

New electoral arrangements for Wirral Council Draft Recommendations

April 2025

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Wirral Council

Electoral review

April 2025

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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 details 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

Why Wirral?

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

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

- The wards in Wirral 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 borough.

Our proposals for Wirral

9 Wirral should be represented by 66 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Wirral should have 22 wards, the same number as there are now.

11 The boundaries of nine wards should change; 13 wards will stay the same. Some ward names will change.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

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

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

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 1 April 2025 to 9 June 2025. 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 9 June 2025 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 23 for how to send us your response.

Review timetable

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

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
20 August 2024	Number of councillors decided
10 September 2024	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
18 November 2024	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
1 April 2025	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
9 June 2025	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
30 September 2025	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

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

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

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

	2024	2030
Electorate of Wirral	243,614	255,680
Number of councillors	66	66
Average number of electors per councillor	3,691	3,874

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Wirral are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2030.

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 2030, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2025. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 5% by 2030.

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

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

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

26 Our mapping tool uses geocoded electoral registers supplied by the Council to locate electors, by associating addresses with specific geographic coordinates. It considers each elector's location to produce precise elector counts for each ward. There can be very slight differences between the electorate figures published on our website at the beginning of the review and the electorate figures published in this report. However, these are very minor and do not impact on our recommendations.

Number of councillors

27 Wirral Council currently has 66 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.

28 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 66 councillors, for example, 66 one-councillor wards, 22 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

29 We received nine submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns. These submissions were all brief and stated that 66 councillors were too many for the authority. However, in our view none of these submissions provided sufficient evidence to explain why this opinion was held nor proposed an alternative number of members. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a 66-councillor council.

Ward boundaries consultation

30 We received 49 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included four borough-wide proposals from the Conservative, Green, Labour and Liberal Democrat groups on the Council. Councillor Cleary made a submission in support of the Green group proposals. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

31 The Conservative Group and Labour Group proposed uniform patterns of three-councillor wards. The other two borough-wide schemes from the Green Party Group and the Liberal Democrat Group proposed a mixed pattern of two- and three-councillor wards. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

32 Our draft recommendations are based on a combination of the borough-wide proposals received and provide for a uniform pattern of 22 three-councillor wards. As Wirral Council has changed its electoral cycle and has moved to whole-council elections once every four years, it is no longer required to have a uniform pattern of

three-councillors wards. We have, however, come to the view that a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards provides the best balance of our three statutory criteria and provides the best warding pattern across the borough. However, we would welcome comments and evidence on this approach during the current consultation and are open to moving away from a uniform pattern of wards where we receive the evidence to do so.

33 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.

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

Draft recommendations

35 Our draft recommendations are for 22 three-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

36 The tables and maps on pages 8–19 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Wirral. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

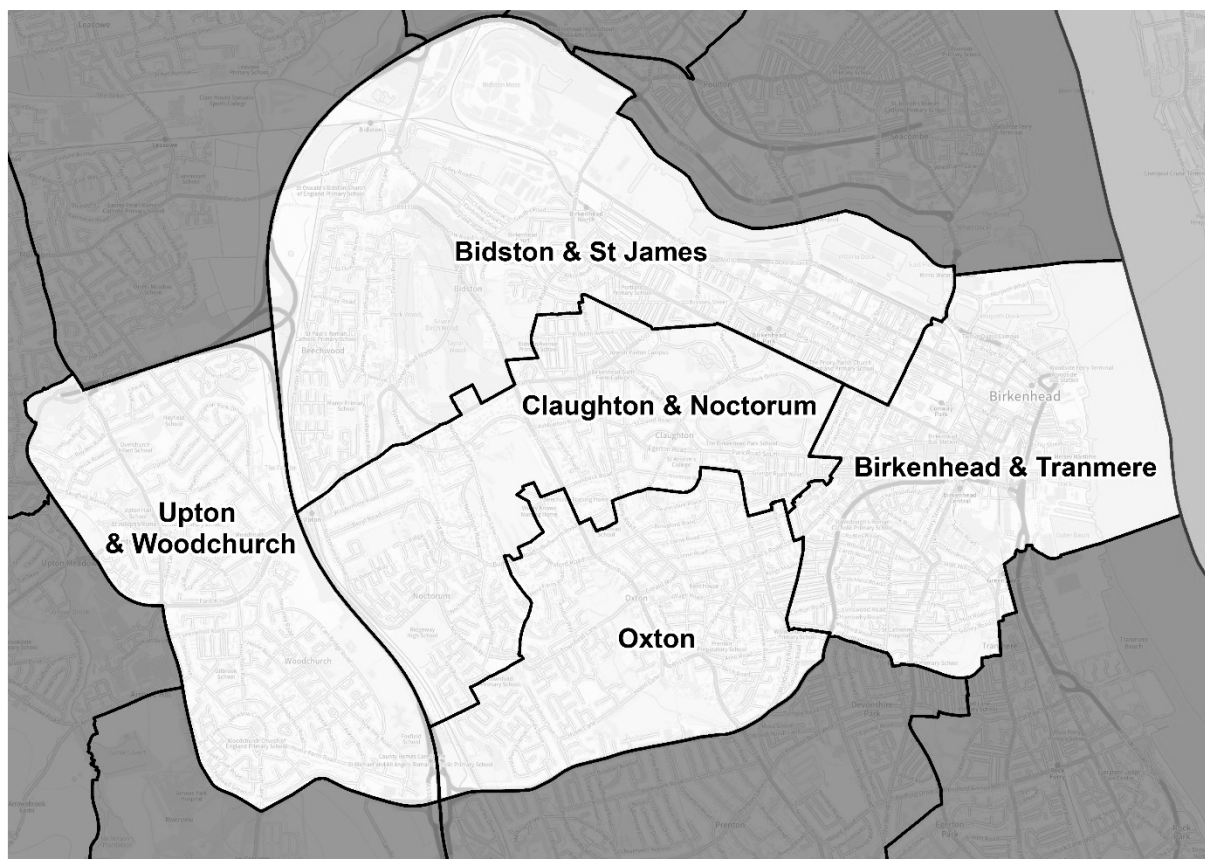
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

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

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

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Central Wirral



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Bidston & St James	3	3%
Birkenhead & Tranmere	3	4%
Claughton & Noctorum	3	-3%
Oxton	3	-2%
Upton & Woodchurch	3	7%

Bidston & St James, Birkenhead & Tranmere, Claughton & Noctorum, Oxton and Upton & Woodchurch

39 The Labour Group proposed minor changes to the boundary of Birkenhead & Tranmere ward and Prenton and Rock Ferry wards which we discuss in full later in this report. The group proposed to include Pembroke Court, Holborn Square and all of Holt Road in Birkenhead & Tranmere ward. Holt Road is currently divided between Birkenhead & Tranmere and Rock Ferry wards. It also proposed to move the southern boundary of Birkenhead & Tranmere ward from its current alignment along Ivydale Road, Elderwood Road, Well Lane and Victoria Park Road so that it follows Downham Road for its duration. Electors to the south of Downham Road would move into Prenton ward. This proposal was made to provide for electoral equality in this ward and adjoining areas, including its proposed Bromborough ward.

40 The Conservative Group proposed one change to the existing boundaries of these five wards. This involved the same area to the south of Downham Road which the Labour Group proposed be moved to Prenton ward. The Conservative Group proposed that these electors be transferred to Rock Ferry ward. It made this proposal to provide for electoral equality for Birkenhead & Tranmere ward which would have 13% more electors per councillor than the average for Wirral if no changes are made. The Conservatives also proposed that Claughton ward be renamed Claughton & Noctorum and that Upton ward be renamed Upton & Woodchurch ward.

41 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed one small change to the boundary between Bidston & St James ward and Birkenhead & Tranmere ward. The group proposed to move the existing ward boundary from Rendel Street, Watson Street and Conway Street so that it follows Corporation Road and Vittoria Street. This would mean that the streets either side of Cathcart Street would be included in its proposed Birkenhead Central ward. The group made this proposal to facilitate its warding pattern for the Birkenhead and Tranmere areas, which is discussed in the section on Rock Ferry ward, below. The group also proposed a minor extension of Oxton ward to the north so that all of Waterford Road would be included in the ward. It also proposed to move the northern boundary of Upton ward so that it follows the rear of properties on Royden Road. As a consequence, the properties to the north of this would be included in Moreton West & Saughall Massie ward.

42 The Green Party Group suggested more significant changes to the pattern of wards in this area, proposing the five two-councillor wards of Birkenhead Central, Claughton, Noctorum, Oxton and Tranmere. The group also proposed a three-councillor ward of Upton and a three-councillor ward of Bidston & St James. In particular, it proposed to move the northern boundary of Claughton ward from Norman Street to run along Park Road North, Laird Street and Lansdowne Road, with electors in properties bounded by these roads moving into its proposed Claughton ward. The group also proposed to move the boundary to follow Upton Road rather than Thermopylae Pass to include a small number of properties on Vyner Road South in Claughton ward. Councillor Tomeny supported the Green Party proposal.

43 Amongst the other submissions we received, a local resident suggested breaking up Bidston & St James ward as they considered it too large. However, they did not suggest a proposed boundary that would achieve this.

44 Having considered all the submissions received and having visited the area on our tour of Wirral, we propose to make minimal changes to the warding arrangements in this area. As described elsewhere in the report, we have adopted the Labour Group's proposals for the boundary between Birkenhead & Tranmere, Prenton and Rock Ferry wards. We also propose to adopt the small amendment

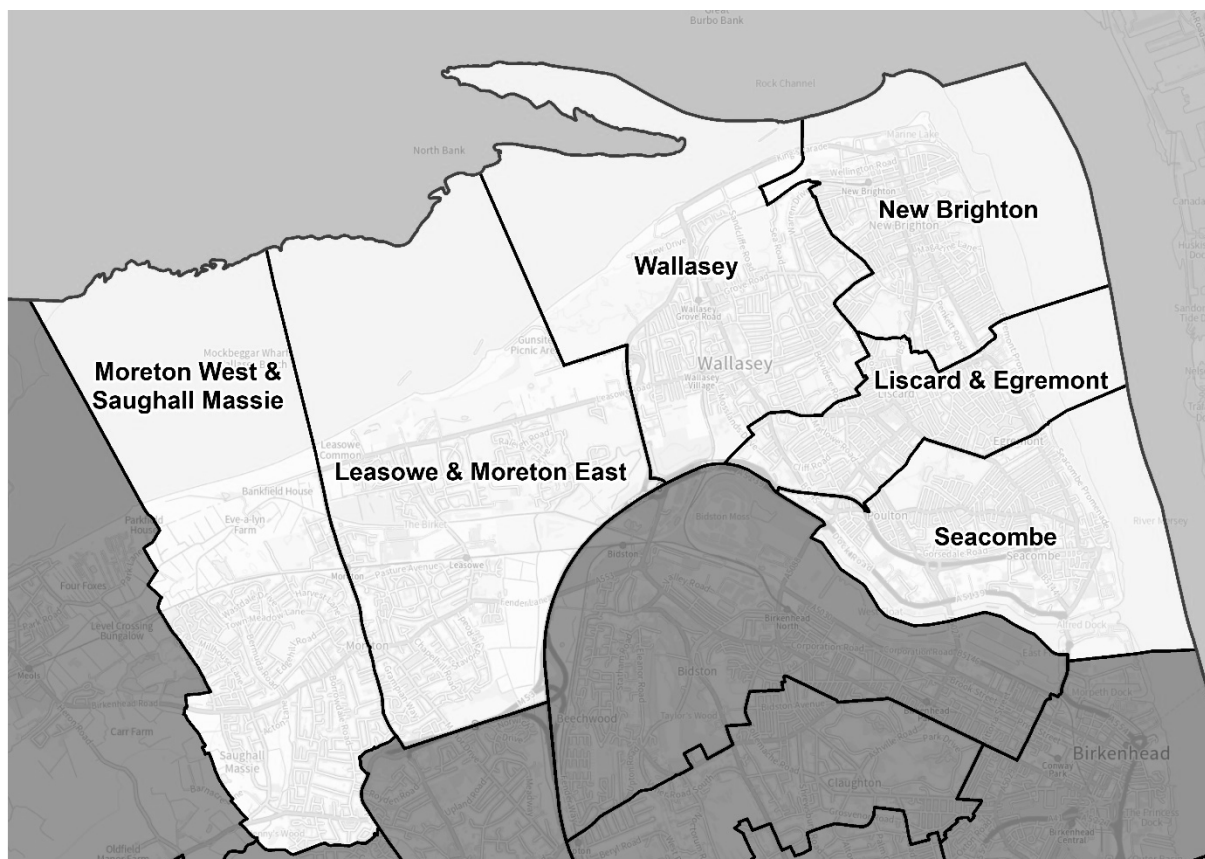
proposed by the Liberal Democrats to include all of Waterford Road in Oxton ward, although we have revised the boundary to follow the rear of properties on Budworth Road, Waterford Road and Winthrop Park so as not to divide the Wirral Golf Course between wards as the Liberal Democrat scheme had proposed.

45 We gave a great deal of consideration to the major revisions proposed by the Green Party for these wards. We have concluded that we have not received sufficient evidence to demonstrate that a reduction of one councillor for Wirral to 65 councillors provided a significantly better warding pattern. Furthermore, we were not persuaded that this warding pattern reflected the communities in this area, particularly in light of the lack of evidence we received regarding community identities and interests. We would welcome further evidence on this proposal during the current consultation and will give it careful consideration before finalising our recommendations.

46 We propose to adopt the ward names suggested by the Conservative Group for Claughton & Noctorum and Upton & Woodchurch as we agree that these names accurately reflect the communities of those wards.

47 Our draft recommendations are for the three-councillor wards of Bidston & St James, Birkenhead & Tranmere, Claughton & Noctorum, Oxton and Upton & Woodchurch. All five wards will have good electoral equality with variances of 3%, 4%, -3%, -2% and 7%, respectively, by 2030.

North Wirral



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Leasowe & Moreton East	3	1%
Liscard & Egremont	3	3%
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	3	-6%
New Brighton	3	0%
Seacombe	3	4%
Wallasey	3	0%

Leasowe & Moreton East, Liscard & Egremont, Moreton West & Saughall Massie, New Brighton, Seacombe and Wallasey

48 The Conservative, Green and Labour groups all proposed to make no changes to the boundaries of these six wards which they all considered fully reflect the communities and required no change. The Conservative Group proposed that Liscard ward be renamed Liscard & Egremont to reflect both communities in the ward.

49 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed a small change to the boundary between Moreton West & Saughall Massie and Upton ward, which is discussed in paragraph 41.

50 The only other submission relating to this area was from a local resident who wanted to ensure that Seacombe ward reflected the increased electorate as a result of the Wirral Waters Development.

51 Having considered the submissions received and given the strong preference for retaining the existing electoral arrangements in this area, we have decided to make no change to ward boundaries in north Wirral, as part of our draft recommendations.

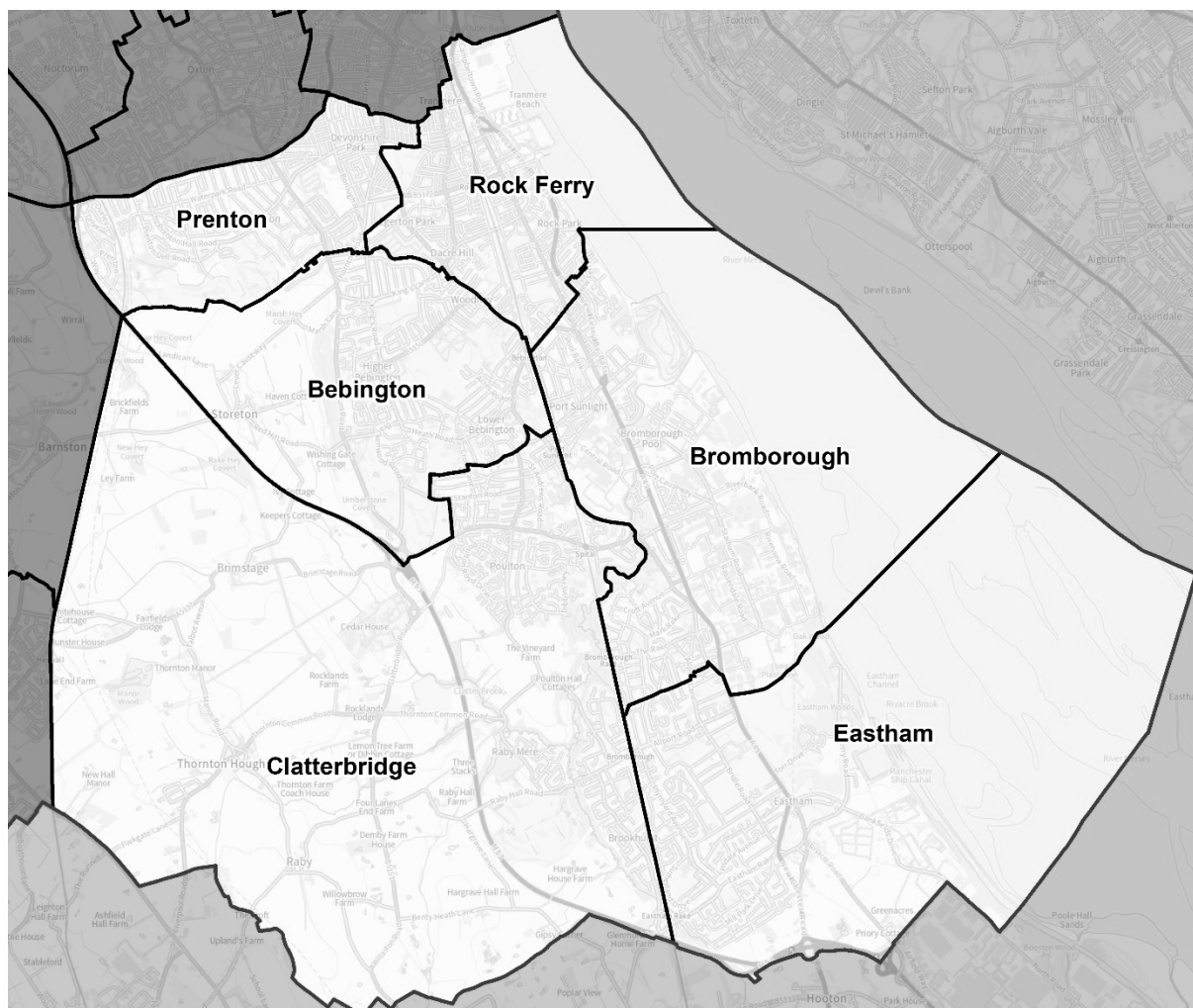
52 However, we are recommending the ward name of Liscard & Egremont, as proposed by the Conservative Group, which we consider reflects the constituent communities of the proposed ward.

53 We considered the small amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group. This, we concluded, was an attempt to reduce the current electoral inequality in Upton ward which, based on the 2024 electorate figures, has an electoral variance of 11%. However, this variance reduces to 7% by 2030 due to housing developments elsewhere in the borough. We are therefore not persuaded to adopt this amendment as part of our draft recommendations. We also considered that the proposed amendment would not reflect community identities given that the proposed Moreton West & Saughall Massie ward would include electors either side of a large dual carriageway which appears to form a significant barrier between communities.

54 In response to the submission regarding the Wirral Waters Development, we confirm that the five-year electorate forecast incorporates this development and has been taken into account when considering the boundaries of the unchanged Seacombe ward.

55 Our draft recommendations for this area are for the three-councillor wards of Leasowe & Moreton East, Liscard & Egremont, Moreton West & Saughall Massie, New Brighton, Seacombe and Wallasey. These wards will have good electoral equality with variances of 1%, 3%, -6%, 0%, 4% and 0%, respectively, by 2030.

South Wirral



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Bebington	3	4%
Bromborough	3	6%
Clatterbridge	3	3%
Eastham	3	-2%
Prenton	3	7%
Rock Ferry	3	4%

Bromborough, Prenton and Rock Ferry

56 The current Bromborough ward will see significant housing development that results in an electoral variance of 24% for this ward by 2030. All four borough-wide schemes propose to address this electoral inequality by proposing changes to its existing boundaries.

57 The Labour Group proposed to amend the boundary between Bromborough and Rock Ferry wards. Its proposed boundary follows Bebington Road, then follows

the rear of properties on the south side of Beverley Road, before running up New Ferry Road to the River Mersey. All properties to the north of this boundary would move from Bromborough ward to Rock Ferry ward. The Labour Group also proposed to move the boundary between Prenton and Rock Ferry wards from Bedford Drive and The Wiend to Hesketh Avenue and Borough Road so that Prenton High School would be included in Prenton ward. Councillors Cooke and Graham supported this change. It also proposed the associated changes to Birkenhead & Tranmere and Prenton wards as detailed in paragraph 39 of this report.

58 The Conservative Group put forward only minor changes to these wards. It proposed a small amendment to Rock Ferry ward, which is discussed elsewhere in this report. It also proposed a change to the boundary between Bromborough and Clatterbridge wards so that it follows Bromborough Road and the Dibbinsdale Brook rather than the railway line. This would ensure that the whole of the Spital area would be included in Clatterbridge ward.

59 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed to address the electoral inequality in Bromborough ward by transferring a larger part of the existing ward into its proposed two-councillor Rock Ferry & New Ferry ward with the remainder of the existing Rock Ferry ward moving into a two-councillor Tranmere & Egerton ward. The group also proposed to move the boundary between Prenton and Bebington wards to include Gayton, Harley, Heswall and Stanley Avenues in Prenton ward to improve electoral equality in both wards.

60 The Green Party Group proposed to move a larger portion of the existing Bromborough ward into its proposed three-councillor Rock Ferry ward. The group also proposed that the southern boundary of Bromborough ward follow Allport Road rather than Acre Lane, moving all electors north of Allport Road from Eastham ward to Bromborough ward. The three Green Party councillors for Bromborough wrote in support of the Green Party proposal. In addition, a local resident stated that Port Sunlight should be moved from Bromborough ward to Bebington ward as residents consider themselves to be part of Bebington. Another local resident wrote in support of keeping the existing Prenton ward. Finally, a third local resident wrote in support of the inclusion of all of Spital in Clatterbridge ward, as proposed by the Conservative Group.

61 Having carefully considered the submissions received and having visited this area as part of our tour of Wirral, we have decided to base our draft recommendations on a combination of the proposals from the Labour Group and Conservative Group. We visited the area between Well Lane and Downham Road which the Labour Group proposed be included in Prenton ward and which the Conservative Group included in Rock Ferry ward. We concluded that it was most appropriate to include this area in Prenton ward. In particular, having visited the area we considered that it had stronger community ties to Prenton, particular around the

Church Road shopping area which serves both communities. However, we are keen to hear evidence from electors in this area during the current consultation as to where their community links lie. We also propose to adopt the Labour Group's proposal to move the boundary between Prenton and Rock Ferry wards from Borough Road and Hesketh Avenue to ensure that Prenton High School is contained in Prenton ward.

62 Finally, we have adopted the Conservative Group's proposal to move the boundary between Bromborough and Clatterbridge wards from the railway line to Bromborough Road and the Dibbinsdale Brook. Our visit to Wirral re-enforced the view that this area appears to form part of the Spital community, but we would welcome further evidence during the current consultation.

63 Of the proposals we have not adopted, we were concerned that the Liberal Democrats' wards of Tranmere & Egerton and Rock Ferry & New Ferry did not have boundaries that were as easily identifiable as the existing arrangements, or the other proposals put forward to us. Nor do we propose to adopt their suggestion for Gayton, Harley, Heswall and Stanley Avenues because we did not consider we had received sufficient evidence of their community connection to Prenton ward. The Green Party Group scheme was predicated on a reduction in the number of councillors across Wirral to provide their chosen warding pattern and we were not persuaded that this proposal provided the best balance of our statutory criteria. Furthermore, we were unable to identify a warding pattern that would include Port Sunlight in Bebington ward and provide electoral equality for Bebington or Bromborough wards.

64 Our draft recommendations are for the three-councillor wards of Bromborough, Prenton and Rock Ferry with electoral variances of 6%, 7% and 4%, respectively, by 2030.

Bebington, Clatterbridge and Eastham

65 The Labour Group proposed no change to these three wards as part of its proposals. The Conservative Group proposed no change other than to the boundary between Bromborough and Clatterbridge wards which is detailed in paragraph 58 and which we propose to adopt as part of our draft recommendations. The Liberal Democrat Group proposed a small change to the ward boundary between Bebington and Prenton detailed in paragraph 59. As detailed above, we have decided not to adopt this change as part of our draft recommendations.

66 The Green Party Group proposed to make more substantive changes to the boundaries of all three wards. It proposed to move Storeton village from Bebington ward to Clatterbridge ward on the basis that it was better suited to the more rural Clatterbridge ward. The group also proposed to include the Brookhurst area in Eastham ward rather than Clatterbridge ward using Allport Road, Raby Hall Road and the M57 as the revised ward boundary rather than the Birkenhead-

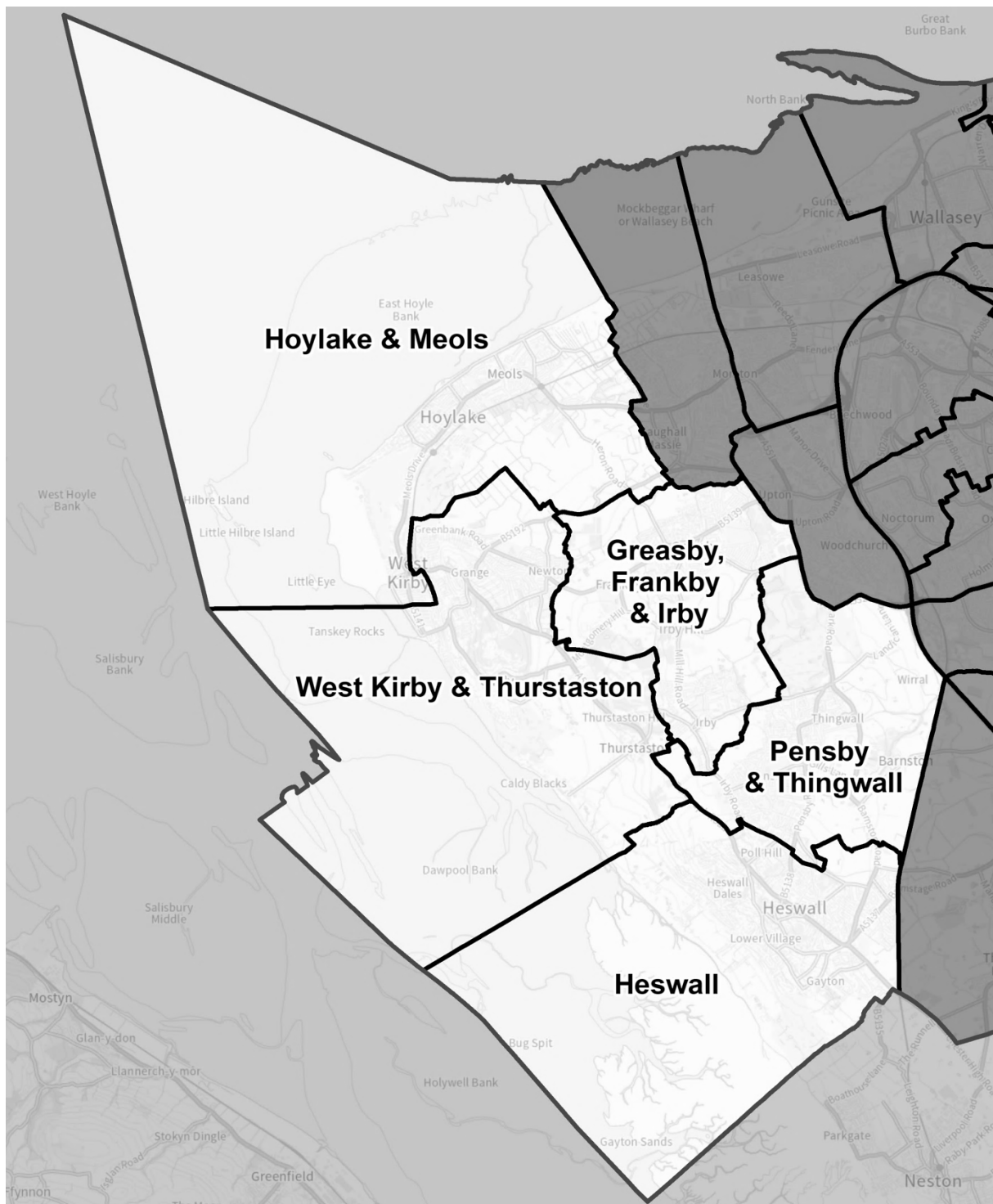
Chester/Ellesmere Port railway line. Its proposed Clatterbridge ward would have 14% fewer electors per councillor than the average for Wirral by 2030. Councillors Grier and Lamb, two of the councillors for Bebington ward, supported the Green Party Group proposal.

67 Two local residents suggested that the Lower Bebington area move from Clatterbridge to Bebington ward. One of the submissions suggested that this should be the area to the north of Spital Road.

68 Having considered the submissions received we propose to make no changes to these wards as part of our draft recommendations, other than the aforementioned change to Clatterbridge ward in the Spital area. We were not persuaded that the Green Party Group's scheme for this area provided the best balance of our statutory criteria. In particular, we were concerned about Storeton Village's apparently limited connections to the rest of Clatterbridge ward as well as the relatively high electoral variance that would result from this proposal. We also carefully considered the proposal to include the Lower Bebington area in Bebington ward. However, we noted that this would result in very high electoral inequality with 30% more electors per councillor in Bebington ward and 36% fewer electors per councillor in Bromborough ward.

69 Our draft recommendations are for the three-councillor wards of Bebington, Clatterbridge and Eastham with electoral variances of 4%, 3% and -2%, respectively, by 2030.

West Wirral



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Greasby, Frankby & Irby	3	1%
Heswall	3	-5%
Hoyalake & Meols	3	-8%
Pensby & Thingwall	3	-9%
West Kirby & Thurstaston	3	-10%

Greasby, Frankby & Irby, Heswall, Hoylake & Meols, Pensby & Thingwall and West Kirby & Thurstaston

70 The Conservative Group and the Labour Group proposed to make no changes to the five wards in this area which they considered continued to offer the best warding pattern for electors in this part of Wirral.

71 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed a number of revisions to the boundaries in this area. It proposed to amend the boundary in West Kirby to include more of the town in Hoylake & Meols ward. The area in question is bounded by Grange Road, Greenbank Road and the Hoylake-West Kirby railway line. In terms of representation, the group's proposed West Kirby & Thurstaston ward would be reduced from three councillors to two and an area of Newton would be included in a new three-councillor Greasby & Newton ward. It further proposed to divide the village of Irby between West Kirby & Thurstaston ward and a renamed Pensby, Thingwall & Irby ward. At the southern boundary of its proposed Pensby, Thingwall & Irby ward, where it meets Heswall ward, the group proposed to make two amendments to the existing boundary. The first was a small change affecting a small number of electors on Mere Lane and Irby Road to reflect their community ties. Secondly, the group proposed to move around 400 electors to the north of Whitfield Lane and east of Pensby Road into Heswall ward on the grounds of community identity.

72 The Green Party Group proposed a three-councillor West Kirby ward including all of the town in a single ward. As a consequence of this the group proposed a two-councillor Hoylake & Meols ward which would have an electoral variance of 13% by 2030. It also proposed to include Thurstaston in a ward with Heswall, as well as moving Irby into a proposed Irby, Pensby & Thingwall ward. Additionally, the group proposed a two-member Greasby & Frankby ward and that Barnston village be transferred from the existing Pensby & Thingwall ward to Clatterbridge ward which would have an electoral variance of 14% by 2030.

73 Amongst the other submissions we received, four local residents wrote in support of West Kirby not being divided between wards. However, they did not put forward alternative boundaries that would both achieve this and provide for good electoral equality. Councillor Jenkinson, one of the current councillors for Greasby, Frankby & Irby, wrote in support of the removal of Irby from that ward and its inclusion in a ward with Thingwall. A local resident also asserted that Greasby and Irby should be in different wards.

74 Having carefully considered the submissions received and having visited the area as part of our tour of Wirral, we are proposing virtually no change to these five wards as part of our draft recommendations. We do propose to make the small amendment suggested by the Liberal Democrat Group to include a number of properties on Mere Lane and Irby Road in Heswall ward. However, we do not propose to include the Downham Road North area in Heswall ward as this would

leave Pensby & Thingwall ward with 15% fewer electors per councillor than the average by 2030. This is a level of electoral inequality we do not consider to be justified by the evidence received.

75 In respect of the Liberal Democrat proposals in the West Kirby and Irby areas, we were concerned that the proposed Greasby & Newton and Pensby, Thingwall & Irby wards may arbitrarily divide Irby in a way that would not reflect its community identities. Equally we considered that including more of West Kirby town centre in Hoylake & Meols ward would not reflect the community identities and interests of West Kirby.

76 We accept that West Kirby has a sense of community identity and that this might be reflected in the establishment of a ward that would contain the whole town, as proposed by the Green Party Group. However, we were not persuaded to adopt the group's proposals for a number of reasons. We did not consider that sufficient evidence had been provided to justify the overall reduction of councillors from 66 to 65 that the group's scheme would require. Furthermore, we did not consider that sufficient evidence was submitted to justify the high electoral variances that would result under this proposal. Under this warding pattern Hoylake & Meols ward would have 13% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the authority and Clatterbridge ward would have 14% more electors than the average. We were also concerned that including the village of Barnston in Clatterbridge ward would not reflect the community identity of electors in Barnston.

77 Given these reasons we considered that maintaining the existing wards (subject to the very small amendment mentioned in paragraph 74) best reflects the Commission's three statutory criteria of electoral equality, community identities and interests, and effective and convenient local government.

78 Our draft recommendations for this area are for three-councillor wards of Greasby, Frankby & Irby, Heswall, Hoylake & Meols, Pensby & Thingwall and West Kirby & Thurstaston.

79 These wards will have electoral variances of 1%, -5%, -8%, -9% and -10%, respectively, by 2030.

Conclusions

80 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Wirral, referencing the 2024 and 2030 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found in Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided in Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2024	2030
Number of councillors	66	66
Number of electoral wards	22	22
Average number of electors per councillor	3,691	3,874
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	2	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Draft recommendations

Wirral Council should be made up of 66 councillors representing 22 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Wirral Council.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Wirral Council on our interactive maps at www.lgbce.org.uk

Have your say

81 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 borough or just a part of it.

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

83 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

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

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

Review Officer (Wirral)
LGBCE
7th Floor
3 Bunhill Row
London
EC1Y 8YZ

86 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Wirral 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.

87 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.

88 Electoral equality:

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

89 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?

90 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?

91 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.

92 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.

93 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.

94 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 Wirral Council in 2027.

Equalities

95 The Commission is satisfied that it complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act and that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Wirral Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2024)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bebington	3	11,776	3,925	6%	12,034	4,011	4%
2	Bidston & St James	3	10,782	3,594	-3%	11,912	3,971	3%
3	Birkenhead & Tranmere	3	9,595	3,198	-13%	12,113	4,038	4%
4	Bromborough	3	10,144	3,381	-8%	12,320	4,107	6%
5	Clatterbridge	3	11,576	3,859	5%	11,953	3,984	3%
6	Claughton & Noctorum	3	11,076	3,692	0%	11,325	3,775	-3%
7	Eastham	3	11,266	3,755	2%	11,355	3,785	-2%
8	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	3	11,536	3,845	4%	11,744	3,915	1%
9	Heswall	3	10,910	3,637	-1%	11,071	3,690	-5%
10	Hoylake & Meols	3	10,517	3,506	-5%	10,714	3,571	-8%
11	Leasowe & Moreton East	3	11,152	3,717	1%	11,753	3,918	1%

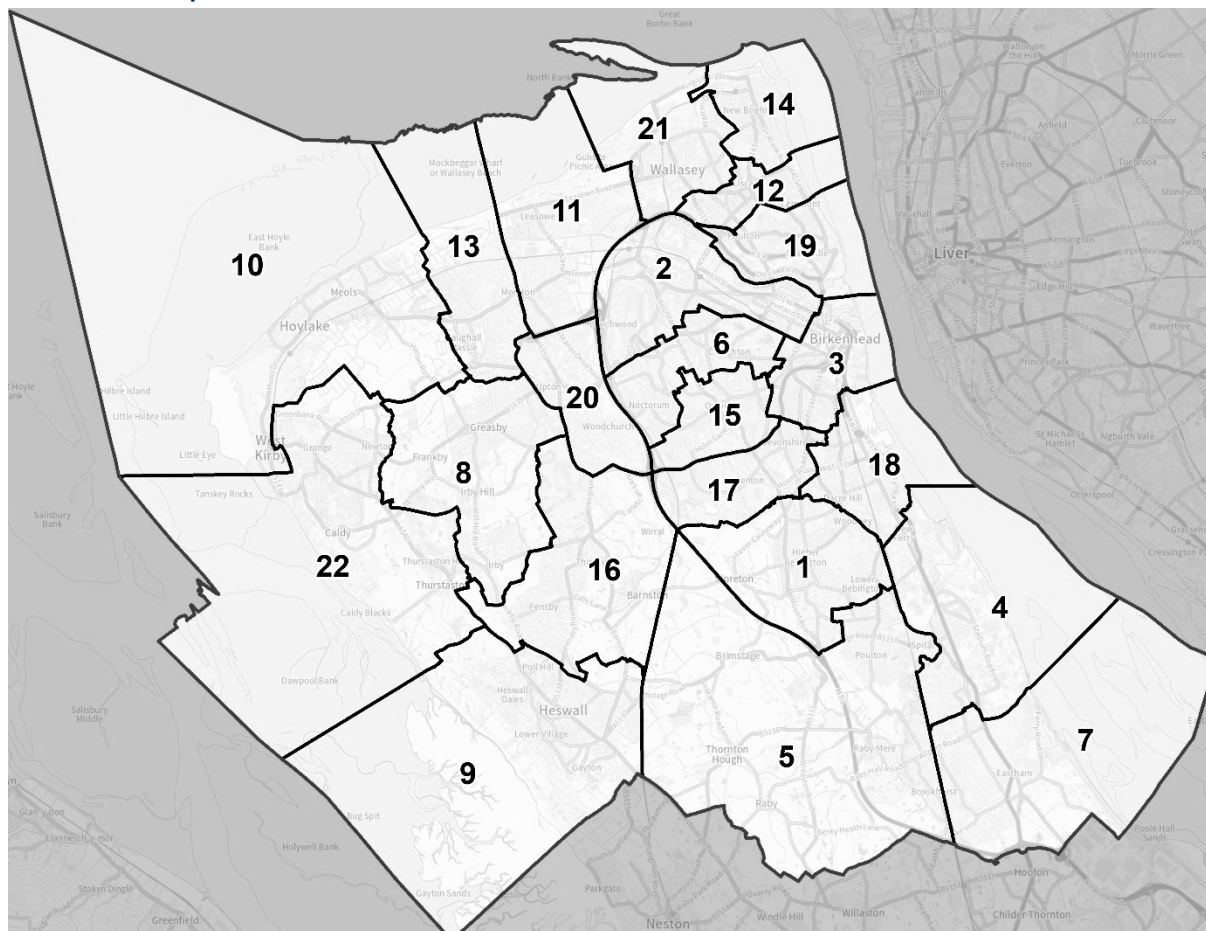
	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2024)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12	Liscard & Egremont	3	11,299	3,766	2%	11,980	3,993	3%
13	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	3	10,675	3,558	-4%	10,874	3,625	-6%
14	New Brighton	3	11,377	3,792	3%	11,575	3,858	0%
15	Oxton	3	11,216	3,739	1%	11,355	3,785	-2%
16	Pensby & Thingwall	3	10,371	3,457	-6%	10,541	3,514	-9%
17	Prenton	3	12,235	4,078	10%	12,399	4,133	7%
18	Rock Ferry	3	11,681	3,894	5%	12,053	4,018	4%
19	Seacombe	3	10,384	3,461	-6%	12,035	4,012	4%
20	Upton & Woodchurch	3	12,257	4,086	11%	12,415	4,138	7%
21	Wallasey	3	11,542	3,847	4%	11,670	3,890	0%
22	West Kirby & Thurstaston	3	10,247	3,416	-7%	10,489	3,496	-10%
Totals		66	243,614	–	–	255,680	–	–
Averages		–	–	3,691	–	–	3,874	–

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

Appendix B

Outline map



1	Bebington	12	Liscard & Egremont
2	Bidston & St James	13	Moreton West & Saughall Massie
3	Birkenhead & Tranmere	14	New Brighton
4	Bromborough	15	Oxton
5	Clatterbridge	16	Pensby & Thingwall
6	Claughton & Noctorum	17	Prenton
7	Eastham	18	Rock Ferry
8	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	19	Seacombe
9	Heswall	20	Upton & Woodchurch
10	Hoylake & Meols	21	Wallasey
11	Leasowe & Moreton East	22	West Kirby & Thurstaston

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/wirral

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

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

Political Groups

- Wirral Borough Council Conservative Group
- Wirral Borough Council Green Group
- Wirral Borough Council Labour Group
- Wirral Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group

Councillors

- Councillors J. Bird, R. Molyneux and K. Murphy (Wirral Borough Council) – Joint submission
- Councillor P. Cleary (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor C. Cooke (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor N. Graham (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor L. Grey (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor J. Grier (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor G. Jenkinson (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor E. Lamb (Wirral Borough Council)
- Councillor E. Tomeny (Wirral Borough Council)

Local Residents

- 36 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Changes Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

Translations and other formats:

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

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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A note on our mapping:

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

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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

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