



# New electoral arrangements for Breckland Council Final Recommendations

June 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

## Why Breckland?

7 We are conducting a review of Breckland District Council ('the Council') as some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

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

- The wards in Breckland 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 district.

## Our proposals for Breckland

9 Breckland should be represented by 51 councillors, two more than there are now.

10 Breckland should have 35 wards, eight more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of 20 wards should change; seven will stay the same.

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

## How will the recommendations affect you?

13 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.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the district 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.

## Review timetable

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

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
13 February 2024	Number of councillors decided
7 May 2024	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
9 September 2024	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
3 December 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
24 February 2025	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
17 June 2025	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation<sup>2</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>3</sup> 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.

18 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.

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.

	2023	2030
Electorate of Breckland	109,159	117,429
Number of councillors	51	51
Average number of electors per councillor	2,140	2,303

20 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'. Thirty-three of our proposed wards for Breckland are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2030. Two wards, Banham & Guiltcross and Wayland, would have variances over 10%, at 11% fewer and 12% fewer respectively by 2030.

## 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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

22 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 8% by 2030.

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

23 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 final recommendations.

24 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

25 Breckland District Council currently has 49 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that increasing by two will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

26 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 51: for example, 51 one-councillor wards or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

27 We received no significant comments about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our warding patterns and therefore based our draft recommendations on a 51-councillor council.

## Ward boundaries consultation

28 We received 25 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries, including two district-wide proposals from the Council and a member of the public. The remaining submissions provided localised comments on specific areas of the district.

29 Both district-wide proposals provided a mixed patterns of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Breckland. While neither proposal had strong supporting arguments, the Council provided more narrative to its proposals, detailing the considerations of its cross-party steering group. The Council stated that it sought to design wards with as few parishes as possible to facilitate councillors' attendance at meetings, while also creating wards with community cohesion and good road links. The member of the public's proposals secured good electoral equality.

30 We carefully considered both district-wide schemes, noting that while in some areas boundaries were similar, in others they differed significantly. The member of the public's proposals relied more heavily on existing boundaries but lacked strong rationale to evidence choices. The Council's proposal offered a slightly stronger



narrative, while employing clear boundaries which generally secure electoral equality.

31 As a result, we used the Council's proposal as the starting point for our draft recommendations. Due to the significant differences between the district-wide schemes, it was difficult to incorporate aspects of both due to the interconnected nature of the boundaries. However, we moved away from the Council's scheme in areas where we did not consider its proposals provided the best balance between our statutory criteria, or to reflect evidence from other submissions, including the member of the public's district-wide scheme.

## Draft recommendations consultation

32 We received 18 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included district-wide comments from the Council. Councillor Kybird expressed support for the Council's response. The remaining submissions provided specific localised comments or general observations on the review process.

33 Following our consideration of the evidence received, we have made a number of changes to our draft recommendations. In Swaffham, we found the arguments for retaining the town as a single ward persuasive, particularly in relation to community identity and internal cohesion. We are therefore recommending a three-member Swaffham ward and a separate single-member Nar Valley ward. In the Forest area, we agree that creating two single-member wards will support more effective and convenient local government, and are adopting the Council's proposed pattern in this area.

34 We are also transferring Snetterton parish from Wayland ward to Buckenham & Quidenham ward, having been persuaded by evidence of shared community identity and infrastructure links. However, we are not adopting the Council's proposal to split the Banham & Guiltcross ward, as this would result in a poor level of electoral equality that was not supported by sufficient justification.

35 In Watton, we are confirming our draft recommendation for a three-member ward. While we acknowledge local concerns, we remain of the view that including Blenheim Grange in a single ward provides the best balance of the statutory criteria, and that separating it would not be justified.

## Final recommendations

36 Our final recommendations are for three three-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and 22 one-councillor wards. 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.

37 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with a modification to the wards in the Swaffham, Forest and Snetterton areas.

38 The tables and maps on pages 9–26 detail our final recommendations for each area of Breckland. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>4</sup> criteria of:

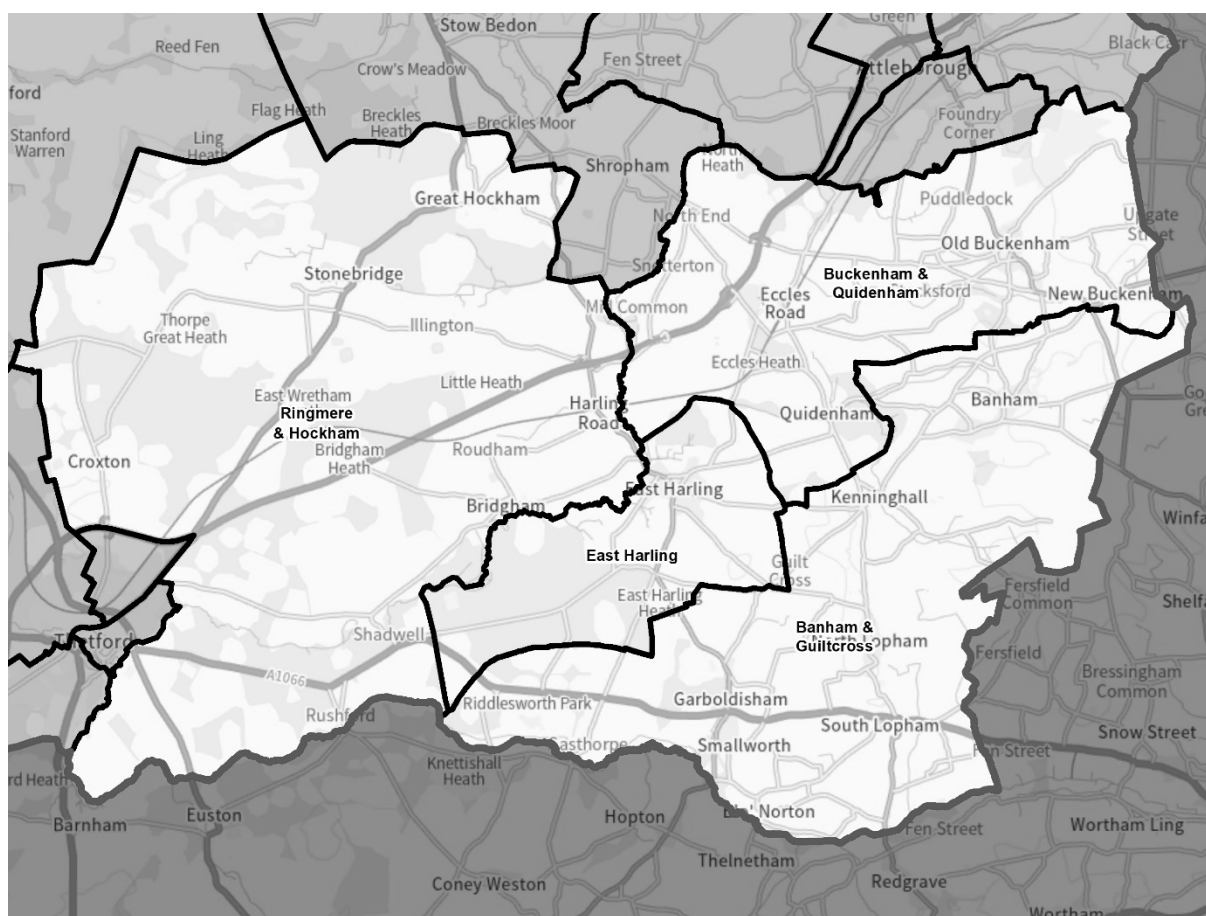
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

39 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 33 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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<sup>4</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## South East



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Banham & Guiltcross	2	-11%
Buckenham & Quidenham	1	-1%
East Harling	1	-4%
Ringmere & Hockham	1	-1%

### *East Harling*

40 In response to the draft recommendations, Councillor Chapman-Allen argued that Riddlesworth parish should be included in East Harling ward. They argued that Riddlesworth and Gasthorpe villages are more closely connected to East Harling, citing road links and stating that they do not have ‘anything in common’ with Garboldisham. No other comments were received on our proposals for East Harling ward.

41 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note Councillor Chapman-Allen’s comments, which are based primarily on road links and geographical distance, and do not offer substantive evidence on community links or lack thereof. In addition, transferring Riddlesworth parish would worsen electoral equality in our Banham & Guiltcross ward from 11% fewer electors than the district

average by 2030, to 13% fewer. On balance, given the limited evidence and lack of broader support, we are not persuaded to adopt this change. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for East Harling as final.

#### *Banham & Guiltcross and Buckenham & Quidenham*

42 In response to the draft recommendations the Council reiterated its original proposal to create two single-member Banham & Kenninghall and Guiltcross wards, rather than combining them into a two-member Banham & Guiltcross ward. It argued that the draft recommendations created a ward that would be too large geographically, making representation difficult given the number of parish councils. It also noted that the proposed ward combined areas with differences in settlement type, service access patterns and healthcare provision, with Guiltcross residents relying more on Suffolk-based services and Banham & Kenninghall residents oriented towards Norfolk.

43 In addition, the Council objected to the inclusion of Snetterton parish in our proposed Wayland ward, citing stronger links to the Buckenham & Quidenham ward. It argued that Snetterton parish has strong parish links with Quidenham parish, supported by infrastructure projects and the anticipated impact of the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor. It also noted that the Snetterton Circuit has a greater impact on Quidenham residents than those in the proposed Wayland ward. It further argued that the draft recommendations worsened electoral equality in Buckenham & Quidenham ward.

44 Councillor Chapman-Allen rejected the two-councillor Banham & Guiltcross ward, arguing that Kenninghall parish should be in a single-councillor Guiltcross ward. As discussed above, Councillor Chapman-Allen also proposed transferring Riddlesworth parish out of our Banham & Guiltcross ward. No other comments were received on this area.

45 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the Council's proposal to split the Banham & Guiltcross ward into two single-member wards. While we acknowledge the geographical size of the ward and the number of parishes involved, we note that the area would be represented by two councillors under our draft recommendations, which we consider would provide effective and convenient local government. In addition, we are not persuaded that the differences in settlement type and service patterns between the areas are sufficient to justify the creation of two separate wards, particularly when this would result in a Guiltcross ward with 14% fewer electors than the district average by 2030. On balance, we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been provided to justify this level of electoral equality.

46 We have also considered Councillor Chapman-Allen's proposal to include Kenninghall in a Guiltcross ward. However, this arrangement would result in a Guiltcross ward with 25% more electors than average, and a Banham ward with 47% fewer, which we do not consider acceptable. While Councillor Chapman-Allen's proposal to transfer Riddlesworth parish to East Harling ward would marginally improve electoral equality in Guiltcross to 20%, this would not resolve the very poor electoral equality in Banham. We are therefore not persuaded to adopt this proposal, and are confirming our draft recommendations for a two-councillor Banham & Guiltcross ward as final.

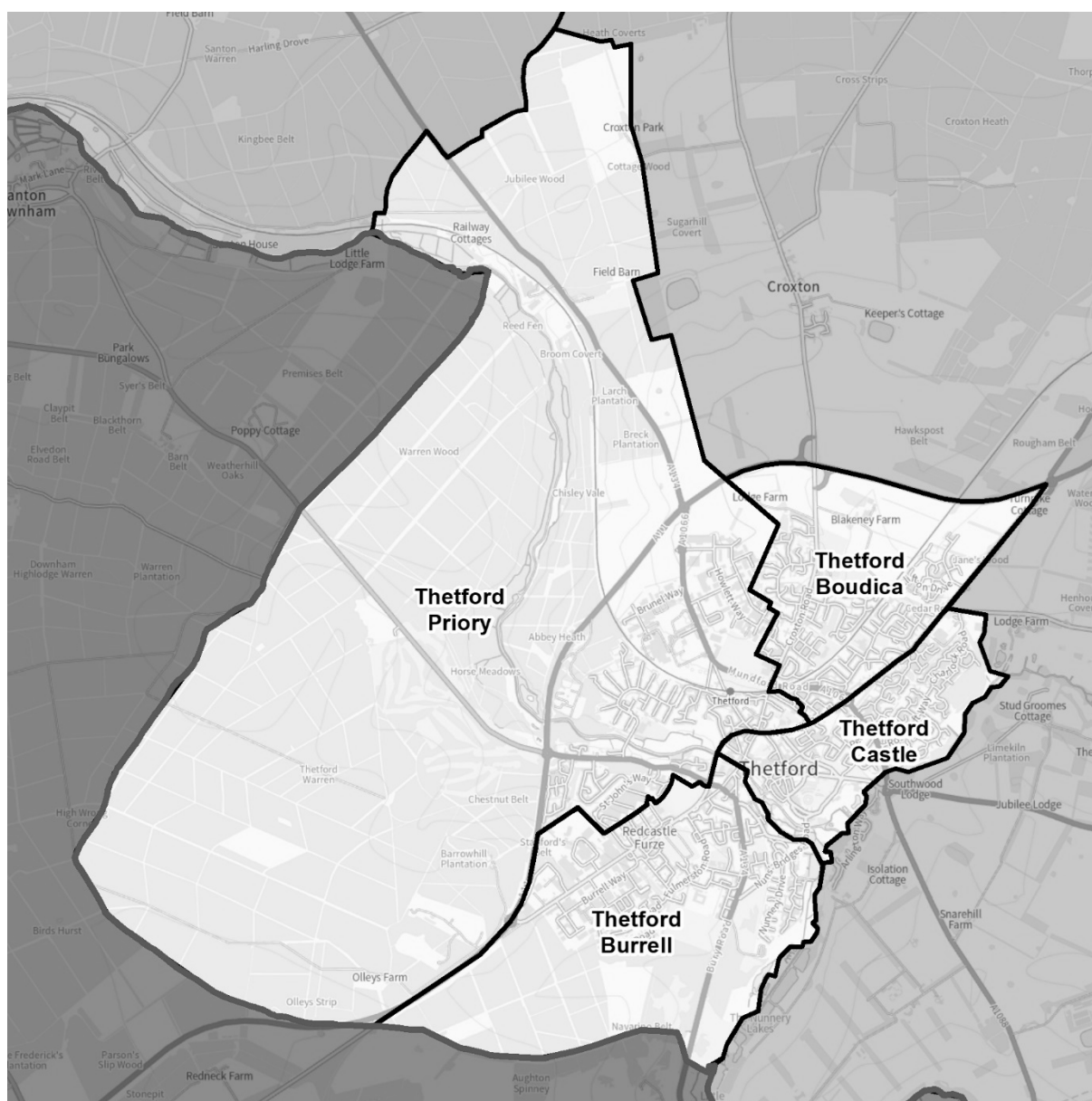
47 We have also considered the Council's proposal to transfer Snetterton parish from our proposed Wayland ward to the Buckenham & Quidenham ward. We acknowledge that this change would worsen electoral equality in Wayland ward to 12% fewer electors than the district average by 2030, but improve it in Buckenham & Quidenham from 9% fewer to 1% fewer. However, we consider the evidence relating to parish ties, shared infrastructure and the wider impact of the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor and Snetterton Circuit to be persuasive. We are therefore adopting this amendment to the boundaries of Wayland and Buckenham & Quidenham wards as part of our final recommendations. Finally, and as discussed above, we are not adopting Councillor Chapman-Allen's proposal to transfer Riddlesworth parish out of the Banham & Guiltcross ward.

48 Our final recommendations are for a single-councillor Buckenham & Quidenham ward and a two-councillor Banham & Guiltcross ward. These wards would have 1% fewer and 11% fewer electors than the district average by 2030.

#### *Ringmere & Hockham*

49 We did not receive any comments on our draft recommendations for this ward, so we are confirming them as final. Our single-councillor Ringmere & Hockham ward would have 1% fewer electors than the district average by 2030.

## Thetford



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Thetford Boudica	2	6%
Thetford Burrell	2	0%
Thetford Castle	2	4%
Thetford Priory	2	4%

### *Thetford Boudica, Thetford Burrell, Thetford Castle and Thetford Priory*

50 In response to the draft recommendations, the Council put forward comments on the parish wards for this area, but not the district wards. Thetford Town Council expressed support for the inclusion of the 'Liberty Gardens' area (Stanford parish ward) in Thetford Boudica ward, but objected

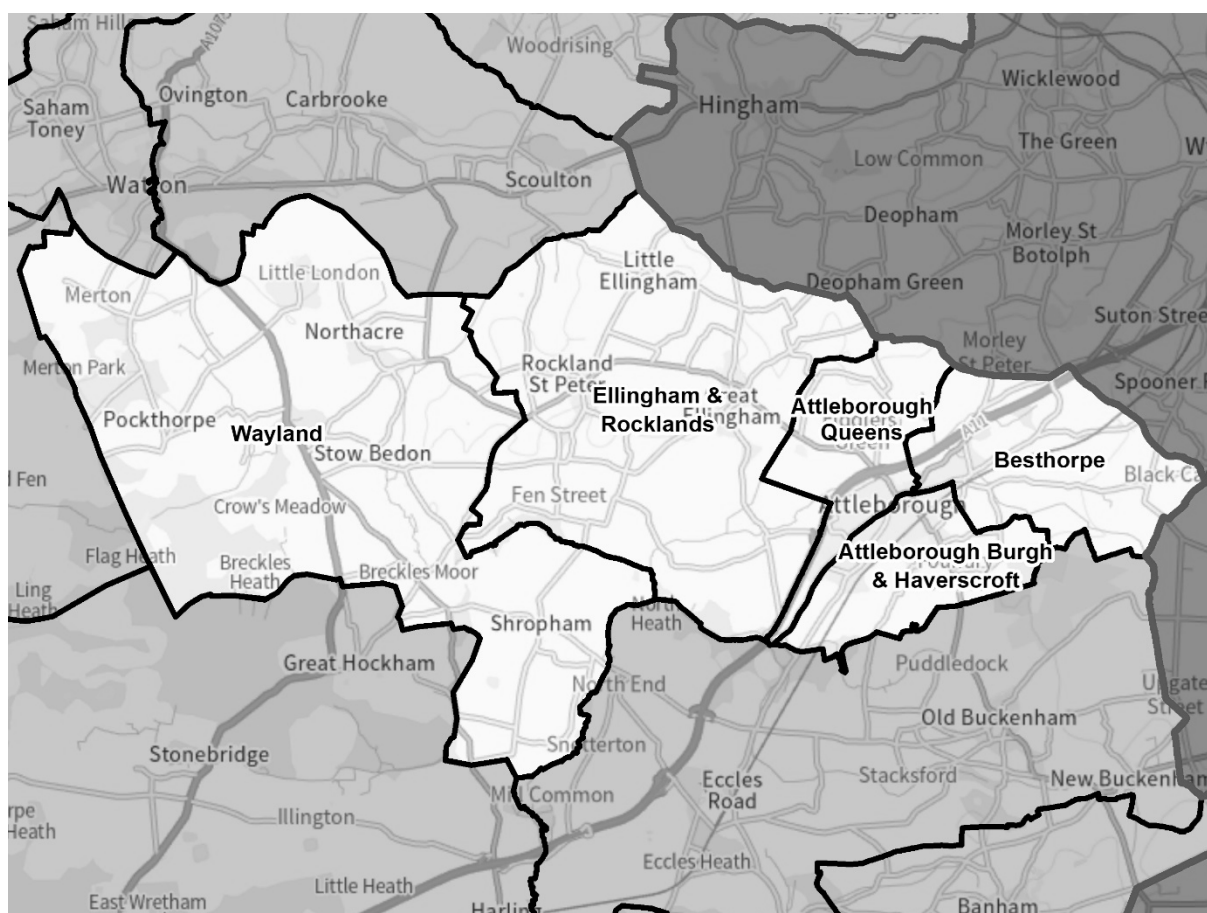
to the transfer of the Vicarage Road area to Thetford Priory, stating it should remain in Thetford Boudica. It also provided comments on the parish wards. We received no other comments on our proposals for Thetford.

51 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. The comments on parish warding are discussed in the parish electoral arrangements section, below. We note a mixture of support and objections to our ward proposals from Thetford Town Council. We note the suggestion that the Vicarage Road area should be retained in Thetford Boudica ward. However, doing so would result in this ward having 14% more electors than the district average by 2030 and we have not been persuaded to adopt a ward with this level of electoral equality. We have been unable to identify any alternatives, so are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

52 Our final recommendations are for two-councillor Thetford Boudica, Thetford Burrell, Thetford Castle and Thetford Priory wards, which would have 6% more, equal to the average, 4% more and 4% more electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.



## Attleborough and Wayland



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft	2	-4%
Attleborough Queens	2	-8%
Bestthorpe	1	-3%
Ellingham & Rocklands	1	6%
Wayland	1	-12%

### *Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft, Attleborough Queens and Bestthorpe*

53 We did not receive any comments on our draft recommendations for these wards, so we are confirming them as final.

54 Our final recommendations are for single-councillor Bestthorpe and two-councillor Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft and Attleborough Queens wards which would have 3% fewer, 4% fewer and 8% fewer electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.



### *Ellingham & Rocklands and Wayland*

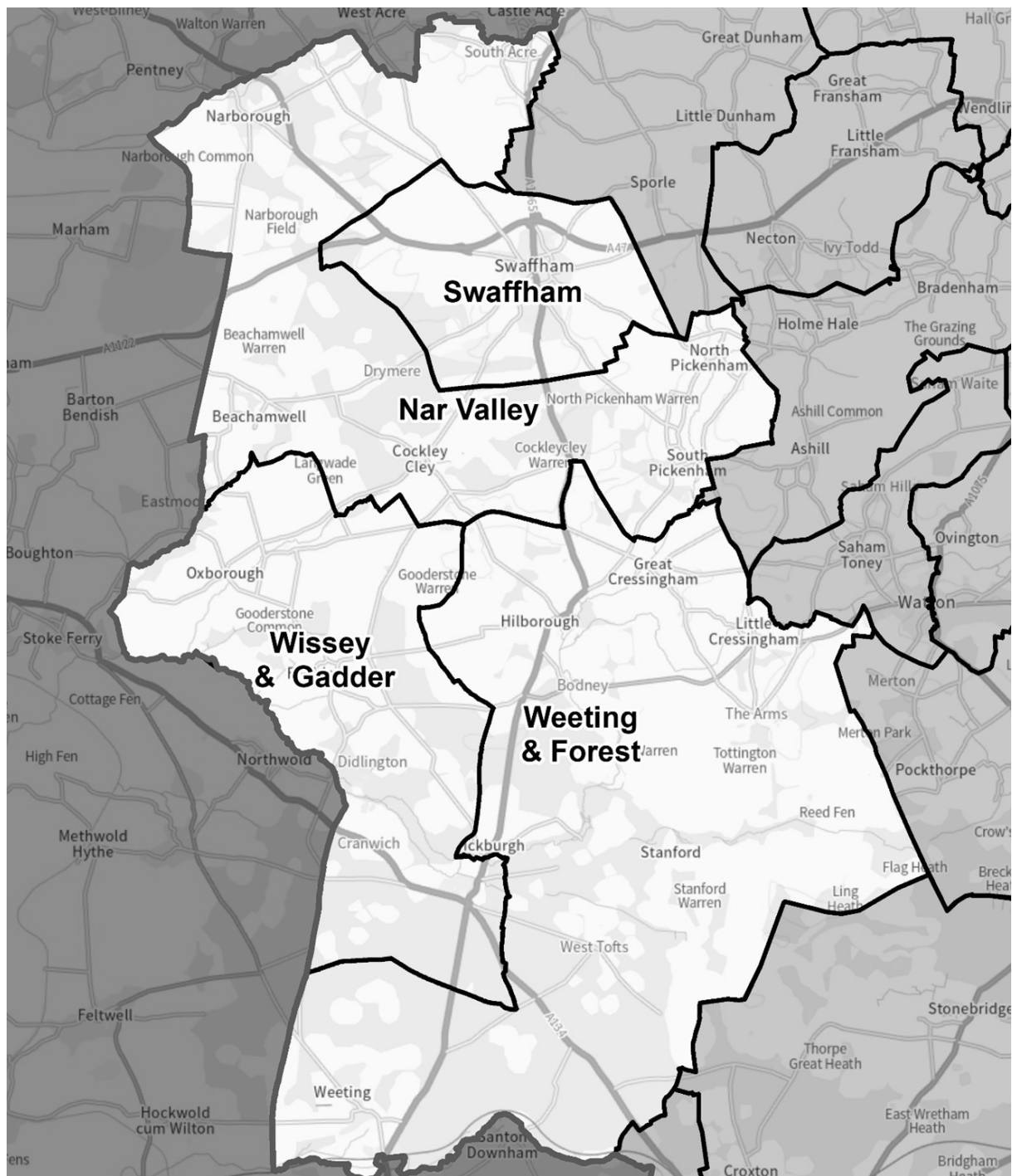
55 In response to our draft recommendations, as discussed above, the Council objected to the inclusion of Snetterton parish in Wayland ward, citing links to the Buckenham & Quidenham ward. In addition, it reiterated its original proposal in the Watton and Carbrooke area to the north, which would see the whole of Griston parish retained in Wayland ward, rather than the Blenheim Grange development area transferred north.

56 Griston Parish Council acknowledged the logic of uniting the Blenheim Grange development under a single district councillor, despite it crossing existing parish boundaries. However, it emphasised that the parish boundary long predates the housing development and that the area within Griston parish forms a significant part of its electorate and long-term planning. While recognising the proposal may make sense for district warding, the Council made clear that this should not be seen as support for any future changes to the parish boundary. It also noted that 'Griston North' lies within the designated area of the Griston Neighbourhood Plan and would remain part of Griston parish.

57 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. As discussed in the South East section above, we are persuaded by the Council's argument for transferring Snetterton parish to Buckenham & Quidenham ward, rather than retaining it in Wayland. While this worsens electoral equality in Wayland ward to 12% fewer electors than the district average by 2030, we consider the evidence relating to parish ties, shared infrastructure and the wider impact of the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor and Snetterton Circuit to justify a 12% variance. We also note the comments about Griston parish, specifically regarding the Blenheim Grange development. While we recognise that this area forms a substantial part of the parish electorate and features in the parish's long-term planning, we consider that the community's built form, access and links are clearly oriented to the north, towards Watton and Carbrooke. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations, to include the northern part of Blenheim Grange in the Watton ward. We also note Griston Parish Council's concern that this change should not be taken as support for any alteration to the parish boundary. We confirm that this review cannot amend parish boundaries. Any such changes would fall to Breckland District Council to consider as part of a separate Community Governance Review.

58 Our final recommendations are for single-councillor Ellingham & Rocklands and Wayland wards with 6% more and 12% fewer electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.

## Swaffham and Forest



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Nar Valley	1	-6%
Swaffham	3	9%
Weeting & Forest	1	6%
Wissey & Gadder	1	0%

### *Weeting & Forest and Wissey & Gadder*

59 In response to the draft recommendations, the Council objected to our proposal for a two-councillor Forest ward, reiterating support for a slightly modified version of its original single-councillor proposals. It proposed adding Ickburgh parish to the Weeting & Forest ward, improving electoral equality there to 6% more electors than the district average by 2030, while Wissey & Gadder would have a variance equal to the average. The Council rejected the draft proposal, arguing that the large geographical area is unsuitable for a single ward, and that separating the wards would give better representation to residents. It also noted that poor transport links would make it difficult for councillors to effectively support constituents.

60 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. While our draft recommendation for a two-councillor ward sought to address the lack of internal road links within the single-councillor wards, we acknowledge that our proposed ward is large, covering a relatively large number of parishes. We have been persuaded that the revised single-member wards provide stronger effective and convenient local government and that this benefit outweighs concerns regarding direct access. We are therefore moving away from our draft recommendations and adopting the Council's proposals.

61 Our final recommendations are for single-councillor Weeting & Forest and Wissey & Gadder wards which would have 6% more and equal to the average electors compared to the district average by 2030.

### *Nar Valley and Swaffham*

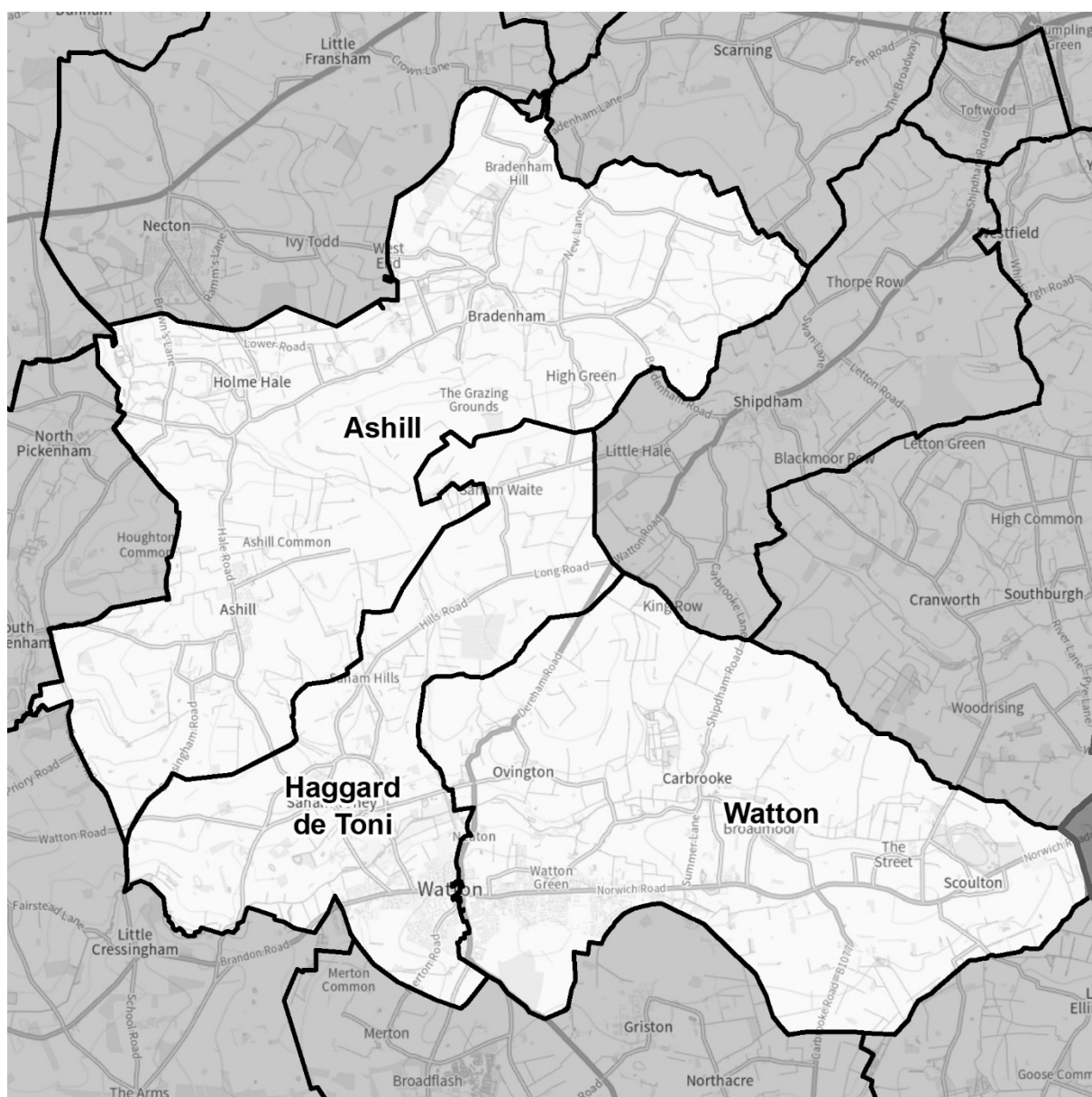
62 In response to the draft recommendations, the Council and Swaffham Town Council objected to our proposal for two-councillor Swaffham North and Swaffham South wards that linked the north and south areas of Swaffham to parishes in the north and south. The Council reiterated support for its original proposal of a three-councillor Swaffham ward and a separate single-councillor Nar Valley ward. It argued that this arrangement better reflects community identities, preserving Swaffham's integrity as a market town, noting it is hard to split it in a way that would avoid creating wards with different character. It also argued that some parishes, like Narborough and South Acre, look out of the district to King's Lynn rather than Swaffham, and therefore should not be combined with Swaffham.

63 Swaffham Town Council put forward similar arguments, noting that dividing the town along an east–west line would fracture the community and create arbitrary boundaries that cut across key town infrastructure and natural north–south links. It noted that the northern half would include nearly all public services, while the southern half would be almost entirely residential. It also objected to linking the surrounding rural villages to Swaffham town. A member of the public also objected to the division of Swaffham between wards.

64 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the objections put forward by Breckland Council and Swaffham Town Council. While our original draft proposal aimed to reflect the geographic links between the town and its surrounding rural parishes, we are persuaded that dividing Swaffham in this way does not provide the best reflection of community identity and effective and convenient local government and have been persuaded to make changes at this stage. The evidence makes a strong case for maintaining the coherence of Swaffham as a single more urban ward, while recognising the distinct identity and needs of the surrounding rural parishes. We are therefore adopting the proposal for a three-member Swaffham ward and a separate single-member Nar Valley ward as part of our final recommendations.

65 Our final recommendations are for a three-councillor Swaffham and a one-councillor Nar Valley ward with 9% more and 6% fewer electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.

## Watton and Ashill



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Ashill	1	5%
Haggard de Toni	2	0%
Watton	3	1%

### *Haggard de Toni and Watton*

66 In response to the draft recommendations, the Council reiterated its preference for maintaining separate wards of Watton and Carbrooke, rather than our proposed three-member Watton ward, which would combine the Council's Watton and Carbrooke wards with the Blenheim Grange development area of Griston parish. The Council emphasised the importance of reflecting the distinct identities of Watton as a market town and Carbrooke as a village. It argued that Carbrooke's ongoing urban



development would be better addressed by a dedicated ward. Watton Town Council expressed general objections to the division of Watton under the draft recommendations, but did not provide any specific comments or alternative proposals. Additionally, as discussed in the 'Attleborough and Wayland' section, Griston Parish Council expressed concerns about the proposed changes to the ward boundaries, particularly regarding the inclusion of parts of Griston Parish.

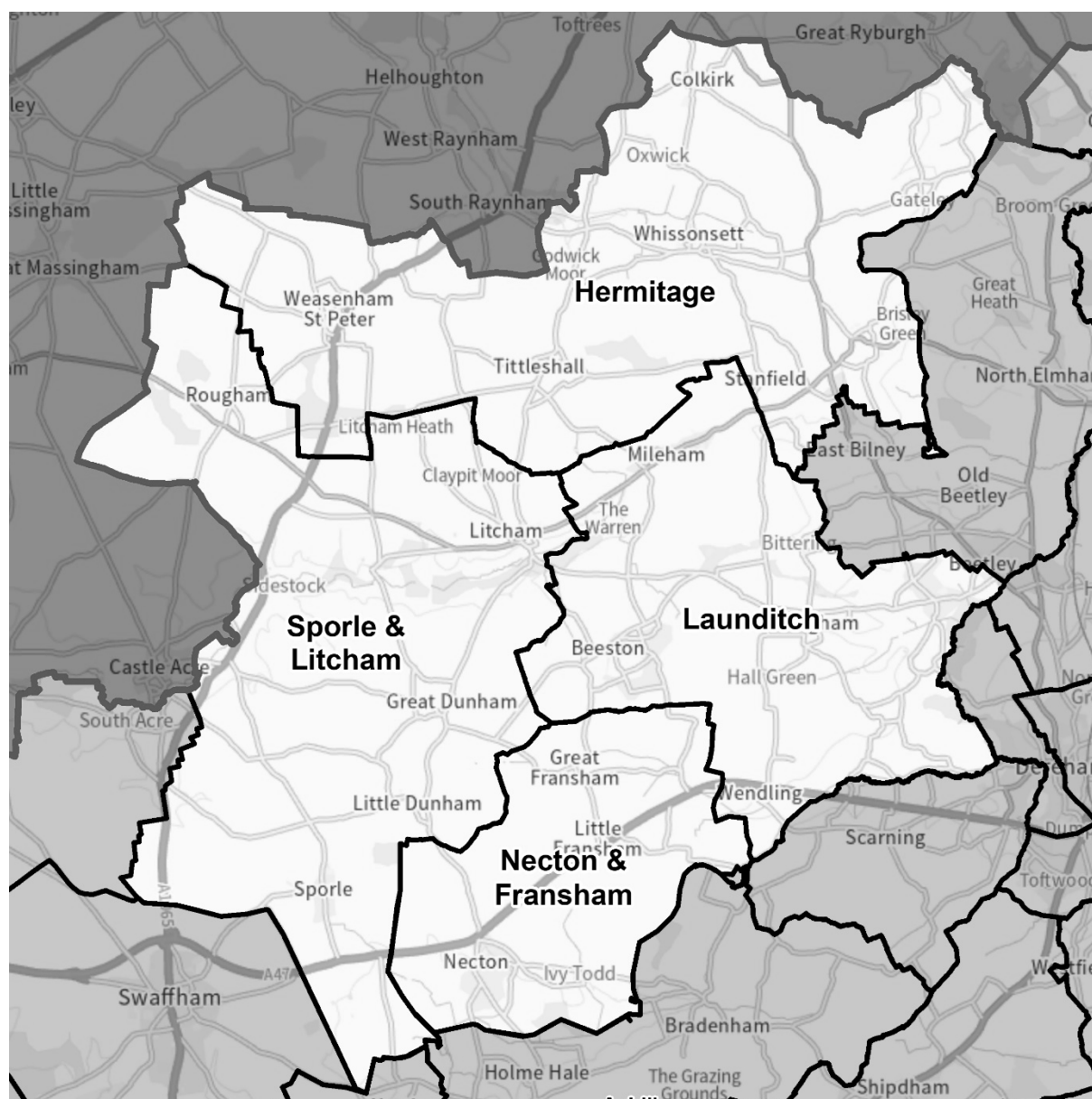
67 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, including the Council's preference for its original proposals. While the Council's argument regarding the distinct identities of Watton and Carbrooke is compelling, it has not addressed our concern that adopting this would result in the Blenheim Grange development being split between Carbrooke and Wayland wards. Despite the strength of the evidence in relation to Watton and Carbrooke, we are not persuaded to adopt this approach, as it would require splitting the Blenheim Grange area. We have looked to see if this can be addressed, but transferring the Blenheim Grange Development to its single-councillor Carbrooke ward would result in this ward having 16% more electors than the district average by 2030. This is not a level of electoral equality we have been persuaded to adopt. As our draft recommendations outline, the only way to address this is to combine Carbrooke and Watton wards. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final.

68 Our final recommendations are for two-councillor Haggard de Toni and three-councillor Watton wards, with equal to the average and 1% more electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.

#### *Ashill*

69 We did not receive any comments on our draft recommendations for this ward, so we are confirming them as final. Our single-councillor Ashill ward would have 5% more electors than the district average by 2030.

## North West



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Hermitage	1	-2%
Launditch	1	7%
Necton & Fransham	1	0%
Sporle & Litcham	1	1%

### *Hermitage, Launditch, Necton & Fransham and Sporle & Litcham*

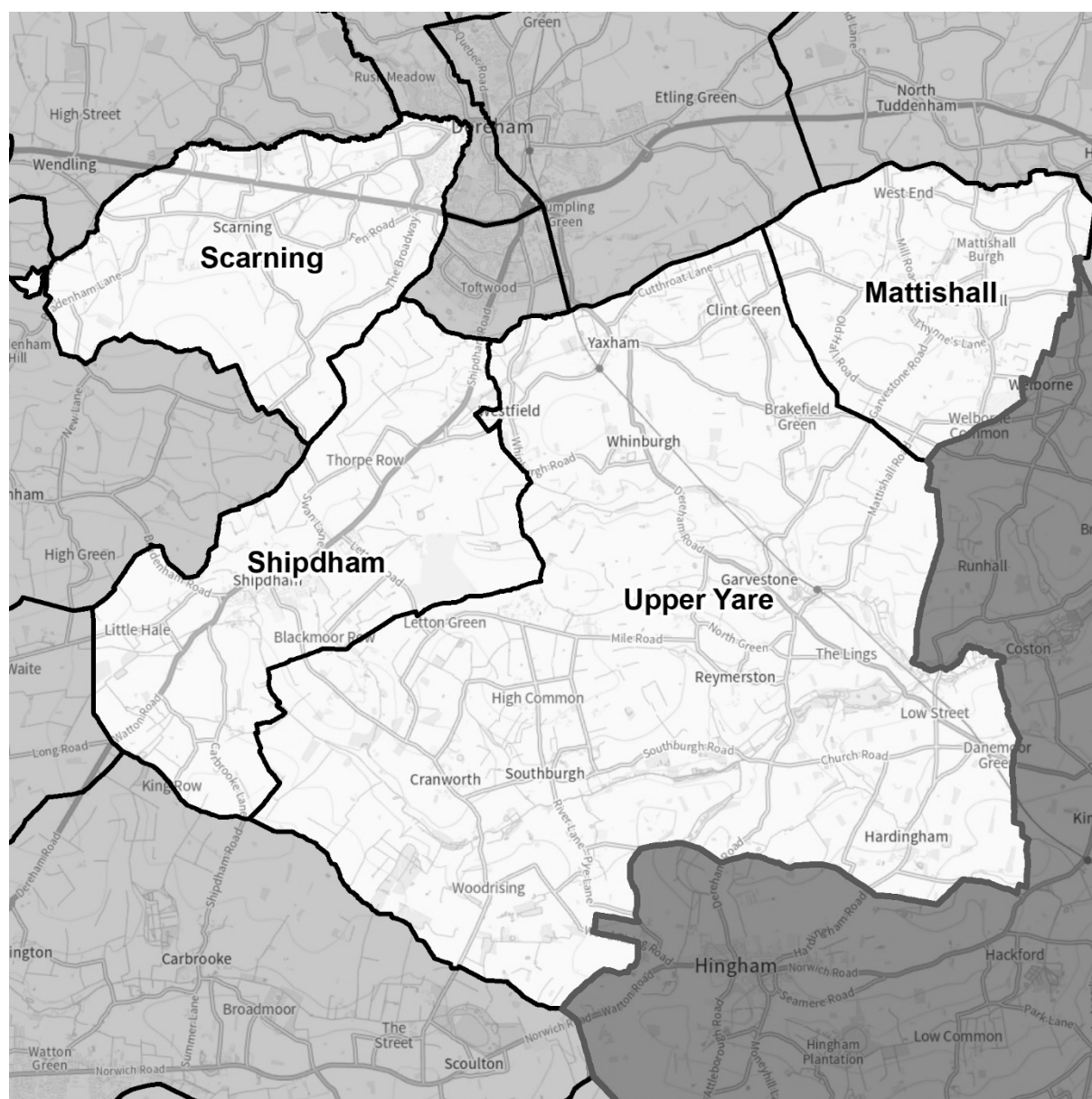
70 In response to our draft recommendations we received limited comments on these wards. The Council proposed renaming Launditch ward as Sporle & Litcham and Springvale as Launditch. We received no other comments on these wards.

71 We have given careful consideration of the evidence, noting the Council's request for name changes. While it provided no significant evidence for these name changes, we acknowledge that they are locally generated, agreed by the cross-party steering group and agreed by the Council. We are therefore persuaded to adopt these name changes as part of our final recommendations.

72 Our final recommendations are for single-member Hermitage, Sporle & Litcham, Necton & Fransham and Launditch wards which would have 2% fewer, 1% more, equal to the average and 7% more electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.



## Mattishall, Scarning, Shipdham and Upper Yare



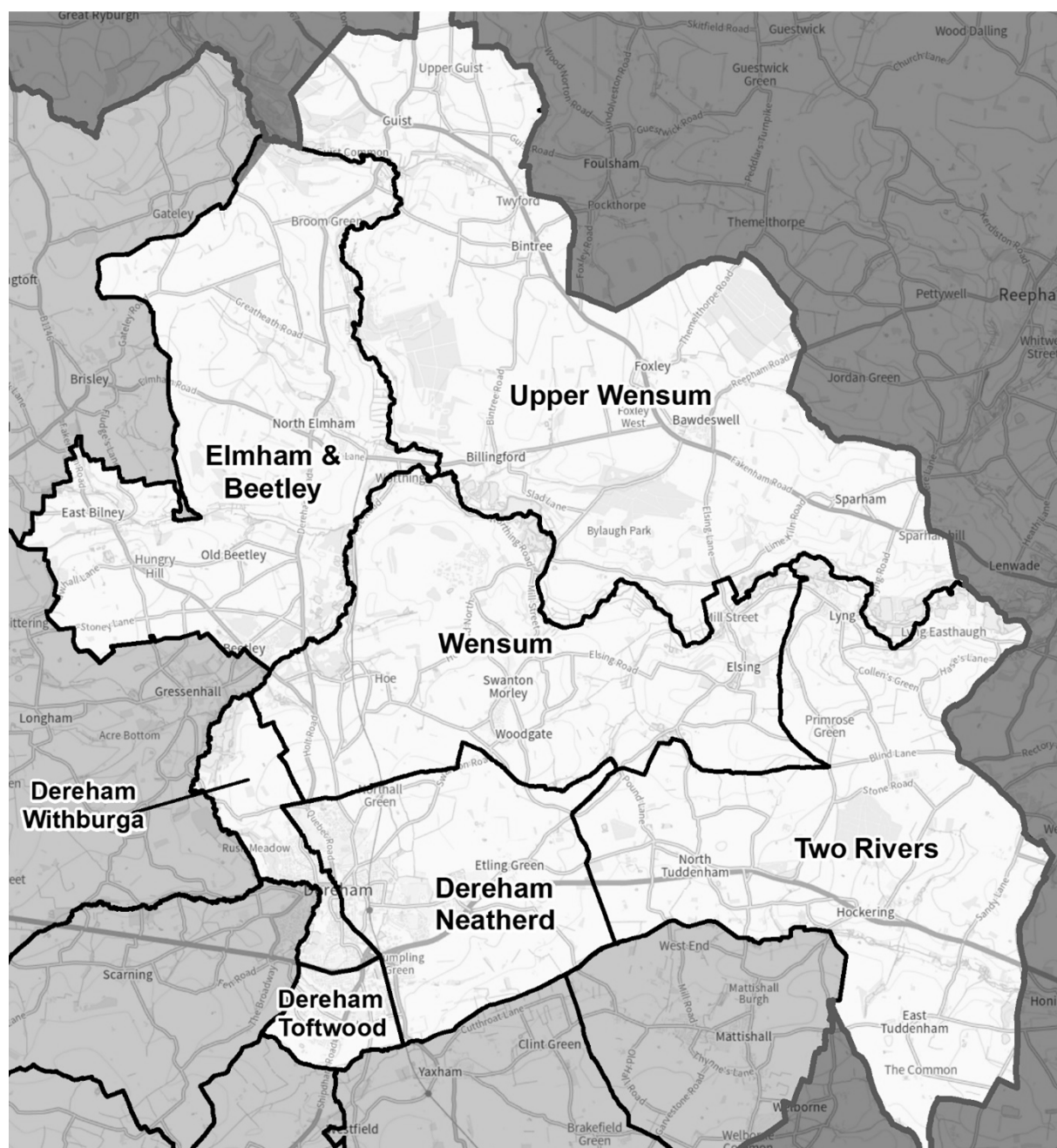
Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Mattishall	1	6%
Scarning	1	2%
Shipdham	1	-9%
Upper Yare	1	5%

### *Mattishall, Scarning, Shipdham and Upper Yare*

73 We received no significant comments in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. We are therefore confirming them as final.

74 Our final recommendations are for single-councillor Mattishall, Scarning, Shipdham and Upper Yare wards. These wards would have 6% more, 2% more, 9% fewer and 5% more electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.

## Dereham and North East



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Dereham Neatherd	3	-7%
Dereham Toftwood	2	6%
Dereham Withburga	2	2%
Elmham & Beetley	1	10%
Two Rivers	1	-5%
Upper Wensum	1	-10%
Wensum	1	-2%

*Dereham Neatherd, Dereham Toftwood and Dereham Withburga*

75 In response to our draft recommendations the Council expressed support for our proposal to remove Hoe from Dereham & Hoe ward creating Dereham Withburga ward. They noted that Hoe & Worthing is a rural parish with stronger ties to surrounding rural areas, and its inclusion in the Wensum ward better reflects this, while also helping maintain Dereham as focused urban wards, and improving electoral equality. A couple of residents expressed support for the whole of Hoe & Worthing parish being included in Wensum ward.

76 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the support for our draft recommendations, which we are confirming as final.

77 Our final recommendations are for two-councillor Dereham Toftwood and Dereham Withburga wards and a three-councillor Dereham Neatherd ward. These wards would have 6% more, 2% more and 7% fewer electors than the district average by 2023 respectively.

*Elmham & Beetley, Two Rivers, Upper Wensum and Wensum*

78 In response to our draft recommendations, as outlined in the Dereham section above, there was support for placing the whole of Hoe & Worthing parish in Wensum ward. The Council also supported the inclusion of Bylaugh parish in Upper Wensum ward.

79 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the support for our draft recommendations, which we are confirming as final.

80 Our final recommendations are for single-councillor Elmham & Beetley, Two Rivers, Upper Wensum and Wensum wards. These wards would have 10% more, 5% fewer, 10% fewer and 2% fewer electors than the district average by 2030 respectively.

## Conclusions

81 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Breckland, referencing the 2023 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

	Final recommendations	
	2023	2030
Number of councillors	51	51
Number of electoral wards	35	35
Average number of electors per councillor	2,140	2,303
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

#### Final recommendations

Breckland should be made up of 51 councillors serving 35 wards: 22 single-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and three three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

#### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Breckland District Council. You can also view our final recommendations for Breckland District Council on our interactive maps at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

### Parish electoral arrangements

82 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.



83 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, Breckland District Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

84 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Attleborough, Griston, Thetford and Watton.

85 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Attleborough parish.

#### Final recommendations

Attleborough Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Burgh North	3
Burgh South	3
Queens Central	5
Queens North	2
Queens South	2

86 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Griston parish.

#### Final recommendations

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

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Griston North	2
Griston South	5

87 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Thetford parish. In response to the draft recommendations, the Council and Thetford Town Council submitted comments regarding the creation of parish wards in Thetford.

88 Under current legislation, we are required to create parish wards where new district wards are created or where county divisions lie. As set out in the Thetford section above, we have not been persuaded to make any changes to the district ward boundaries for Thetford. As a result, the creation of new parish wards remains necessary to reflect these district and county arrangements. However, we have simplified the parish warding pattern by removing those wards that do not align with the district or county boundaries, with the exception of the Icen parish ward, to which, at the parish council's request, we are now allocating two councillors. We are

unable to add any further parish councillors as part of this review, so the remaining councillors are allocated according to the distribution of electors.

89 Finally, we have noted the comments regarding the renaming of Vicarage Road and the proposed name of Wheatacres ward. In light of the feedback from the Council, and following further consideration, we are proposing to rename Wheatacres ward as Vicarage Road to better reflect local identity.

#### Final recommendations

Thetford Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Boudica	3
Burrell	4
Castle	4
Iceni	2
Priory	3
Stanford	1
Vicarage Road	1

90 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Watton parish.

#### Final recommendations

Watton Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Watton East	6
Watton West	9





## What happens next?

91 We have now completed our review of Breckland District Council. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – was scheduled to be laid in Parliament this year, and the new electoral arrangements were to come into force at local elections in 2027. However, we are aware that the Government's White Paper on English Devolution may have an impact on local government structure in Norfolk. Therefore, at this stage, we do not intend to lay a draft Order in Parliament.

## Equalities

92 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

### Final recommendations for Breckland District Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ashill	1	2,273	2,273	6%	2,428	2,428	5%
2	Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft	2	4,122	2,061	-4%	4,418	2,209	-4%
3	Attleborough Queens	2	4,040	2,020	-6%	4,257	2,129	-8%
4	Banham & Guiltcross	2	3,843	1,922	-10%	4,113	2,057	-11%
5	Besthorpe	1	2,070	2,070	-3%	2,236	2,236	-3%
6	Buckenham & Quidenham	1	2,131	2,131	0%	2,281	2,281	-1%
7	Dereham Neatherd	3	5,983	1,994	-7%	6,450	2,150	-7%
8	Dereham Toftwood	2	4,577	2,289	7%	4,874	2,437	6%
9	Dereham Withburga	2	4,365	2,183	2%	4,683	2,342	2%
10	East Harling	1	2,044	2,044	-5%	2,211	2,211	-4%

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11	Ellingham & Rocklands	1	2,008	2,008	-6%	2,443	2,443	6%
12	Elmham & Beetley	1	2,343	2,343	9%	2,522	2,522	10%
13	Haggard de Toni	2	4,257	2,129	-1%	4,597	2,299	0%
14	Hermitage	1	2,090	2,090	-2%	2,258	2,258	-2%
15	Launditch	1	2,284	2,284	7%	2,470	2,470	7%
16	Mattishall	1	2,292	2,292	7%	2,435	2,435	6%
17	Nar Valley	1	2,016	2,016	-6%	2,167	2,167	-6%
18	Necton & Fransham	1	2,138	2,138	0%	2,297	2,297	0%
19	Ringmere & Hockham	1	2,034	2,034	-5%	2,285	2,285	-1%
20	Scarning	1	2,148	2,148	0%	2,338	2,338	2%
21	Shipdham	1	1,859	1,859	-13%	2,091	2,091	-9%
22	Sporle & Litcham	1	2,163	2,163	1%	2,320	2,320	1%
23	Swaffham	3	7,184	2,395	12%	7,509	2,503	9%
24	Thetford Boudica	2	4,509	2,254	5%	4,869	2,434	6%
25	Thetford Burrell	2	4,269	2,135	0%	4,608	2,304	0%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
26 Thetford Castle	2	4,427	2,214	3%	4,772	2,386	4%
27 Thetford Priory	2	4,467	2,234	4%	4,812	2,406	4%
28 Two Rivers	1	2,033	2,033	-5%	2,194	2,194	-5%
29 Upper Wensum	1	1,942	1,942	-9%	2,077	2,077	-10%
30 Upper Yare	1	2,246	2,246	5%	2,419	2,419	5%
31 Watton	3	6,643	2,214	3%	6,963	2,321	1%
32 Wayland	1	1,897	1,897	-11%	2,033	2,033	-12%
33 Weeting & Forest	1	2,273	2,273	6%	2,438	2,438	6%
34 Wensum	1	2,056	2,056	-4%	2,255	2,255	-2%
35 Wissey & Gadder	1	2,133	2,133	0%	2,306	2,306	0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>109,159</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>117,429</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,303</b>	<b>–</b>

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

## Appendix B

### Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland)

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

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

[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland)

#### *Local Authority*

- Breckland District Council

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor S. Chapman-Allen (Breckland District Council)
- Councillor R. Kybird (Breckland District Council)

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Griston Parish Council
- Swaffham Town Council (2 submissions)
- Thetford Town Council
- Watton Town Council

#### *Local residents*

- 10 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 <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
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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