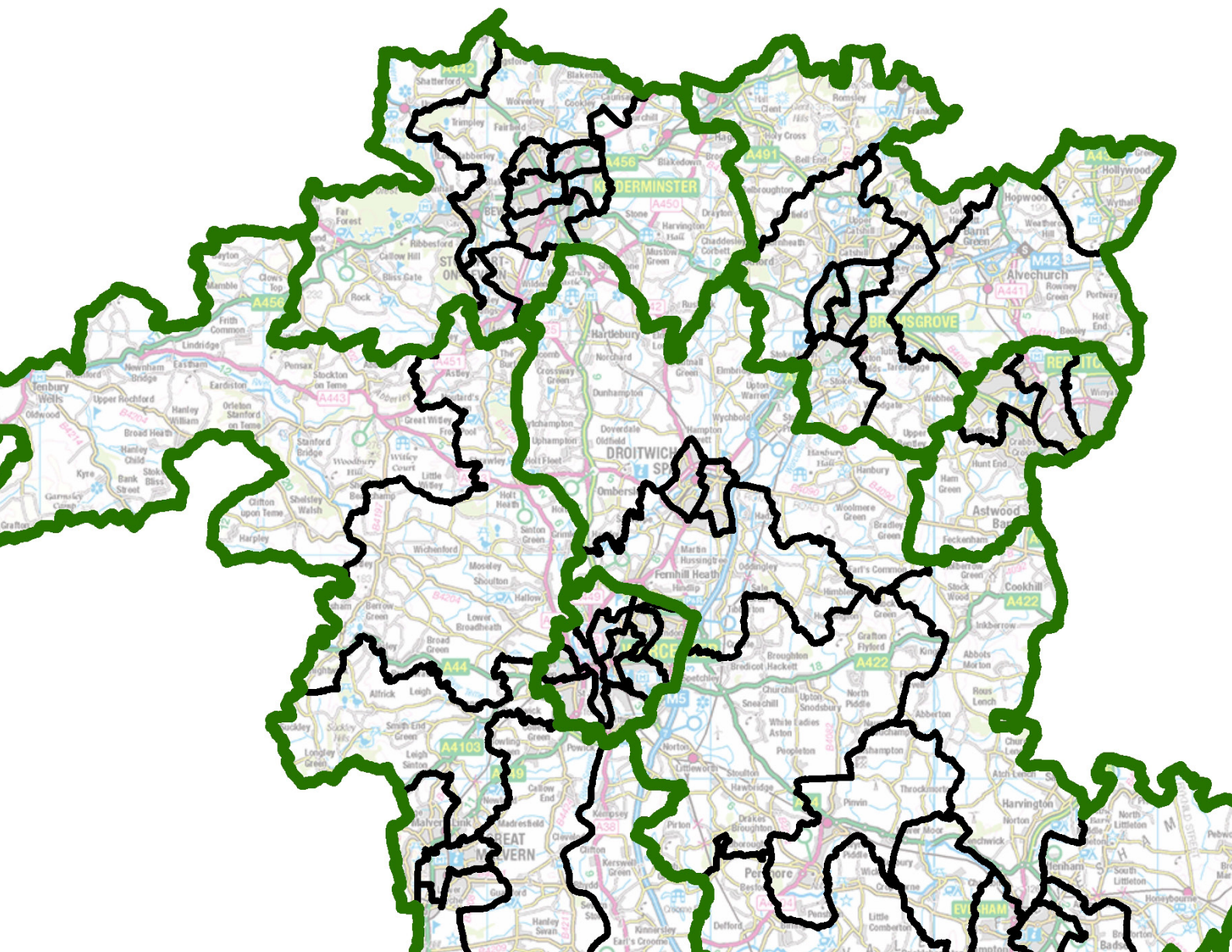


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for Worcestershire County Council Final Recommendations

July 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
- Liz Treacy
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- 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.

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

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

Why Worcestershire?

7 We are conducting a review of Worcestershire County Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2004, 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 divisions in Worcestershire 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 county.

Our proposals for Worcestershire

9 Worcestershire should be represented by 57 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Worcestershire should have 53 divisions, one more than there is now.

11 The boundaries of most divisions should change; 13 will stay the same.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Worcestershire.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the county 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 take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

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

Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Worcestershire. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on division patterns for the county. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
21 February 2023	Number of councillors decided
16 May 2023	Start of consultation seeking views on new divisions
19 September 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
9 January 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
18 March 2024	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
9 July 2024	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 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 divisions.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create divisions 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.

19 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.

	2022	2029
Electorate of Worcestershire	455,293	495,172
Number of councillors	57	57
Average number of electors per councillor	7,988	8,687

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a division is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the division as having 'good electoral equality'. All but eight of our proposed divisions for Worcestershire are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

22 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 8% by 2029.

23 During the division boundaries consultation, a resident expressed concern that the forecast figures for Bromsgrove district did not accurately reflect future housing developments. We contacted the Council, which supplied us with an updated forecast to accurately reflect new developments in this district which was used to

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.

produce our draft recommendations. This affected the forecasted variance for Bromsgrove East division. This change was taken into account in the scheme submitted to us by the Council.

24 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, the Council noted that the development north of Newton Road in Worcester city (and referenced in paragraph 69 of our draft recommendations report) was not included in the electorate forecasts and does not feature in the current draft local plan. This development was included in the initial forecast for the recent electoral review of the city. However, we note that this development has recently been completed and therefore did not need to be incorporated into the County Council's electoral forecast.

25 Councillor K. Taylor expressed concern that the Foxlydiate development in Bromsgrove district is still subject to planning approval but has been considered in the electorate forecasts. While we note the concerns raised, we state in our technical guidance that providing electoral forecasts can be a difficult and somewhat inexact science. While local authorities are best placed to know about the status of planning permissions and the likely pattern of future development, in addition to population and development trends, these are dynamic, and the Commission acknowledges that producing an electorate forecast can be difficult. We are content that the methodology used and the forecast produced by the Council are underpinned by reasonable evidence.

26 The Wyre Forest Liberal Democrats challenged the electoral figures put forward by the Council. They were concerned that the electorate forecasts had not taken into consideration the 1,450 home Woven Oaks development which is designated in the Wyre Forest Local Plan. We can confirm that this development was taken into consideration by the Council when producing the electorate forecasts. However, the development is not expected to be completed by 2029 and therefore not all of the electors expected to reside in this development on its completion were included in the electorate forecasts.

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

Number of councillors

28 Worcestershire County Council currently has 57 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 divisions that would be represented by 57 councillors.

30 We did not receive any submissions regarding the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our draft recommendations. We have therefore maintained 57 councillors for our final recommendations.

Councillor allocation and coterminosity

31 A council size of 57 provides the following allocation of members between the district councils in the county. When conducting reviews of two-tier county councils, there are a number of rules that we must follow. Firstly, we must not recommend any divisions that cross an external district boundary. Secondly, we must have regard to district wards within each district. Where possible, we try to use the district wards to form the boundaries of the county divisions. The table below shows the percentage of district wards that are wholly contained within our proposed divisions. We refer to this as coterminosity.

District	Allocation of councillors	Coterminosity
Bromsgrove	9	77%
Malvern Hills	8	77%
Redditch	8	56%
Worcester	10	63%
Wychavon	12	76%
Wyre Forest	10	50%

32 New ward boundaries were recently implemented for Redditch Borough Council and Worcester City Council at their council elections in 2024. As these new wards have been implemented before the conclusion of this review of the County Council, we have based our coterminosity calculations on the new ward boundaries, rather than the existing boundaries.

33 We received some submissions during our division boundaries consultation that stated that Wychavon district should be allocated an additional councillor and Worcester should be allocated one less. Our allocation of county councillors per district is based on the forecast electorates for each district. We have concluded that the allocation of 57 councillors outlined in the table above is accurate and will provide for a division pattern that best reflects our statutory criteria.

Division boundaries consultation

34 We received 48 submissions in response to our consultation on division boundaries. These included county-wide proposals from Worcestershire County Council. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for division arrangements in particular areas of the county.

35 The Council scheme provided a pattern of two-councillor divisions for the borough of Redditch and a uniform pattern of one-councillor divisions for the remainder of the districts in Worcestershire. We carefully considered this proposal and were of the view that it would broadly reflect community identities and ensure good electoral equality.

36 Our draft recommendations were therefore broadly based on the Council's proposals. We also took 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.

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

38 Our draft recommendations were for five two-councillor divisions and 47 one-councillor divisions. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

Draft recommendations consultation

39 We received 243 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included a submission from Worcestershire County Council regarding specific proposals for Bromsgrove district, Worcester city and Wychavon district. We also received submissions from political groups, local organisations, parish councils and local residents. The majority of the other submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in Bromsgrove district, where there was opposition to our proposed Clent Hills division, in addition to our proposed two-councillor Alvechurch & Wythall division.

Final recommendations

40 Our final recommendations are for four two-councillor divisions and 49 one-councillor divisions. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

41 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations, with modifications to Alvechurch & Wythall, Bromsgrove East and Clent Hills divisions in Bromsgrove district, based on the submissions received. We also made modifications to the boundaries between Warndon Villages and Nunnery divisions to address submissions we received regarding Warndon parish. Elsewhere in Worcester city, we made a minor modification to the boundary between St John and Riverside divisions in response to a submission made by the Council. In Wychavon

district, we have made modifications to the boundaries between Bowbrook and Droitwich West divisions, Evesham North West and Harvington divisions, and between Littletons, Broadway and Bredon divisions, in response to local evidence received.

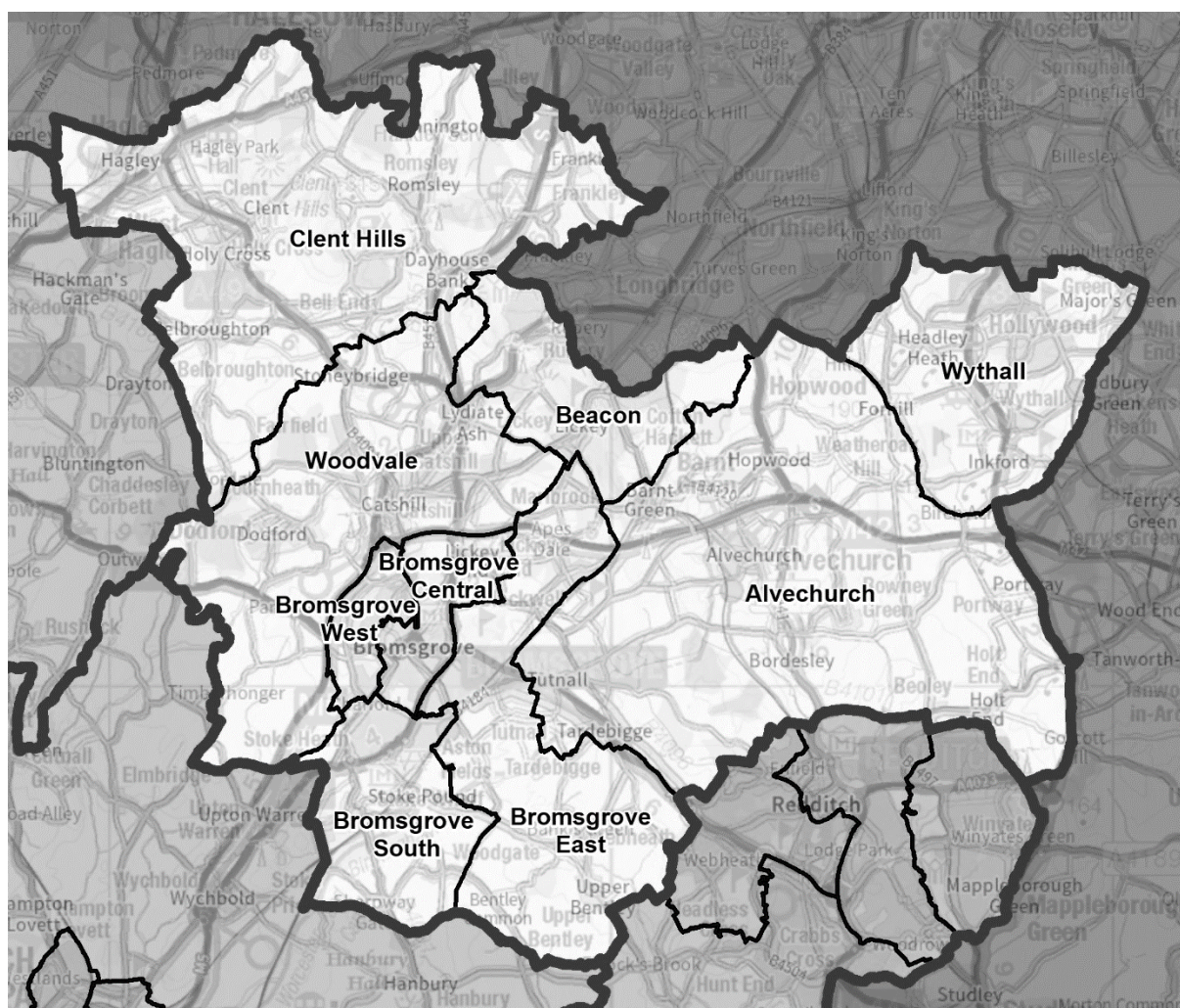
42 The tables and maps on pages 10–27 detail our final recommendations for each area of Worcestershire. They detail how the proposed division arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

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

43 A summary of our proposed new divisions is set out in the table starting on page 37 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Bromsgrove



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Alvechurch	1	-2%
Beacon	1	-6%
Bromsgrove Central	1	10%
Bromsgrove East	1	6%
Bromsgrove South	1	9%
Bromsgrove West	1	11%
Clent Hills	1	13%
Woodvale	1	3%
Wythall	1	14%

Alvechurch and Wythall

44 The Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Wythall Parish Council, Alvechurch Parish Council, Barnt Green Parish Council, Tutnall & Cobley Parish Council, Councillor Kent, Councillor S. Taylor, Councillor Wiseman, Councillor Kriss and several residents opposed our proposal to merge the existing single-councillor

divisions of Alvechurch and Wythall into a two-councillor Alvechurch & Wythall division. We had proposed merging the two single-councillor divisions in our draft recommendations to improve electoral equality for Wythall division and bring the entirety of Wythall parish into one division, based on community evidence we had received during our initial consultation. However, the above submissions shared the view that our proposed Alvechurch & Wythall division covered too large of an area and linked towns and villages that shared no community connection, with concern that the vastness of the area would prove difficult for elected members to represent effectively.

45 We were persuaded by the evidence received that two-single councillor divisions in this area of the county would better reflect our statutory criteria. We are therefore recommending a single-councillor Alvechurch division consisting of Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Beoley and Tutnall & Cobley parishes. Despite a relatively high electoral variance of 14%, we consider that a Wythall division that consists of the entirety of Wythall parish to be appropriate, based on convincing community evidence received.

Beacon, Bromsgrove East and Bromsgrove South

46 The Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Finstall Parish Council submitted a proposal to amend the boundary between Bromsgrove East and Bromsgrove South divisions to include the electors residing in Field View House in Bromsgrove South division. We were not persuaded to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations, as it would involve the creation of an unviable parish ward composed of fewer than 30 electors, which we consider not to aid effective and convenient local government.

47 In this case, we consider that a community governance review, carried out by the Council after the completion of this electoral review, would be the most effective way to effect parish boundary changes in this area. A subsequent request for related alterations following a community governance review would allow the Council to modify district wards and county divisions so that they are coterminous with any revised parish boundaries.

48 We received several submissions regarding our proposal to transfer Tutnall & Cobley parish from the existing Bromsgrove East division into our proposed Alvechurch & Wythall division. While acknowledging that this parish is more rural in nature, Councillor K. Taylor argued that the community has no affinity with Alvechurch or Wythall and alternatively forms a tight-knit community with Bentley Pouncefoot Parish Council, which we proposed to retain within Bromsgrove East division. This was supported by a resident who also proposed that Tutnall & Cobley parish remain in Bromsgrove East division. However, retaining Tutnall & Cobley parish within Bromsgrove East division results in a 23% forecasted electoral variance, which we consider exceptionally high. We were therefore not persuaded to

adopt this proposal and we are placing Tutnall & Cobley parish in our single-councillor Alvechurch division under our final recommendations.

49 Furthermore, we received opposition from Councillor Dale, Councillor K. Taylor and several residents to our proposal to move Shepley parish ward of Lickey & Blackwell parish into Beacon division. These submissions argued that this area had no connection to the other communities that compose Beacon division and suggested it should remain within Bromsgrove East division. The Council suggested this proposal during the previous stage and we adopted it to improve electoral equality for Bromsgrove East and Beacon divisions in our draft recommendations. However, based on the compelling community evidence, we have been persuaded to retain Shepley parish ward in Bromsgrove East division as part of our final recommendations, with both affected divisions forecasted good electoral equality by 2029.

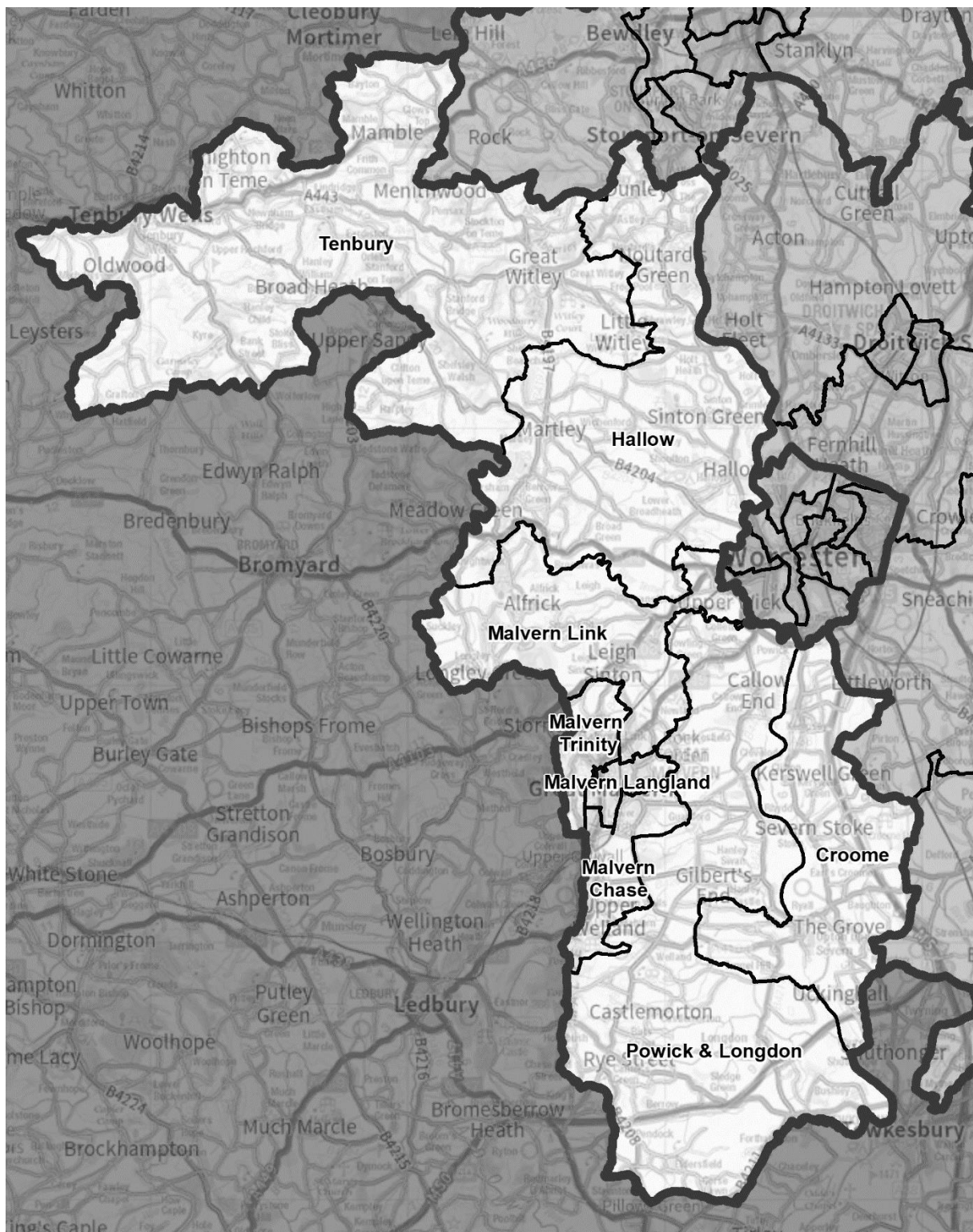
Bromsgrove Central and Bromsgrove West

50 We received no submissions directly relating to our proposed Bromsgrove Central and Bromsgrove West divisions. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

Clent Hills and Woodvale

51 We received 134 submissions that related to our proposed Clent Hills division during consultation. The Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Councillor May, Councillor Nock, Hagley Parish Council, Fairfield Village Community Association and many residents all advocated for the retention of the existing Clent Hills division boundary. In our draft recommendations, we had moved electors east of the A491 into our proposed Woodvale division to ensure good electoral equality for Clent Hills division. However, the above-mentioned submissions provided convincing community-based evidence this area has strong community ties to Clent Hills division. Although this would result in a Clent Hills division with forecast electoral variance of 13%, we have been persuaded that this variance is appropriate, as we consider that, based on the evidence received, the community identities and interests of those electors east of the A491 would be best served in Clent Hills division. We therefore recommend the retention of the existing Clent Hills division aside from a minor amendment to correct a defaced area of the boundary as part of our final recommendations.

Malvern Hills



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Croome	1	5%
Hallow	1	-4%
Malvern Chase	1	-5%

Malvern Langland	1	-9%
Malvern Link	1	7%
Malvern Trinity	1	-1%
Powick & Longdon	1	-2%
Tenbury	1	7%

Malvern Link and Malvern Trinity

52 Councillor Whatley suggested further improvements could be made to our proposed Malvern Link division to better reflect community identities in this area. He proposed to remove the electors in Link district ward from Malvern Link division, although an alternative division for these electors was not suggested. This amendment would result in a -42% forecasted electoral variance for Malvern Link division. We consider this electoral variance to be exceptionally high and were therefore not persuaded to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

53 Councillor Whatley also proposed renaming Malvern Link division as he argued that the majority of the electors within the division lived outside of the settlement that this name is associated with. 'Alfrick, Leigh & Rushwick' was suggested to reflect the district ward name that is included in this division or a 'neutral' name of 'Teme Valley'. We were not persuaded to adopt either of these suggestions as part of our final recommendations, as we did not consider them to be any more distinctive than our name of Malvern Link.

54 Furthermore, a resident stated that some of Malvern Link division should be moved into Worcester to reduce its size. We cannot adopt this proposal as it is a statutory requirement that every division we propose must be entirely within a single district or borough.

55 We received no submissions directly relating to our proposed Malvern Trinity division and therefore confirm this division as part of our final recommendations.

Malvern Chase and Malvern Langland

56 Malvern Town Council expressed support for the proposed parish warding arrangements in Malvern town, which we recommended as a result of our proposed division boundaries in this area. They did nonetheless suggest that the boundary between Pound Bank and Chase town council wards be amended to allow for an additional councillor to be allocated to Pound Bank ward. However, our recommendations for revised parish warding arrangements are required to reflect our proposed county division boundaries and determining county division boundaries upon town councillor allocation is not part of our statutory criteria. Furthermore, we concluded that insufficient community evidence had been provided for us to alter our proposed division boundaries for Malvern Chase and Malvern Langland divisions. Therefore, with no further submissions regarding these divisions received, we have decided to confirm them as final.

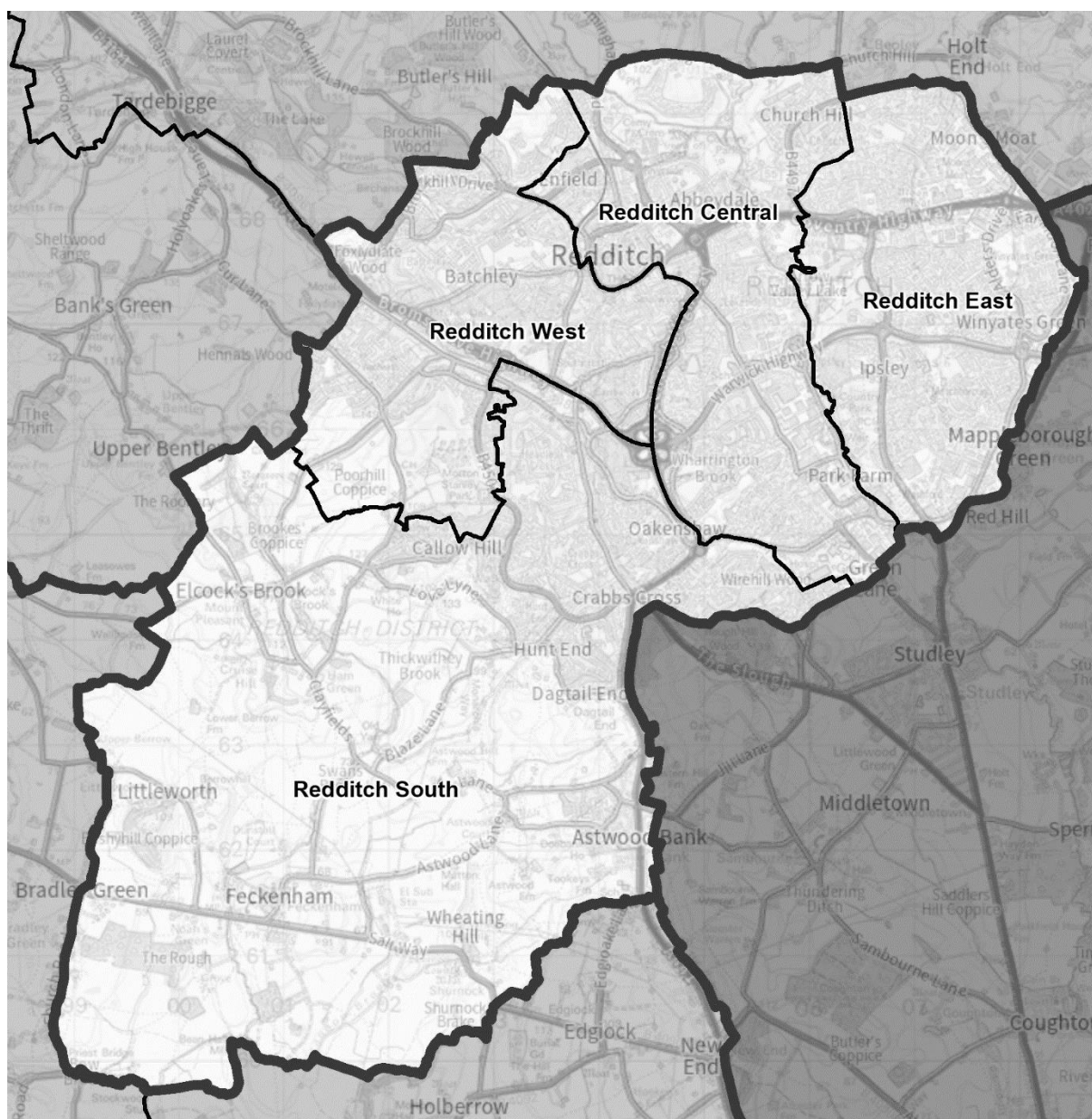
Croome and Powick & Longdon

57 Councillor Allen expressed support for our proposed Croome and Powick divisions. However, a resident proposed to rename Powick division to 'Powick and Longdon' to 'recognise the historic Longdon Marsh which once covered a significant bulk of this area'. The resident also noted that this name is reflected in the names of roads and properties within this division. We were persuaded by this evidence that the name 'Powick & Longdon' is appropriate for this division and we have adopted this division name change as part of our final recommendations.

Hallow and Tenbury

58 We received no submissions directly relating to our proposed Hallow and Tenbury divisions. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

Redditch



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Redditch Central	2	-4%
Redditch East	2	-8%
Redditch South	2	-2%
Redditch West	2	-2%

Redditch Central, Redditch East, Redditch South and Redditch West

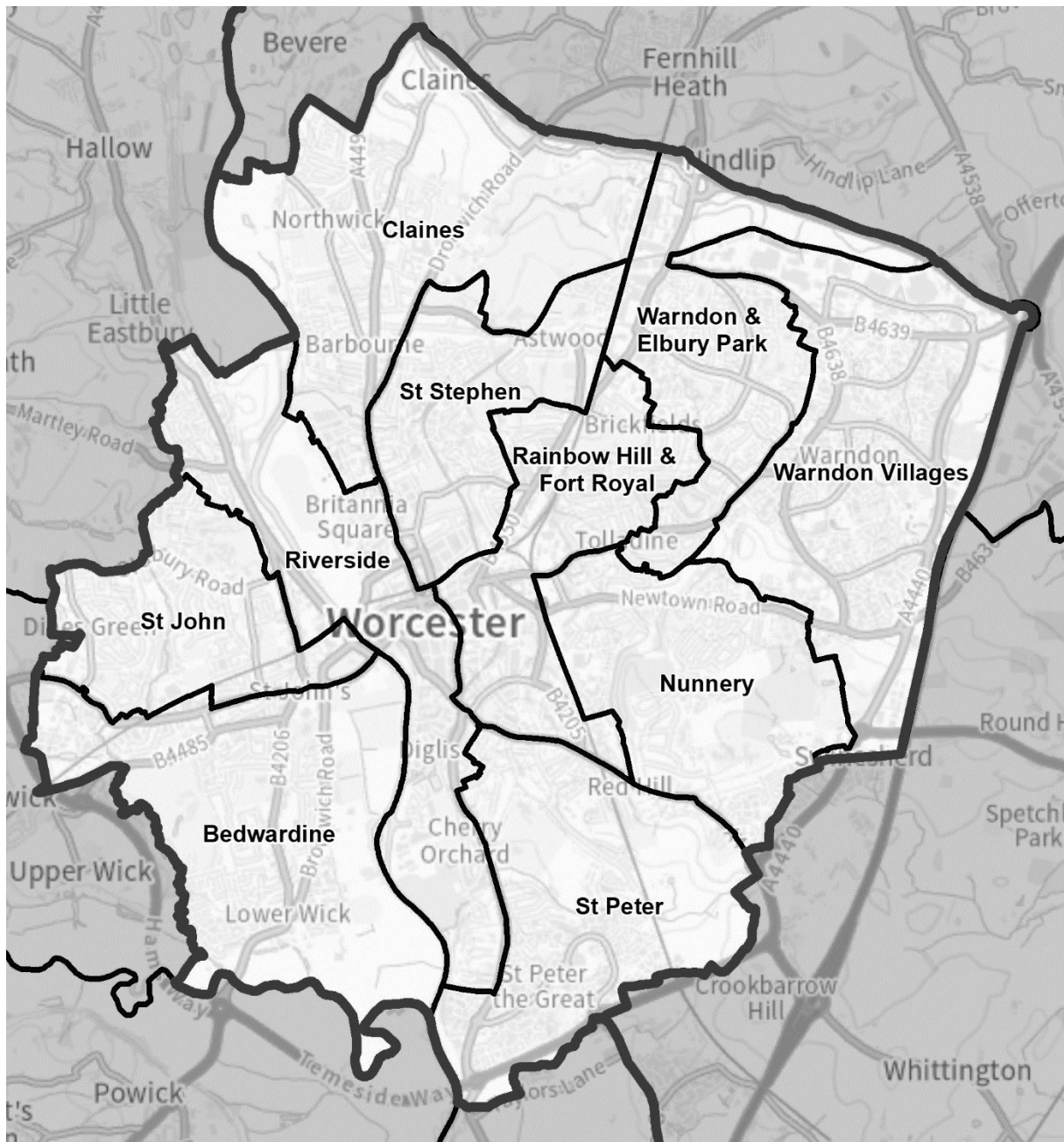
59 Redditch Borough Council suggested amendments to our proposed divisions in order to achieve coterminosity with their new polling district boundaries. We were not persuaded to make these changes to our division arrangements, as the statutory criteria does not require us to consider coterminosity with polling districts when

determining division arrangements. We also consider that the Council's proposal moves away from using strong and locally recognisable boundaries.

60 Furthermore, a resident of Plymouth Road expressed that they did not want to be affected by a boundary change. This area is part of our proposed Redditch West division. This division reflects the existing arrangements, aside from a name change. We therefore did not make any amendments to this division and confirm it as final.

61 We did not receive any further submissions regarding our draft recommendations for Redditch and we therefore confirm these divisions as part of our final recommendations.

Worcester



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Bedwardine	1	-9%
Claines	1	-10%
Nunnery	1	-14%
Rainbow Hill & Fort Royal	1	8%
Riverside	1	-1%
St John	1	-8%
St Peter	1	-1%
St Stephen	1	-4%

Warndon & Elbury Park	1	-11%
Warndon Villages	1	-2%

Claines, Rainbow Hill & Fort Royal, St Stephen and Warndon & Elbury Park

62 A resident submission stated that Gorse Hill & Warndon division should be renamed to ‘Warndon & Elbury Park’ and Rainbow Hill division should be named ‘Rainbow Hill & Fort Royal’ to reflect the city ward names that make up these divisions. We were persuaded to adopt these suggestions as part of our final recommendations, as we agree that the use of locally recognisable names would help to promote effective and convenient local government.

63 We received no submissions in relation to Claines and St Stephen divisions during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

Nunnery, St Peter and Warndon Villages

64 The Council, Warndon Parish Council, Councillor Cross and a resident opposed our proposals for St Nicholas & Leopard Hill division and advocated for coterminosity between the division boundary and the Warndon parish boundary. The submissions suggested that this arrangement would better reflect community identities and interests in this area. It was also proposed to change the name of St Nicholas & Leopard Hill division to ‘Warndon Villages’, stating that this would be a more locally recognisable name. While we note that this proposal would produce a -14% forecasted electoral variance for Nunnery division, we consider that, based on the evidence received, following the Warndon parish boundary better reflects the identities of local communities in this area and will help promote effective and convenient local government.

65 We did not receive any submissions directly relating to our proposals for St Peter division and we therefore confirm this division as final.

Bedwardine, Riverside and St John

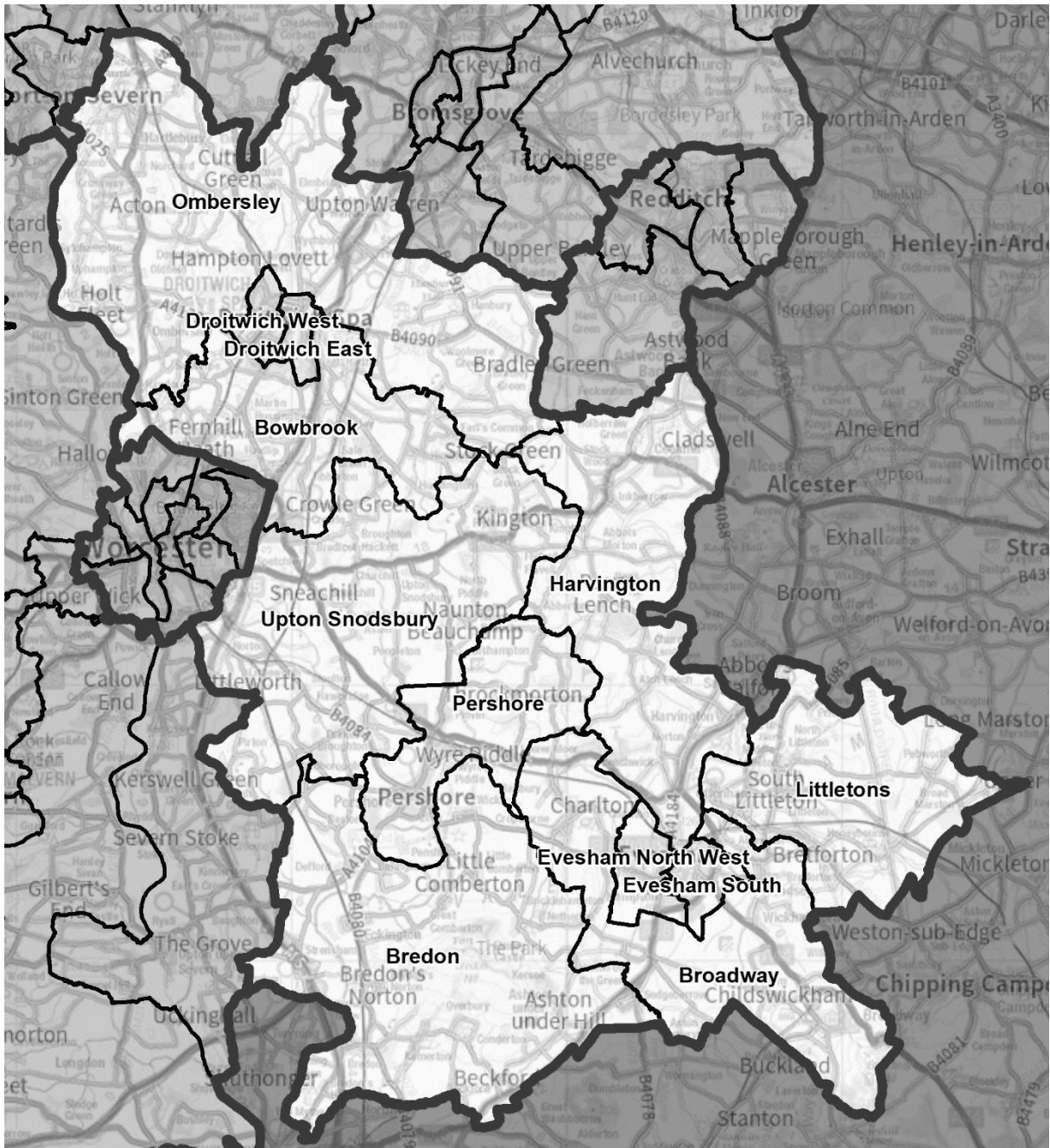
66 The Council opposed our draft recommendations for Riverside and St John divisions. While we had largely adopted the Council’s proposals for this area, we had slightly amended the boundary between the divisions to follow Himbleton Road, instead of behind the properties along this road, as we considered it to be a stronger and more locally recognised boundary. The Council, however, reinforced their initial proposals. We have decided to adopt their proposal as part of our final recommendations as we are content that their proposed boundary represents a better reflection of the statutory criteria.

67 A resident proposed to extend Bedwardine division to include the entirety of Bromyard Road and Ashford Road. We were not persuaded to adopt this proposal,

as this would involve crossing district boundaries which we statutorily cannot do.

68 Furthermore, two residents stated that our proposals for Riverside division grouped electors that had no community connections and had a lack of coterminosity with city wards. One of these residents presented alternative proposals for Riverside, Bedwardine and St John divisions. However, they resulted in an anticipated electoral variance of -14% for Bedwardine division. We were not persuaded that sufficient community evidence had been supplied to justify such a variance and we have not adopted this proposal in our final recommendations.

Wychavon



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Bowbrook	1	8%
Bredon	1	3%
Broadway	1	8%
Droitwich East	1	4%
Droitwich West	1	5%
Evesham North West	1	11%
Evesham South	1	10%
Harvington	1	1%

Littletons	1	-10%
Ombersley	1	2%
Pershore	1	14%
Upton Snodsbury	1	6%

Bredon, Broadway and Littletons

69 Badsey & Aldington Parish Council opposed our draft recommendation to transfer Badsey parish from Littletons division to Broadway division. The parish council proposed to retain Badsey parish in Littletons division, asserting that it had stronger community connections with the parishes in Littletons division. Two residents advocated for Badsey and Aldington parishes to remain within the same division to reflect community identities and interests. One resident stated that the parishes were ‘entwined in many ways’ and shared many local services.

70 We are unable to adopt the request made by Badsey & Aldington Parish Council and retain Badsey parish within Littletons division, if we are to ensure a good level of electoral equality, as this would produce a 21% anticipated electoral variance for Littletons division. However, we were persuaded by the local evidence received that Badsey and Aldington parishes should remain in the same division. We were persuaded that the proposal to split the grouped parish council of Badsey & Aldington would not reflect community identities in this area nor aid effective and convenient local government. We have therefore transferred Aldington parish to Broadway division as part of our final recommendations. The majority of Badsey parish is within Broadway division with the exception of Blackminster parish ward, to follow the district ward boundary and ensure good electoral equality.

71 Councillor Eyre acknowledged that our draft recommendation for retaining Sedgeberrow parish in Broadway division improved coterminosity with district wards. However, they proposed to transfer the parish to Bredon division. We were persuaded to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations as we consider that the evidence supplied demonstrates that such a change would represent the most effective balance of our statutory criteria.

Evesham North West, Evesham South and Harvington

72 The Council, Mid Worcestershire & the Vale Green Party, Evesham Town Council, Councillor Raphael, Councillor Stokes, Councillor Goodge and eight residents objected to our draft recommendations for Evesham. These submissions broadly argued that transferring part of Evesham town centre into the predominantly rural division of Harvington did not reflect community identities and interests. We had previously adopted the Council’s proposal for our draft recommendations to ensure good electoral equality in this area.

73 In response, several of these submissions proposed to retain the existing boundaries for Evesham North West and Evesham South divisions. However, we are

unable to adopt this proposal, as it produces poor levels of electoral equality for both divisions.

74 The Council proposed an amendment to their initial proposal in order to retain key facilities and landmarks which local people associate with Evesham town in Evesham North West division. Although this modification results in an 11% anticipated electoral variance for the division, we have been persuaded by the local evidence received to adopt this suggestion as part of our final recommendations, as we consider that this change will better reflect community identities and interests in this area.

Pershore and Upton Snodsbury

75 Councillor Betteridge, Councillor Boatright-Greene, Bishampton & Throckmorton Parish Council and two residents supported our proposals for Pershore division, which reflects the existing arrangements. We therefore confirm this division as final.

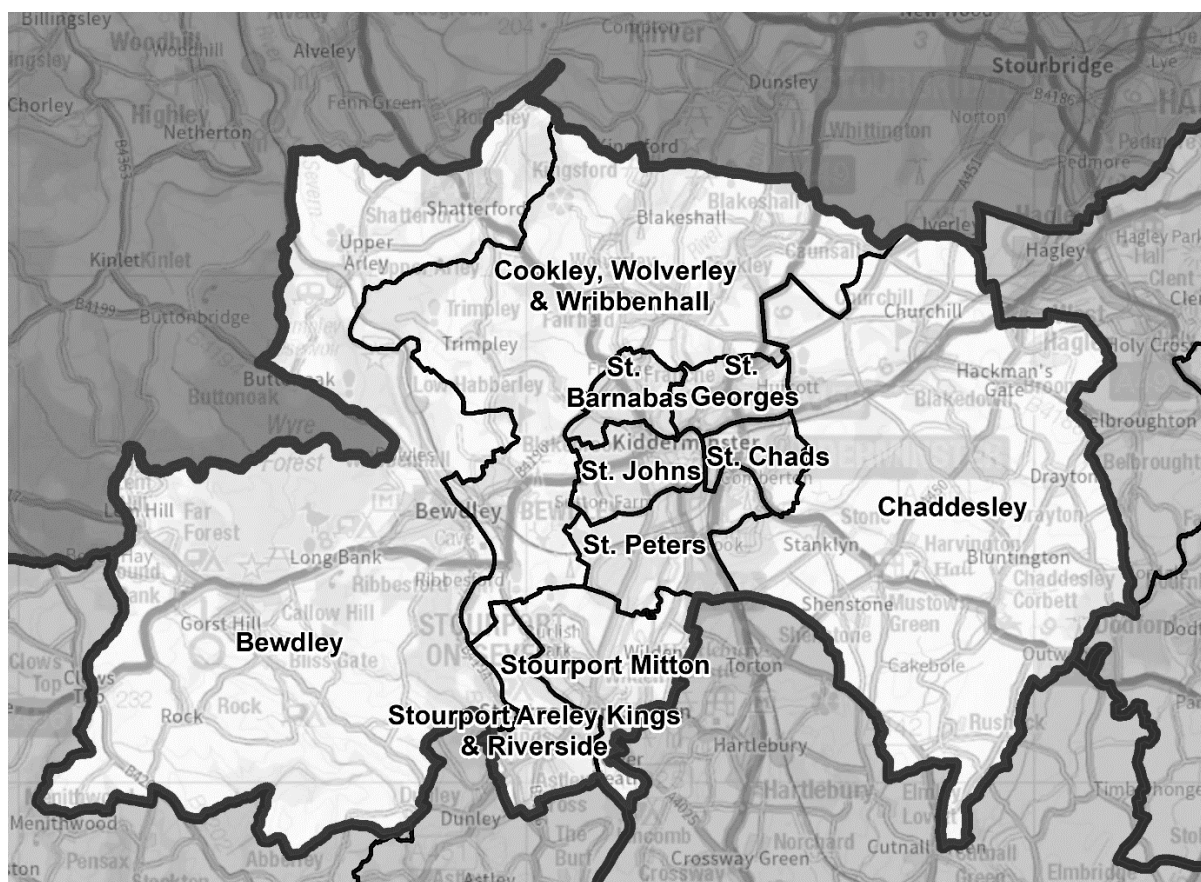
76 We received support from Kington & Dormston Parish Council, Peopleton Parish Council and two residents for our proposal to retain Kington & Dormston parish in our proposed Upton Snodsbury division. We therefore confirm this division as final.

Bowbrook, Droitwich East, Droitwich West and Ombersley

77 Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council supported our draft recommendations for Bowbrook division and considered them to provide for effective and convenient local government. Councillor Morris also expressed support for our draft recommendations in this area, but proposed to extend the boundary of Droitwich West division further south to the Copcut Roundabout, to include electors on Lahn Drive and Monnow Close. They argued that this would provide for a more locally recognisable boundary. After consideration, we consider this amendment to better reflect our statutory criteria and have adopted it as part of our final recommendations.

78 Dodderhill Parish Council expressed support for our proposal to move Impney parish ward from Ombersley division to Droitwich East division. We received no further submissions relating to these divisions and we therefore confirm them as final.

Wyre Forest



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Bewdley	1	-8%
Chaddesley	1	5%
Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall	1	-6%
St Barnabas	1	-10%
St Chads	1	-8%
St Georges	1	-3%
St Johns	1	1%
St Peters	1	-9%
Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside	1	-7%
Stourport Mitton	1	11%

Bewdley, Chaddesley and Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall

79 Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council objected to our draft recommendation to adopt the Council scheme and move part of Kidderminster Foreign parish into Bewdley division. Instead, the parish council proposed to extend the boundary of Bewdley division eastwards, to the railway line. They stated this amendment would also allow for their parish to remain wholly contained in Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall division. However, this proposal would result in a -13% forecasted electoral variance for Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall division. We were not

persuaded to adopt this suggestion as part of our final recommendations as we were not persuaded that the community evidence provided was not strong enough to warrant an electoral variance of this level.

80 Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council supported our draft recommendations for Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall division. Wyre Forest District Council objected to our parish warding arrangements for this division and proposed the retention of Wolverley and Cookley as separate parish wards. They also requested that we increase the number of parish councillors allocated to Lea Castle parish ward from four to five, as the new Lea Castle development is expected to exceed the number of electors initially forecasted. We have carefully considered these proposals and have included the separate parish wards of Wolverley and Cookley as part of our final recommendations. However, we were not persuaded to adopt the proposal to increase the number of parish councillors allocated to Lea Castle parish ward, as we allocate parish councillors based on the forecast electorate figures that were decided and published at the beginning of the review. In any case, we consider that a community governance review, carried out by Wyre Forest District Council after the completion of this electoral review, would be the most effective way to amend the allocation of parish councillors to parish wards in this area.

81 Broome Parish Council, Rushock Parish Council and Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council supported our draft recommendations for Chaddesley division. A resident stated that Wilden Lane Forest Gate should be in the same division as the Spennells estate, which is in Chaddesley division, as this area is 'absolutely dependent on the Spennells estate for all its shops, transport, play areas, schools and representation'. We could not adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations as this area is currently in Stourport Mitton division and is separated from Chaddesley division by a district boundary, which we are not able to cross. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Chaddesley division as final.

St Barnabas, St Chads, St Georges, St Johns and St Peters

82 The Wyre Forest Liberal Democrats advocated for the inclusion of electors east of the railway line into St Chads division, arguing that this area shares many facilities and amenities with St Chads division. They also proposed to move electors east of Hoo Road, which we placed in St Chads division under our draft recommendations, into St Peters division. They stated that this amendment would better represent community identities and interests in this area. However, these proposals produce an anticipated electoral variance of -21% for St Peters division. We consider this electoral variance is too high to accept if we are to ensure equality of representation in Worcestershire. Therefore, we have not adopted this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

83 A number of residents, Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest Liberal Democrats, Wyre Forest Conservatives, Wyre Forest Conservative Association,

Wyre Forest Labour Party, Kidderminster Town Council and Councillor Hine objected to the parish warding pattern we proposed for Kidderminster in our draft recommendations. Many of the submissions stated that the existing parish warding arrangements for Kidderminster were coterminous with the district wards and therefore assisted in promoting effective and convenient local government.

84 However, the creation of these parish wards was not a choice but a necessity. We have a statutory duty to ensure that parish wards are wholly contained within a county division, while also being mindful of the existing district ward boundaries. While we proposed changes between the Council's proposed St Chads and St Peters divisions in our draft recommendations, to ensure good electoral equality, it is the County Council's proposals that we have largely adopted, which have led to the creation of the Sutton Farm, Greenhill, Aggborough North, Aggborough South & Hill Grove and Spennells parish wards. In the absence of any alternative proposals, we have carried forward our draft recommendations for these divisions and parish ward boundaries for Kidderminster into our final recommendations.

Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside and Stourport Mitton

85 Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest Liberal Democrats and Wyre Forest Conservatives supported our draft recommendations for Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside and Stourport Mitton divisions.

86 Two residents opposed the proposal to divide Lickhill district ward between Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside and Stourport Mitton divisions and the resulting parish warding arrangements for Stourport-on-Severn Town Council. The Wyre Forest Labour Party agreed with our proposed division boundaries for this area and acknowledged that it was necessary to divide Lickhill district ward, but opposed the parish warding of Stourport-on-Severn Town Council as a result. However, as stated in paragraph 83, we have a statutory duty to ensure parish wards are wholly contained within a county division. In the absence of alternative boundary proposals for this area, we consider our proposals to best reflect our statutory criteria and confirm these division boundaries as final.

87 The Wyre Forest Labour Party also proposed to rename Stourport Mitton division to 'Mitton' and Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside to 'Severn' as per the previous electoral review. We were not persuaded to adopt this suggestion as we considered removing 'Stourport' from the division names would make them less recognisable to local electors.

88 A resident also stated that the names of 'Stourport West' and 'Stourport East' for our Stourport divisions should be adopted. However, we were not persuaded to adopt this suggestion, as we determined that these proposed names did not accurately reflect the geography of these divisions. We therefore confirm our proposed names for these divisions as part of our final recommendations.

Conclusions

89 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Worcestershire, referencing the 2022 and 2029 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and divisions. 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

	Final recommendations	
	2022	2029
Number of councillors	57	57
Number of electoral divisions	53	53
Average number of electors per councillor	7,988	8,687
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	9	8
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Final recommendations

Worcestershire County Council should be made up of 57 councillors serving 53 divisions representing 49 single-councillor divisions and four two-councillor divisions. 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 divisions for Worcestershire.

You can also view our final recommendations for Worcestershire on our interactive maps at www.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

90 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 divisions it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

91 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, Worcestershire 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.

92 As a result of our proposed division 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 Belbroughton & Fairfield, Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Kidderminster, Kidderminster Foreign, Malvern, Stourport-on-Severn and Wolverley & Cookley.

93 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Belbroughton & Fairfield parish.

Final recommendations

Belbroughton & Fairfield Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Belbroughton	9
Fairfield	5

94 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Droitwich Spa parish.

Final recommendations

Droitwich Spa Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing 10 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Droitwich Central	1
Droitwich Chawson	2
Droitwich Copcut North	1
Droitwich Copcut South	2
Droitwich Copcut West	1
Droitwich East	4
Droitwich Tagwell	2
Droitwich West	3
Droitwich Witton East	1
Droitwich Witton West	1

95 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Evesham parish.

Final recommendations

Evesham Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing nine wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Abbey North	1
Abbey South	1
Bengeworth	5
Evesham Avon	2
Evesham South	4
Evesham Twyford	2
Fairfield	1
Great Hampton	3
Little Hampton	5

96 We are providing revised electoral parish arrangements for Kidderminster parish.

Final recommendations

Kidderminster Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing 10 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Aggborough North	1
Aggborough South & Hill Grove	1
Blakebrook & Habberley South	3
Broadwaters	3
Foley Park & Hoobrook	2
Franche & Habberley North	3
Greenhill	1
Offmore & Comberton	2
Spennells	1
Sutton Farm	1

97 We are providing revised electoral parish arrangements for Kidderminster Foreign parish.

Final recommendations

Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Kidderminster Foreign North	4
Kidderminster Foreign South	3

98 We are providing revised electoral parish arrangements for Malvern parish.

Final recommendations

Malvern Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing eight wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Chase	4
Great Malvern	3
Link	3
Malvern Vale	3
Pickersleigh	2
Pound Bank	1
St Joseph's	2
Upper Howsell	2

99 We are providing revised electoral parish arrangements for Stourport-on-Severn parish.

Final recommendations

Stourport-on-Severn Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Areley Kings East	2
Areley Kings West	3
Central	2
Lickhill East	1
Lickhill West	1
North	5
Stour and Wilden	4

100 We are providing revised electoral parish arrangements for Wolverley & Cookley parish.

Final recommendations

Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Cookley	5
Lea Castle	4
Wolverley	5

What happens next?

101 We have now completed our review of Worcestershire. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2025.

Equalities

102 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

Final recommendations for Worcestershire County Council

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Bromsgrove							
1 Alvechurch	1	7,501	7,501	-6%	8,553	8,553	-2%
2 Beacon	1	7,879	7,879	-1%	8,197	8,197	-6%
3 Bromsgrove Central	1	9,041	9,041	13%	9,533	9,533	10%
4 Bromsgrove East	1	7,440	7,440	-7%	9,201	9,201	6%
5 Bromsgrove South	1	8,813	8,813	10%	9,502	9,502	9%
6 Bromsgrove West	1	6,219	6,219	-22%	9,607	9,607	11%
7 Clent Hills	1	9,156	9,156	15%	9,857	9,857	13%
8 Woodvale	1	8,521	8,521	7%	8,930	8,930	3%
9 Wythall	1	9,469	9,469	19%	9,925	9,925	14%
Malvern Hills							
10 Croome	1	7,845	7,845	-2%	9,128	9,128	5%

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11 Hallow	1	7,246	7,246	-9%	8,339	8,339	-4%
12 Malvern Chase	1	7,355	7,355	-8%	8,212	8,212	-5%
13 Malvern Langedland	1	7,514	7,514	-6%	7,946	7,946	-9%
14 Malvern Link	1	7,717	7,717	-3%	9,314	9,314	7%
15 Malvern Trinity	1	8,119	8,119	2%	8,561	8,561	-1%
16 Powick & Longdon	1	7,925	7,925	-1%	8,477	8,477	-2%
17 Tenbury	1	8,391	8,391	5%	9,305	9,305	7%
Redditch							
18 Redditch Central	2	16,133	8,067	1%	16,733	8,367	-4%
19 Redditch East	2	15,261	7,631	-4%	15,926	7,964	-8%
20 Redditch South	2	16,216	8,108	2%	17,010	8,505	-2%
21 Redditch West	2	15,842	7,921	-1%	17,090	8,545	-2%
Worcester							
22 Bedwardine	1	7,424	7,424	-7%	7,879	7,879	-9%
23 Claines	1	7,518	7,518	-6%	7,849	7,849	-10%

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
24 Nunnery	1	7,167	7,167	-10%	7,431	7,431	-14%
25 Rainbow Hill & Fort Royal	1	8,404	8,404	5%	9,391	9,391	8%
26 Riverside	1	8,025	8,025	0%	8,601	8,601	-1%
27 St John	1	7,539	7,539	-6%	8,028	8,028	-8%
28 St Peter	1	8,136	8,136	2%	8,624	8,624	-1%
29 St Stephen	1	8,031	8,031	1%	8,323	8,323	-4%
30 Warndon & Elbury Park	1	7,414	7,414	-7%	7,759	7,759	-11%
31 Warndon Villages	1	8,166	8,166	2%	8,513	8,513	-2%
Wychavon							
32 Bowbrook	1	8,429	8,429	6%	9,343	9,343	8%
33 Bredon	1	8,598	8,598	8%	8,941	8,941	3%
34 Broadway	1	8,747	8,747	10%	9,355	9,355	8%
35 Droitwich East	1	8,371	8,371	5%	9,031	9,031	4%
36 Droitwich West	1	8,652	8,652	8%	9,096	9,096	5%
37 Evesham North West	1	8,533	8,533	7%	9,619	9,619	11%

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
38 Evesham South	1	8,944	8,944	12%	9,539	9,539	10%
39 Harvington	1	8,464	8,464	6%	8,786	8,786	1%
40 Littletons	1	6,992	6,992	-12%	7,851	7,851	-10%
41 Ombersley	1	8,546	8,546	7%	8,885	8,885	2%
42 Pershore	1	9,080	9,080	14%	9,896	9,896	14%
43 Upton Snodsbury	1	8,387	8,387	5%	9,231	9,231	6%
Wyre Forest							
44 Bewdley	1	7,642	7,642	-4%	7,965	7,965	-8%
45 Chaddesley	1	7,188	7,188	-10%	9,139	9,139	5%
46 Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall	1	7,406	7,406	-7%	8,127	8,127	-6%
47 St Barnabas	1	7,448	7,448	-7%	7,815	7,815	-10%
48 St Chads	1	7,111	7,111	-11%	7,965	7,965	-8%
49 St Georges	1	7,743	7,743	-3%	8,443	8,443	-3%
50 St Johns	1	8,366	8,366	5%	8,765	8,765	1%
51 St Peters	1	7,455	7,455	-7%	7,869	7,869	-9%

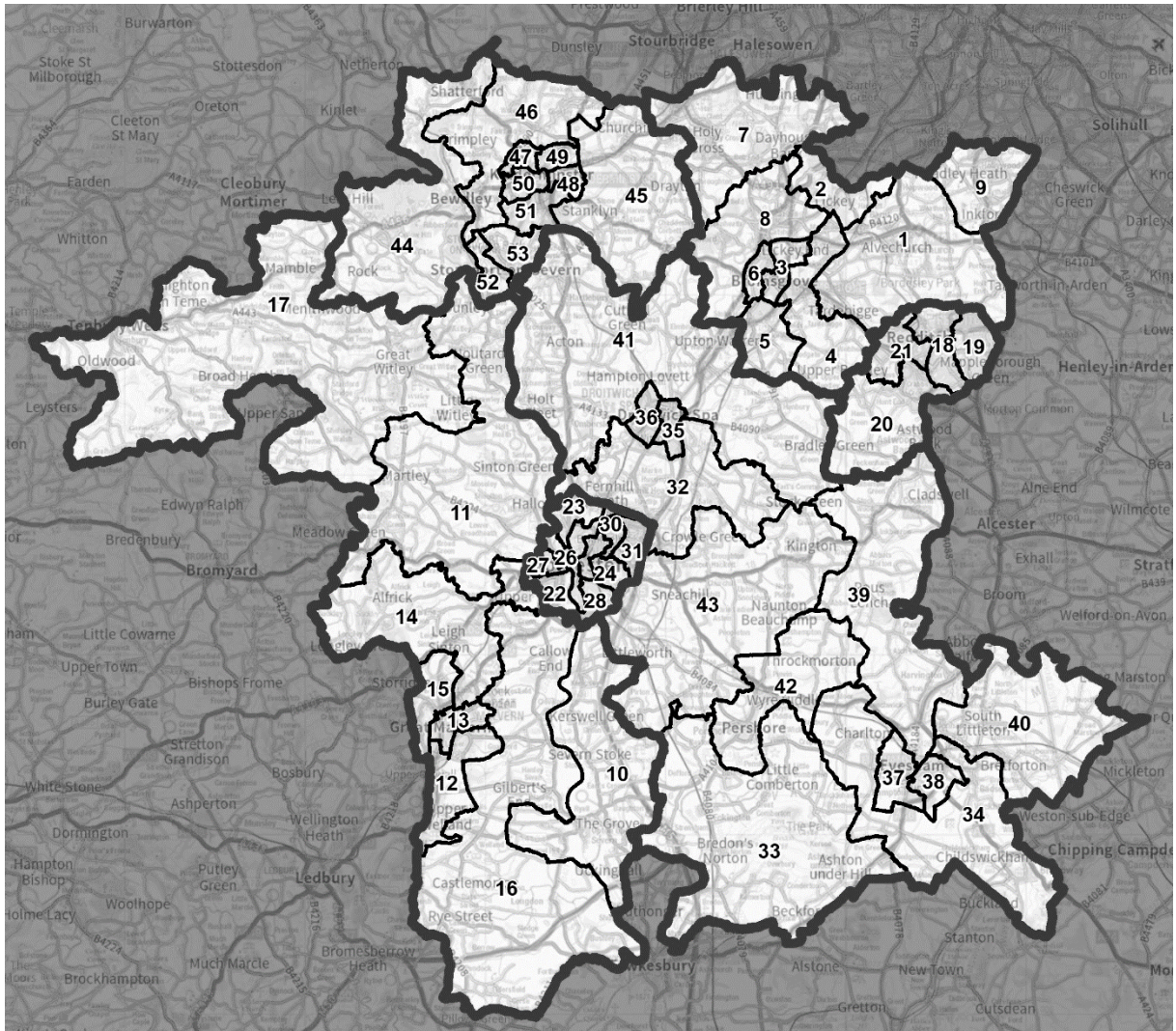
Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
52 Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside	1	6,957	6,957	-13%	8,093	8,093	-7%
53 Stourport Mitton	1	8,807	8,807	10%	9,674	9,674	11%
Totals	57	455,293	-	-	495,172	-	-
Averages	-	-	7,988	-	-	8,687	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Worcestershire County Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral division varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Number	Division name
1	Alvechurch
2	Beacon
3	Bromsgrove Central
4	Bromsgrove East
5	Bromsgrove South
6	Bromsgrove West
7	Clent Hills
8	Woodvale
9	Wythall
10	Croome
11	Hallow
12	Malvern Chase
13	Malvern Langland

14	Malvern Link
15	Malvern Trinity
16	Powick & Longdon
17	Tenbury
18	Redditch Central
19	Redditch East
20	Redditch South
21	Redditch West
22	Bedwardine
23	Claines
24	Nunnery
25	Rainbow Hill & Fort Royal
26	Riverside
27	St John
28	St Peter
29	St Stephen
30	Warndon & Elbury Park
31	Warndon Villages
32	Bowbrook
33	Bredon
34	Broadway
35	Droitwich East
36	Droitwich West
37	Evesham North West
38	Evesham South
39	Harvington
40	Littletons
41	Ombersley
42	Pershore
43	Upton Snodsbury
44	Bewdley
45	Chaddesley
46	Cookley, Wolverley & Wribbenhall
47	St Barnabas
48	St Chads
49	St Georges
50	St Johns
51	St Peters
52	Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside
53	Stourport Mitton

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/worcestershire

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

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

Local Authority

- Bromsgrove District Council
- Malvern Hills District Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Wyre Forest District Council

Political Groups

- Mid Worcestershire & the Vale Green Party
- Wyre Forest Conservative Association
- Wyre Forest Conservatives
- Wyre Forest Labour Party
- Wyre Forest Liberal Democrats

Councillors

- Councillor M. Allen (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor A. Betteridge (Hill & Moor Parish Council)
- Councillor D. Boatright-Greene (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor A. Cross (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor A. Dale (Bromsgrove District Council)
- Councillor E. Eyre (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor M. Goodge (Evesham Town Council)
- Councillor D. Hine (Kidderminster Town Council)
- Councillor A. Kent (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor A. Kriss (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor K. May (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor R. Morris (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor S. Nock (Bromsgrove District Council)
- Councillor R. Raphael (Wychavon District Council)
- Councillor E. Stokes (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor K. Taylor (Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor S. Taylor (Wythall Parish Council)
- Councillor P. Whatley (Malvern Hills District Council)

- Councillor K. Wiseman (Alvechurch Parish Council)

Local Organisations

- Fairfield Village Community Association

Parish and Town Councils

- Alvechurch Parish Council
- Badsey & Aldington Parish Council
- Barnt Green Parish Council
- Bishampton & Throckmorton Parish Council
- Broome Parish Council
- Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council
- Dodderhill Parish Council
- Evesham Town Council
- Finstall Parish Council
- Hagley Parish Council
- Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council
- Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council
- Kidderminster Town Council
- Kington & Dormston Parish Council
- Malvern Town Council
- Peopleton Parish Council
- Rushock Parish Council
- Tutnall & Cobley Parish Council
- Warndon Parish Council
- Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council
- Wythall Parish Council

Local Residents

- 192 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 (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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