurrock and South Stifford ward will consist of two members and encompass several retail parks, including the notable Lakeside Shopping Centre, which is a distinctive feature of West Thurrock.



Conclusion

In conclusion, our proposals are designed to uphold the fundamental principles guiding this process: ensuring electoral equality, respecting community identities and interests, and facilitating efficient and accessible local governance. We have addressed these principles by recommending the establishment of a new ward in the Western area of the borough and reallocating existing councillors accordingly.

We extend our gratitude to the dedicated teams at Thurrock Council and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for their invaluable assistance and guidance throughout the initial phases of this process. Should the commission seek further clarification or discussion on any aspect of our submission, we are available. We look forward to seeing the draft recommendations in due course.