

Colin Mellors
Chair
Local Government Boundary Commission
for England
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Please ask for: Leader of the Council
Email: Councillor.D.Fitzhenry@southampton.gov.uk
Our ref: Boundary Review/280122

28th January 2022

Dear Professor Mellors,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank yourself, and your team, for the collaborative work which has taken place so far on the electoral review for Southampton and enclose our council proposal on warding arrangements as part of phase two of the review.

There has been full cross-party support in developing this submission; our proposed warding patterns were presented to Full Council on Monday 24th January 2022 and all members present voted unanimously in favour of it.

In creating our proposals, the council's Task and Finish Group comprising Conservative and Labour councillors, supported by council officers, have taken into consideration the statutory criteria as outlined below.

- delivering electoral equality for local voters
- reflecting the interests and identities of local communities
- promoting effective and convenient local government

In determining the size of our wards, we have aimed for a preferred tolerance of +/- 7%, with a maximum tolerance in line with the Boundary Commission's guidance of +/- 10%.

Our recommendations also reflect the outcome of phase one of Southampton's Electoral Review whereby the LGBCE recommended that Southampton should increase its council size from 48 councillors to 51, with an additional ward (increase of 16 to 17 wards) and a continuation of a pattern of three councillors per ward.

To reflect the above, we are proposing a new ward 'Bargate North,' accounting for the major growth seen in the existing Bargate ward in recent years, with further development projected by 2027. This new ward also seeks to bring together student communities from the existing Bargate, Bevois and Freemantle wards. The revised and newly named 'Bargate South' ward comprises the Kingsland and Ocean Village areas of the city.

We appreciate you taking our submission, and the views of the council, into account when making your decision on warding arrangements. Should you require more detailed maps in addition to the information provided, we would be happy to supply these.



WEBCHAT

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Best wishes,



Sandy Hopkins
Chief Executive

Cllr Daniel Fitzhenry
Leader of the Council



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Summary of proposal

Introduction and Principles

Southampton City Council set up a cross-party working group to consider proposals for future warding patterns with support from officers. The working group were mindful from the start that when determining proposals they should have regard to the following statutory criteria:

- delivering electoral equality for local voters',
- reflecting the interests and identities of local communities,
- promoting effective and convenient local government.

The group recognised that changes were required in order to achieve improved electoral equality across the city. Whilst some of the current wards are already outside the permitted electoral variance (+/- 10%), there were other wards that would be by 2027, taking into account expected developments and population growth.

The working group also established a number of principles:

- that 51 councillors is the optimum number of councillors for the efficient and effective representation and governance of the council;
- that the city is divided into 17 city wards, and that each is represented by three councillors;
- that by and large the warding pattern established in the eastern part of the city remains fit for purpose with regard to both representation and governance of the council, and therefore our proposals should seek to preserve this warding pattern where practicable;
- where possible, ward boundaries would be 'tidied' if this did not adversely impact electoral equality or community identity.

Taking into account the projected electorate for the city in 2027, there is a small deficit of electors in the east of the city when compared to the west. However, feedback from members during the early stages of the review confirmed that both the Conservative and Labour party groups were strongly in favour of retaining the natural boundary provided by the River Itchen, which effectively divides the city in two.

With that in mind, our proposals for the future pattern of wards across the city are based on this premise.

Eastern area

Although the Woolston ward is currently within the permitted level of electoral variance, by 2027 it is expected to exceed this (+14%). By contrast, the remaining wards in the east of the city are projected to remain within the permitted level of electoral variance up to and beyond 2027. Appendix A sets out the proposed warding pattern for the eastern area of the City of Southampton.

Western area

The western part of the city has seen significant population growth since the last electoral review and is projected to grow still further by 2027. As such, the Bargate and Bevois wards currently exceed the permitted electoral variance and this is expected to grow still further in both wards by 2027 (+44% for Bargate and +12% for Bevois). At the other extreme, the Swaythling ward is currently significantly below the permitted level of variance, and this is expected to worsen by 2027 (-24%).

In order to address this, our proposal includes the creation of an additional ward in this part of the city, with consequential changes to some of the other ward boundaries in order to achieve better electoral equality. Appendix B sets out the proposed warding pattern for the western area of the City of Southampton.

Methodology

The working group considered both the 2021 electorate figures and the 2027 forecasts per ward, which included new developments and population growth forecasts. From this information we were able to determine both the existing and projecting levels of variance.

The 2021 electorate figures, with the addition of new development data, was used as the basis for changing ward boundaries. In the case of new build properties, a multiplier of 1.9 was used to determine the number of projected electors by 2027.

The average number of electors per councillor for 2027 was calculated as being 3,603, with the average number of electors in each of the three-member wards being 10,809.

In terms of changes, we have aimed for a preferred variance of +/- 7%, with a maximum tolerance in line with the Boundary Commission's guidance of +/- 10%.

Electorate Projections

Ward name	Appendix A/B	Electors per Councillor	Electors per ward	% variance
Bargate North	B	3,441	10,323	-4.5
Bargate South	B	3,597	10,791	-0.2
Bassett	B	3,348	10,044	-7.1
Bevois	B	3,685	11,055	+2.3
Bitterne	A	3,508	10,524	-2.6
Bitterne Park	A	3,697	11,091	+2.6
Coxford	B	3,509	10,527	-2.6
Freemantle	B	3,610	10,830	+0.2
Harefield	A	3,657	10,971	+1.5
Millbrook	B	3,346	10,038	-7.1
Peartree	A	3,763	11,289	+4.4
Portswood	B	3,856	11,568	+7.0
Redbridge	B	3,530	10,590	-2.0
Shirley	B	3,701	11,103	+2.7
Sholing	A	3,693	11,079	+2.5
Swaythling	B	3,497	10,491	-2.9
Woolston	A	3,835	11,505	+6.4

Detailed Proposals

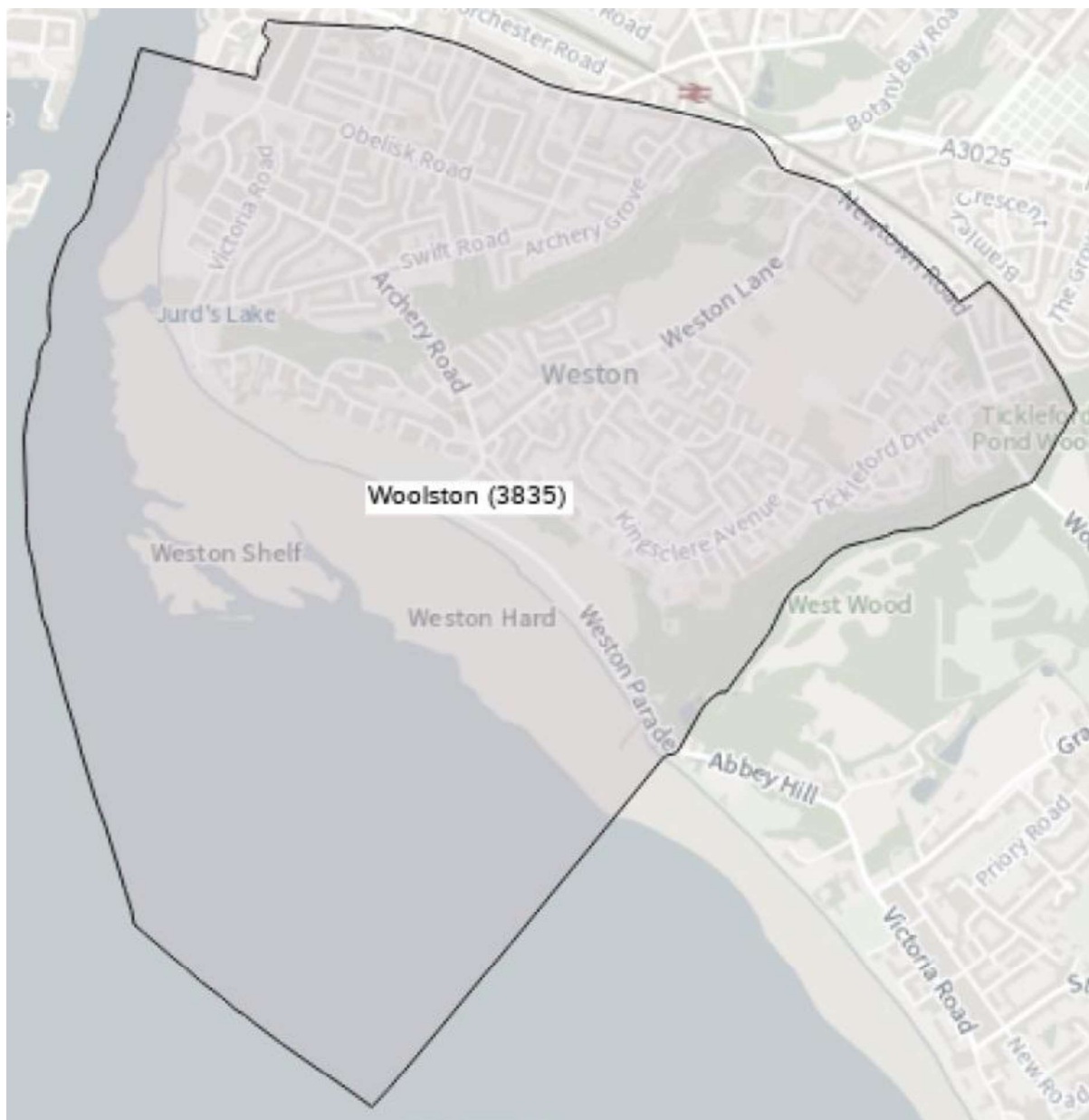
Maps for each ward have been prepared and are set out at Appendices A and B. The rationale behind the proposed changes, together with a brief description of each ward, are set out below.

Woolston ward

Whilst this ward has seen some growth in recent years, the projected development at Centenary Quay in the far north west is expected to result in 1,000+ additional electors. However, with the natural boundaries of the River Itchen to the west, the Solent estuary to the south and the city boundary itself to the east, options for making changes are limited.

With the area to the north being the only realistic option, the representatives of both political parties on the working group considered that the new development at Centenary Quay had strong links with the Woolston suburb and should remain in this ward. Similarly, the working group felt that the area around Wharf Road and Woodley Road had more synergy with the Peartree area of the city.

With a primary focus on the Woolston and Weston areas of the city, the revised northern ward boundary follows Keswick Road, Woodley Road, and the principal roads of the A3025 (Portsmouth Road), Wrights Hill and Newtown Road before following the north-western boundary of Dyserth Close to the railway line. From there, the boundary continues along the railway line to the city boundary.



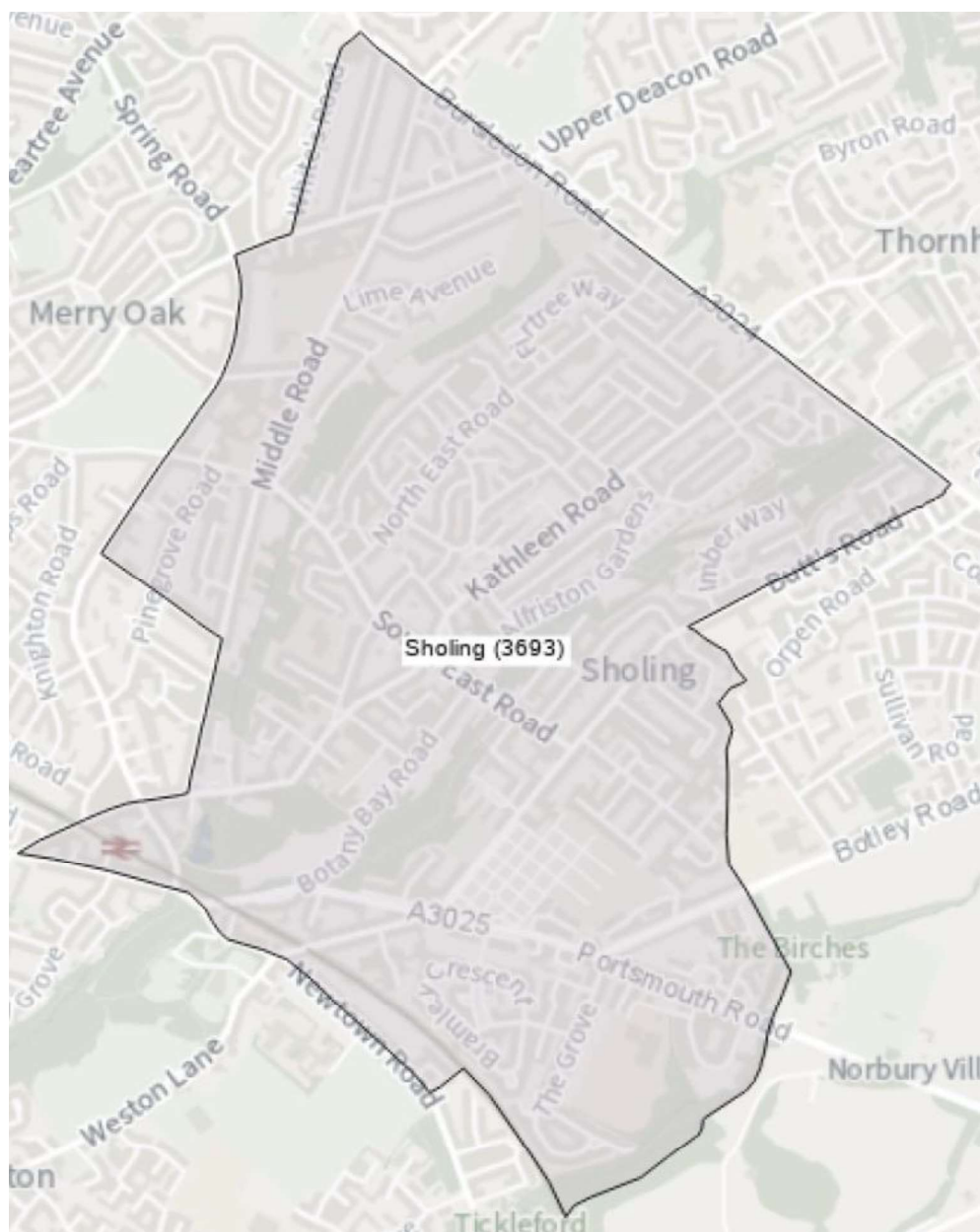
Sholing ward

As with a number of other wards in the eastern part of the city, this ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is within the permitted level of variance. As such we are proposing only two minor changes to the current ward boundary.

The revised southern ward boundary follows the principal roads of the A3025 (Portsmouth Road), Wrights Hill and Newtown Road, before continuing along the north-western boundary of Dyserth Close to the railway line. From there, the revised boundary continues along the railway line to the city boundary. The remainder of the southern boundary follows the city boundary.

The eastern boundary in the north of the ward follows the principal roads of Butts Road and Bursledon Road, and is unchanged. In order to improve community identity in the area, we are proposing a minor realignment of the boundary around Orpen Road and Valentine Avenue. From Butts Road the revised boundary follows the rear boundary of Landseer Road before continuing along the western boundary of Orpen Road, Valentine Avenue, Finzi Close, Valentine Infant School, and the eastern boundary to the rear of Lowry Gardens to the city boundary.

To the west the principal roads of Station Road, Middle Road, Rosoman Road, Spring Road Deacon Road, and Whites Road continue to form the ward boundary.

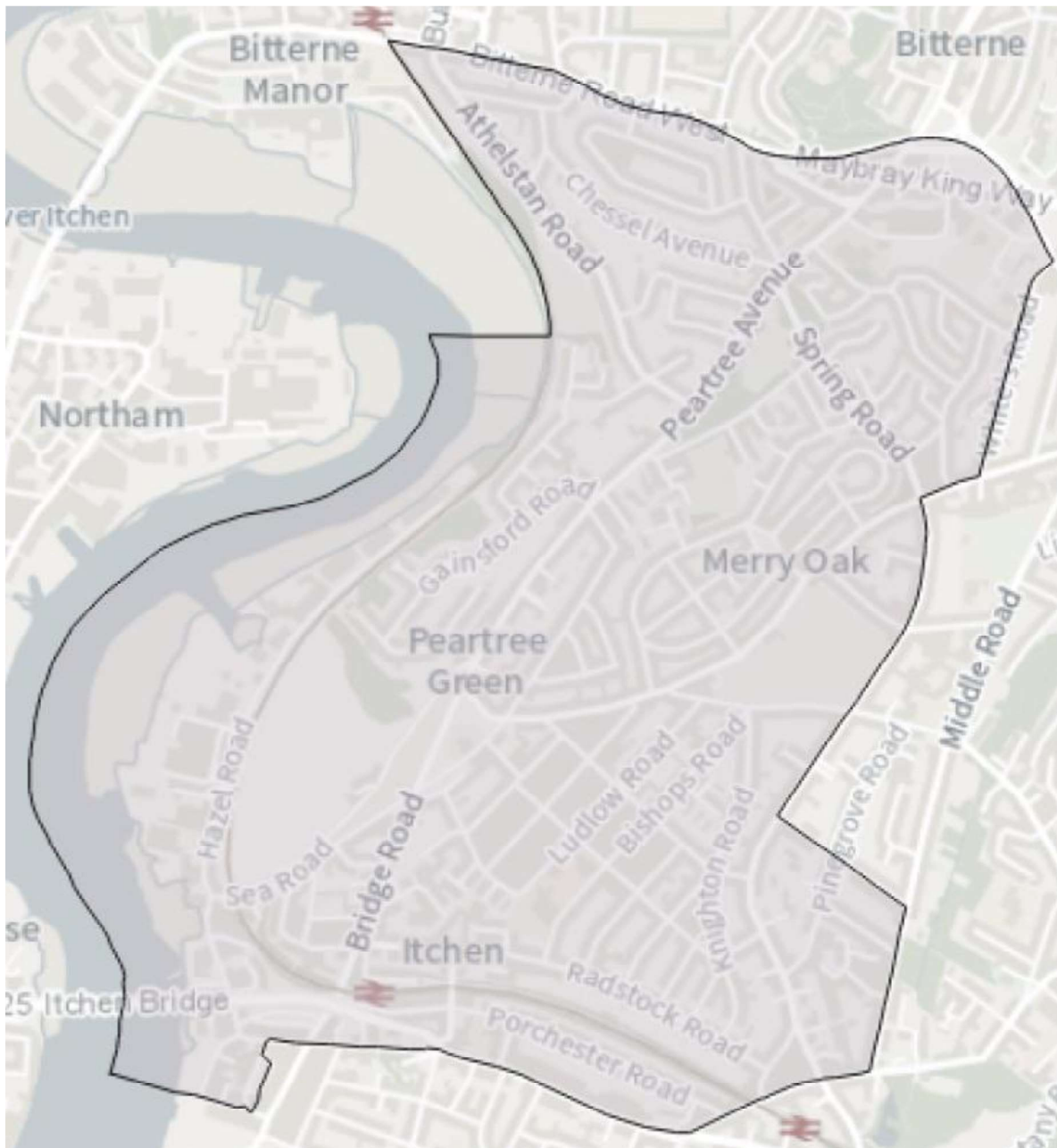


Pear tree ward

As with the Sholing ward above, this ward has also proved to be effective as an area of local government with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance. As such we are only proposing one minor change to the current ward boundary.

To facilitate changes to the Woolston ward as detailed above, to the south we have used Keswick Road, Woodley Road and the A3025 (Portsmouth Road) as the revised boundary.

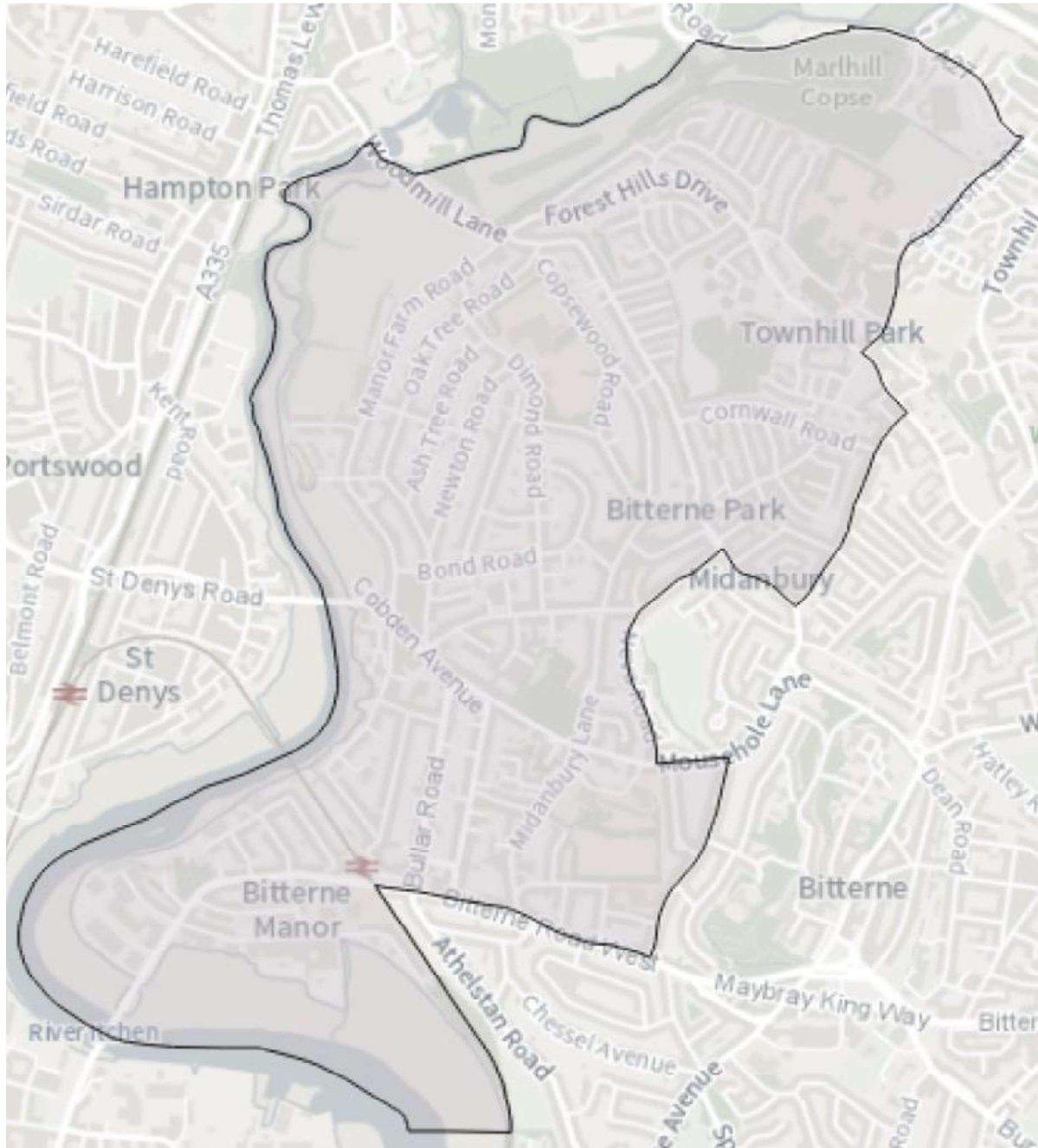
The River Itchen and existing natural buffers form the boundary to the west of the ward, which is unchanged. The northern boundary is also unchanged and follows the principal roads of Bitterne Road West, Maybray King Way. The western boundary continues to follow the principal roads of Whites Road, Deacon Road, Spring Road, Rosoman Road, Middle Road and Station Road.



Bitterne Park ward

As an effective area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance, we are not proposing any changes to this ward, which follows the natural boundary of the River Itchen to the west and north.

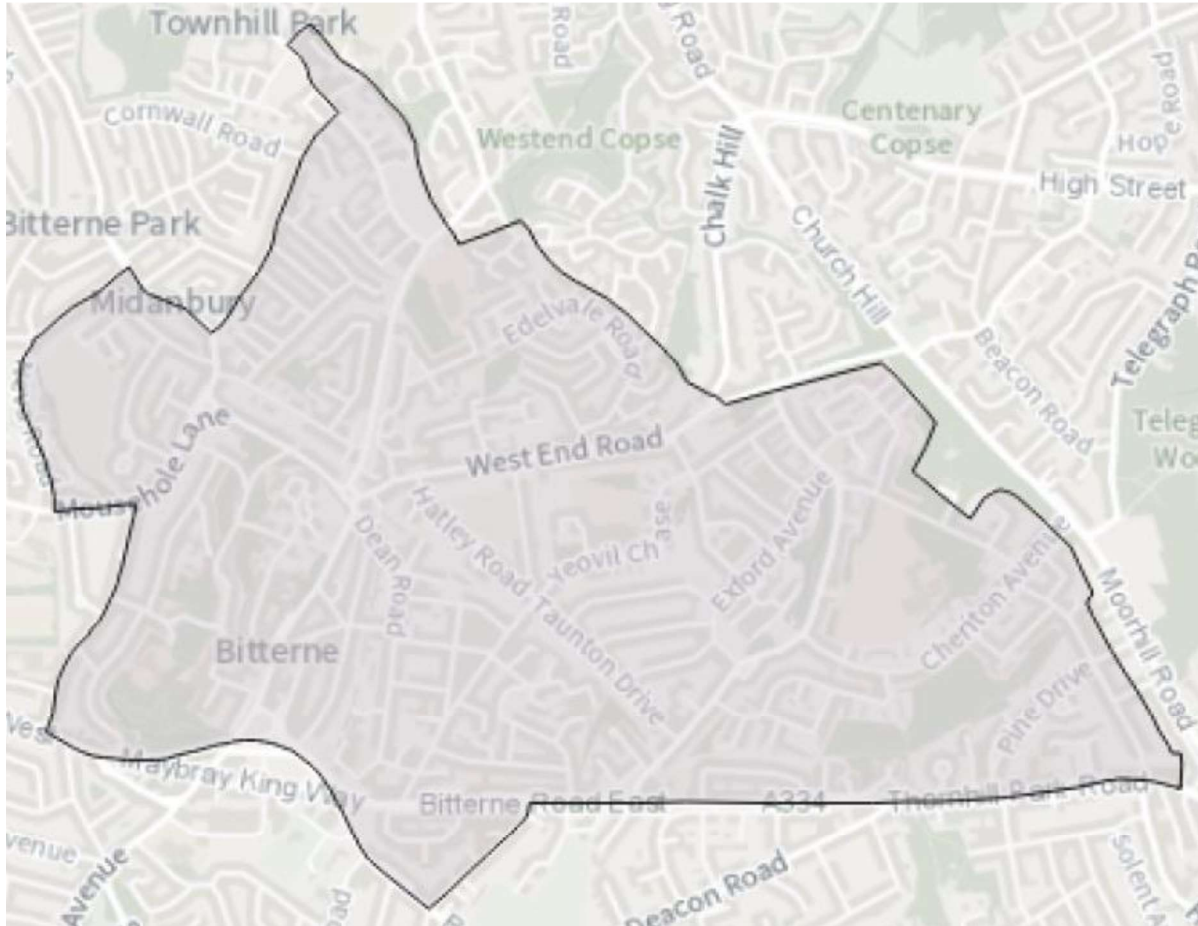
On the eastern side it follows the city boundary, together with the principal roads of Cutbush Lane, Meggeson Avenue, Wakefield Road, Witts Hill, Avon Road, Neva Road, Mousehole Lane, and Glenfield Avenue. To the south it follows Bitterne Road East and existing natural buffers to the south of Bitterne Manor.



Harefield ward

As with other wards in the eastern part of the city, this ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance. As such, we are not proposing any changes to this ward, which to the north and east follow the city boundary.

On the southern side the boundary follows the principal roads of Thornhill Park Road, Bitterne Road East, Bath Road, Bursledon Road, and Maybray King Way. The western boundary follows the principal roads of Cutbush Lane, Meggeson Avenue, Wakefield Road, Witts Hill, Avon Road, Neva Road, Mousehole Lane, and Glenfield Avenue.

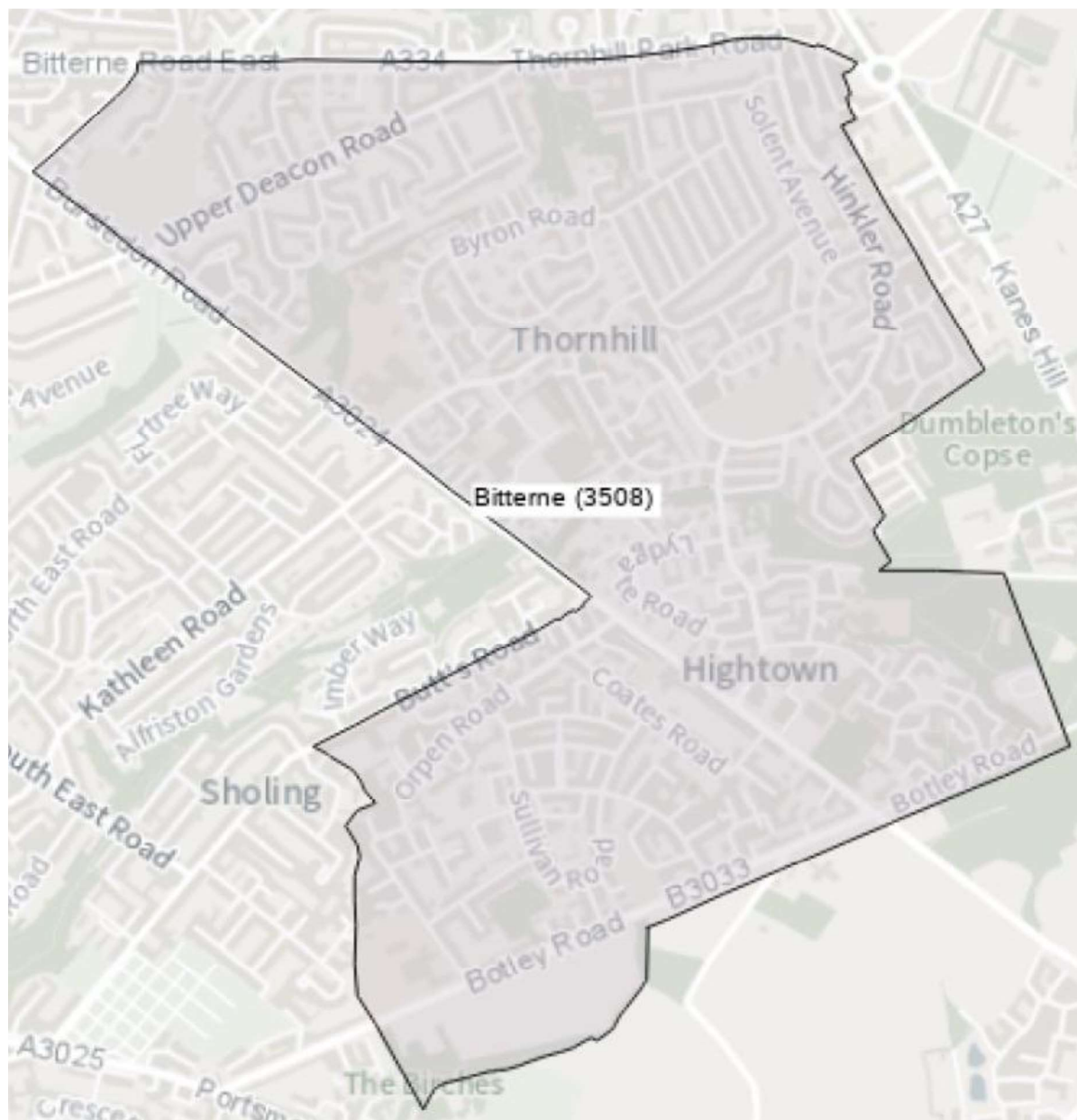


Bitterne ward

This ward has also proved to be effective as an area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance. As such, we are proposing only a minor change to the western boundary.

In the north of the ward the western boundary follows the principal roads of Butts Road and Bursledon Road, and is unchanged. In order to improve community identity in the area, we are proposing a minor realignment of the boundary around Orpen Road and Valentine Avenue. From Butts Road the revised boundary follows the rear boundary of Landseer Road before continuing along the western boundary of Orpen Road, Valentine Avenue, Finzi Close, Valentine Infant School, and the eastern boundary to the rear of Lowry Gardens to the city boundary.

To the north the ward boundary follows the principal roads of Bitterne Road East and Thornhill Park Road, whilst to the east and south it follows the city boundary.



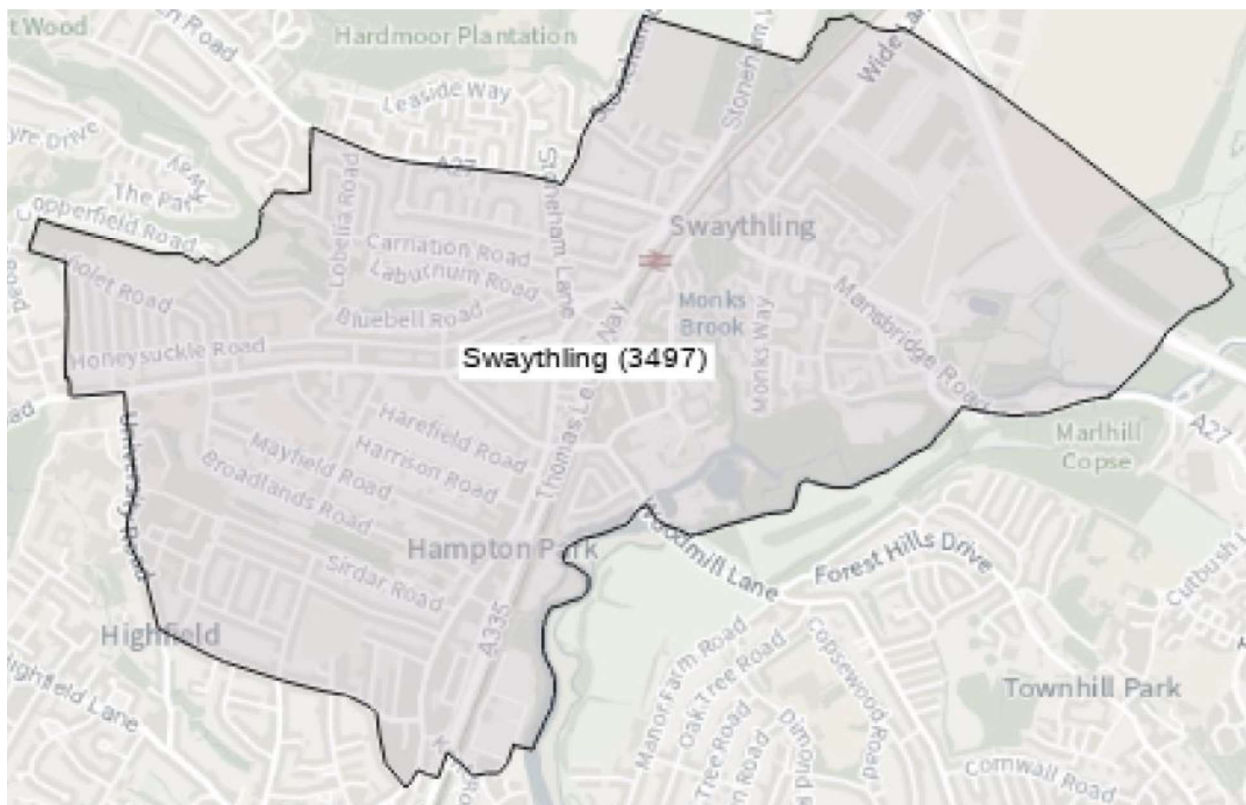
Swaythling ward

With significant electoral inequality compared to other wards in the city, the Swaythling ward was one of the 'triggers' for the current electoral review, with a projected variance of -24% by 2027.

In the south of the ward our proposal seeks to include the area to the south of Kitchener Road, thereby providing a greater focus for the Hampton Park area of the city. In addition, in the west our proposal also seeks to re-join in Swaythling an area of the city that has been divided across different wards for a number of years – principally, the community around Honeysuckle and Bluebell Roads. Feedback from local residents has been positive to such a move.

With the River Itchen forming a natural boundary to the east and much of the south, and with the city boundary to the north, the revised boundary in the south follows the principal roads of Kent Road, Thomas Lewis Way, Portswood Road, Arnold Road, Welbeck Avenue, and University Road.

The revised western boundary follows Burgess Road, along the boundaries to the rear of Bentham Court and the western side of Primrose Road, to Violet Road. From there the revised boundary continues along the rear boundary on the southern side of Copperfield Road, the western boundary of the play area/Daisy Dip natural buffer, the rear boundaries to the west of both Carnation Road and Poppy Road, to the principal road of Bassett Green Road. From Bassett Green Road the revised boundary follows Stoneham Road to the northern city boundary.

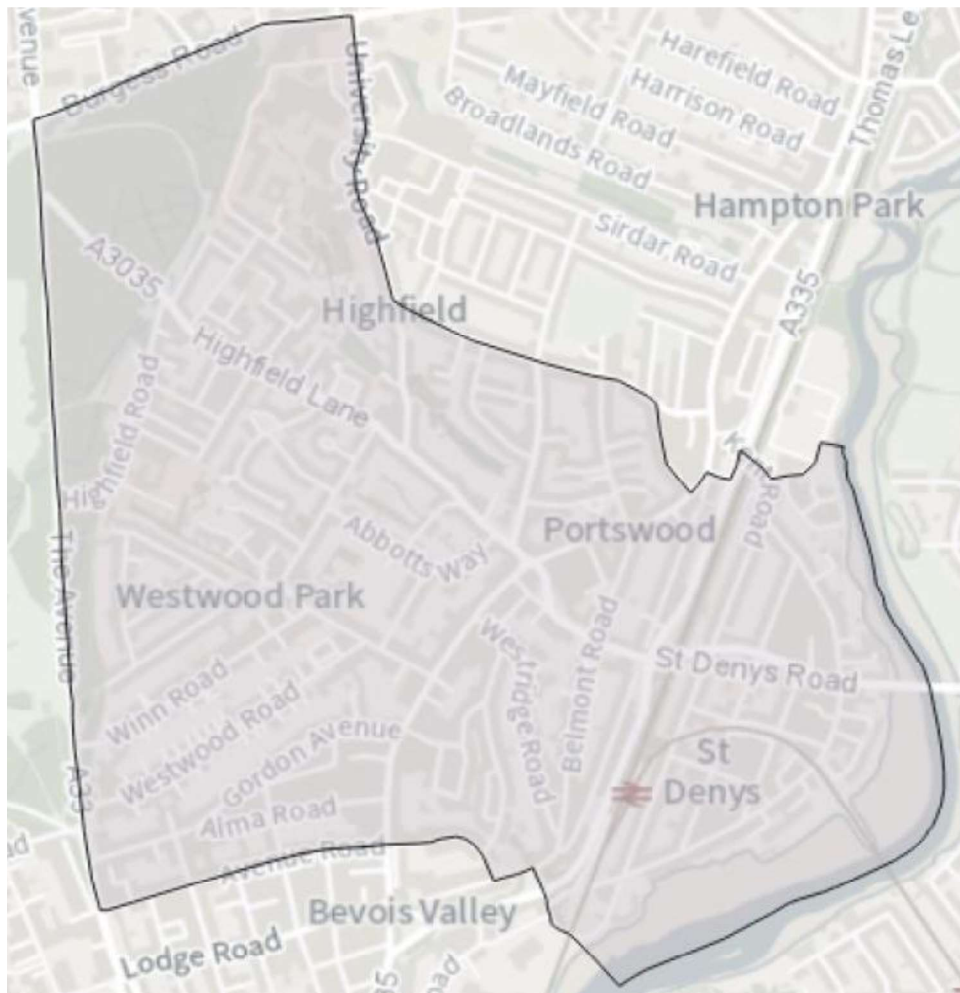


Portswood ward

As with other wards in the city, this ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance. However, with the requirement to accommodate an additional ward in the western part of the city and to provide a primary focus on the Highfield and St Denys areas of the city, we are proposing changes to the northern and southern ward boundaries.

To the east, the River Itchen forms a natural ward boundary. In the north the revised boundary follows the principal roads of Kent Road, Thomas Lewis Way, Arnold Road, Welbeck Avenue, University Road and Burgess Road.

On the western side the boundary is unchanged and continues to follow The Avenue/A33, whilst to the south the revised boundary follows the principal roads of Avenue Road and Spring Crescent. From there it continues to follow the principal roads of Lawn Road, Dukes Road, and Horseshoe Bridge.

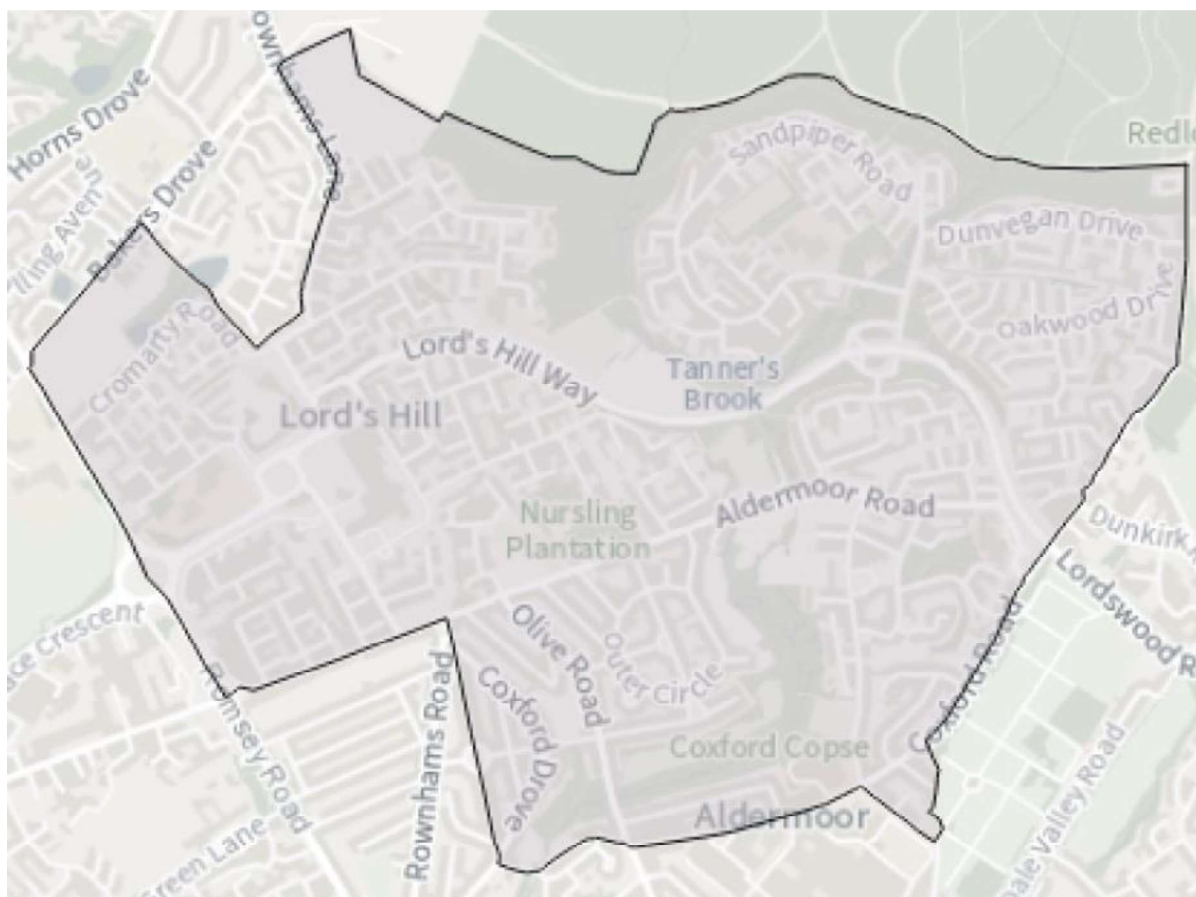


Coxford ward

As an effective area of local government with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance, we are not proposing any changes to this ward.

The northern boundary of the ward is that of the city itself. To the west the boundary is unchanged and follows the principal roads of Romsey Road, Upper Brownhill Road, and Alder Road. The eastern boundary is also unchanged and follows the principal road of Coxford Road, before continuing along the rear boundary to the east of Arcadia Close to Tremona Road.

On the southern side the boundary continues to follow the principal roads of Tremona Road and Coxford Road.

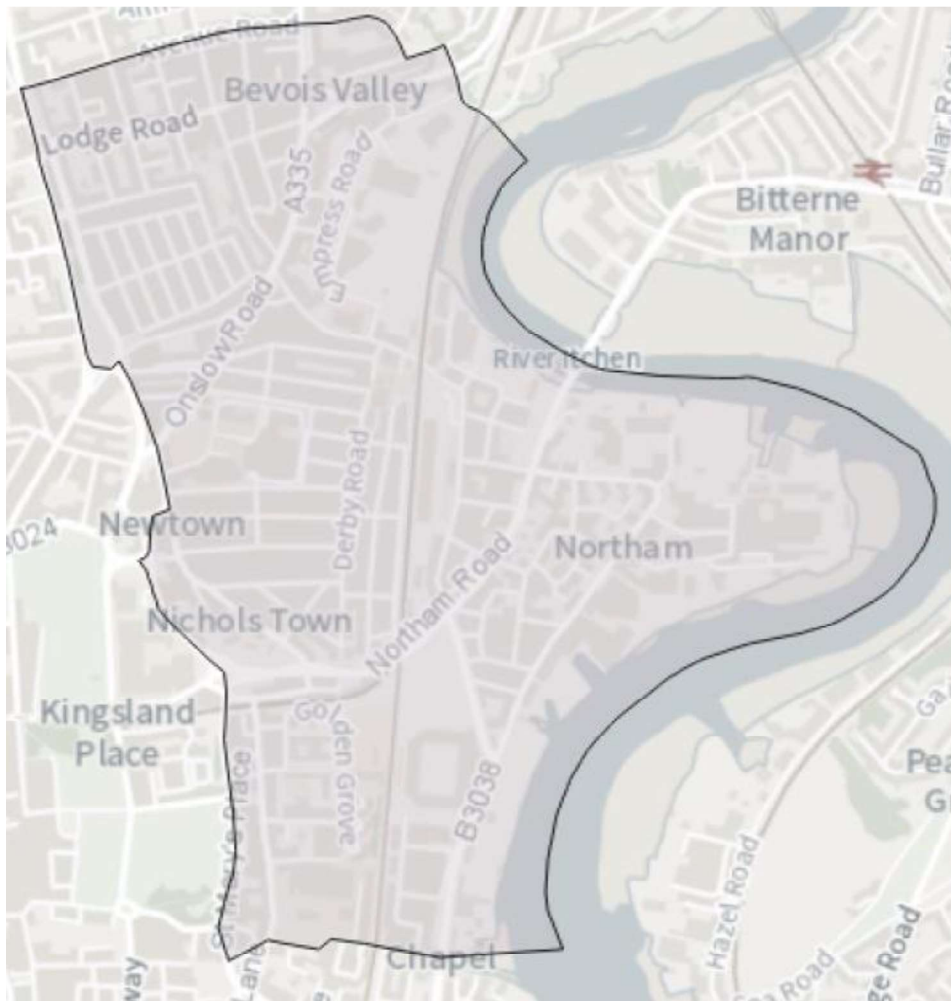


Bevois ward

This ward has seen some significant growth in recent years, with further development projected by 2027 that would result in an electorate that is significantly above the permitted level of variance (+12%). Focusing primarily on communities in the Bevois Valley, Northam and Nichols Town area of the city, we are proposing some significant changes for this ward.

Whilst the River Itchen forms a natural boundary to the east, the revised northern boundary follows the principal roads of Horseshoe Bridge, Dukes Road, Spring Crescent, and Avenue Road.

On the western side the revised ward boundary follows The Avenue, Bellevue Terrace, St Marys Road, St Andrews Road, Kingsway, and St Marys Place. In the south the revised boundary follows the principal roads of St Marys Street and Chapel Road, before continuing along the northern boundary of American Wharf in Marine Parade.

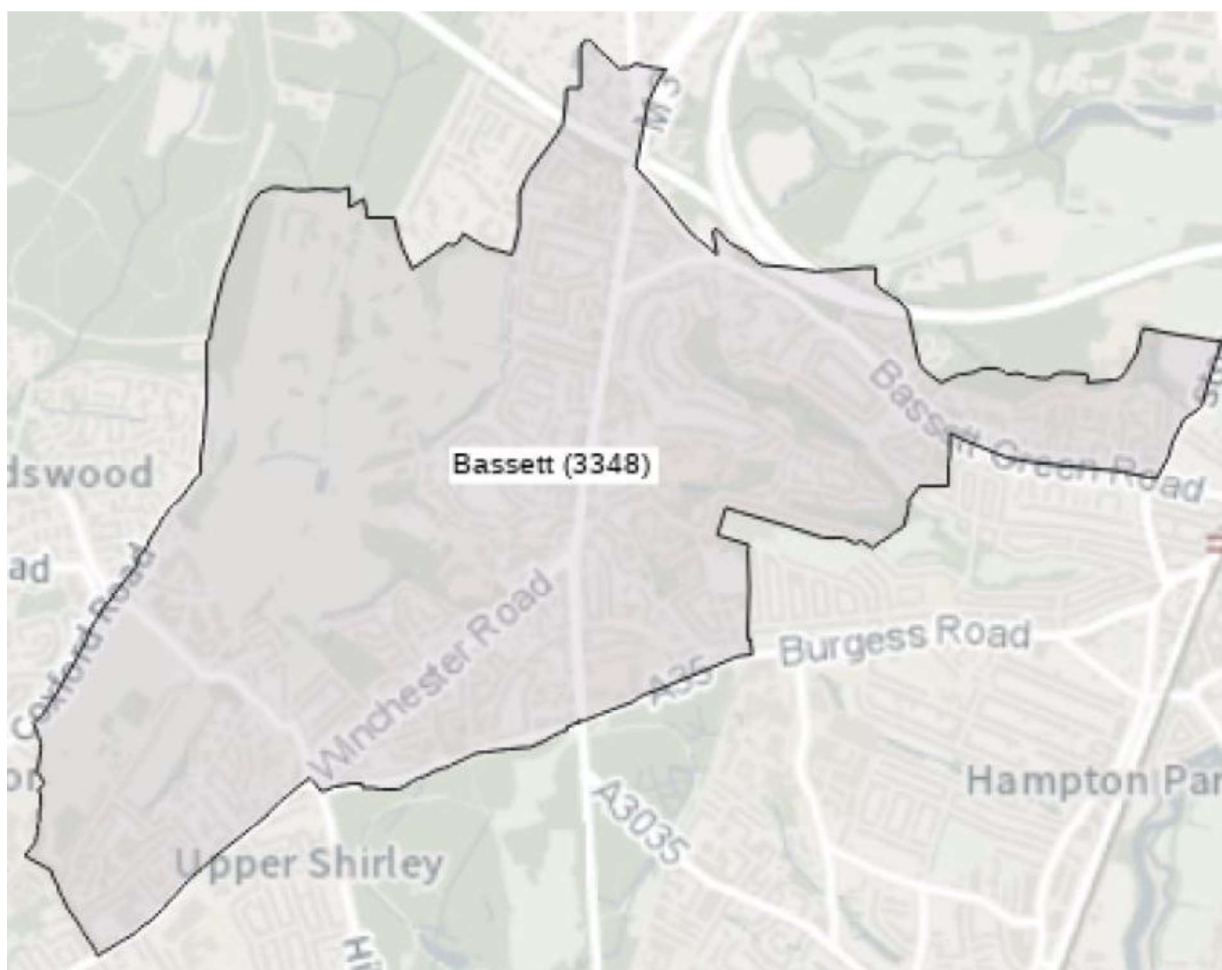


Bassett ward

As with the Coxford ward above, this ward has also proved to be effective as an area of local government with a projected electorate in 2027 that is well within the permitted level of variance. However, to provide a focus for the Bassett Green area of the city, which has been divided across different wards for a number of years, we are proposing some changes in the east of the ward.

The northern boundary of the ward is also the city boundary. To the west the boundary is unchanged and follows the principal road of Coxford Road, before continuing along the rear boundary to the east of Arcadia Close to Tremona Road. The southern boundary is also unchanged and continues to follow the principal roads of Tremona Road, Dale Road, Winchester Road, and Burgess Road.

From Burgess Road, the revised eastern ward boundary follows the boundaries to the rear of Bentham Court and the western side of Primrose Road, to Violet Road. From there the revised western boundary continues along the rear boundary to the southern side of Copperfield Road, the western boundary of the play area/Daisy Dip natural buffer, the rear boundaries to the west of both Carnation Road and Poppy Road, to the principal road of Bassett Green Road. From Bassett Green Road the revised boundary follows Stoneham Road to the northern city boundary.



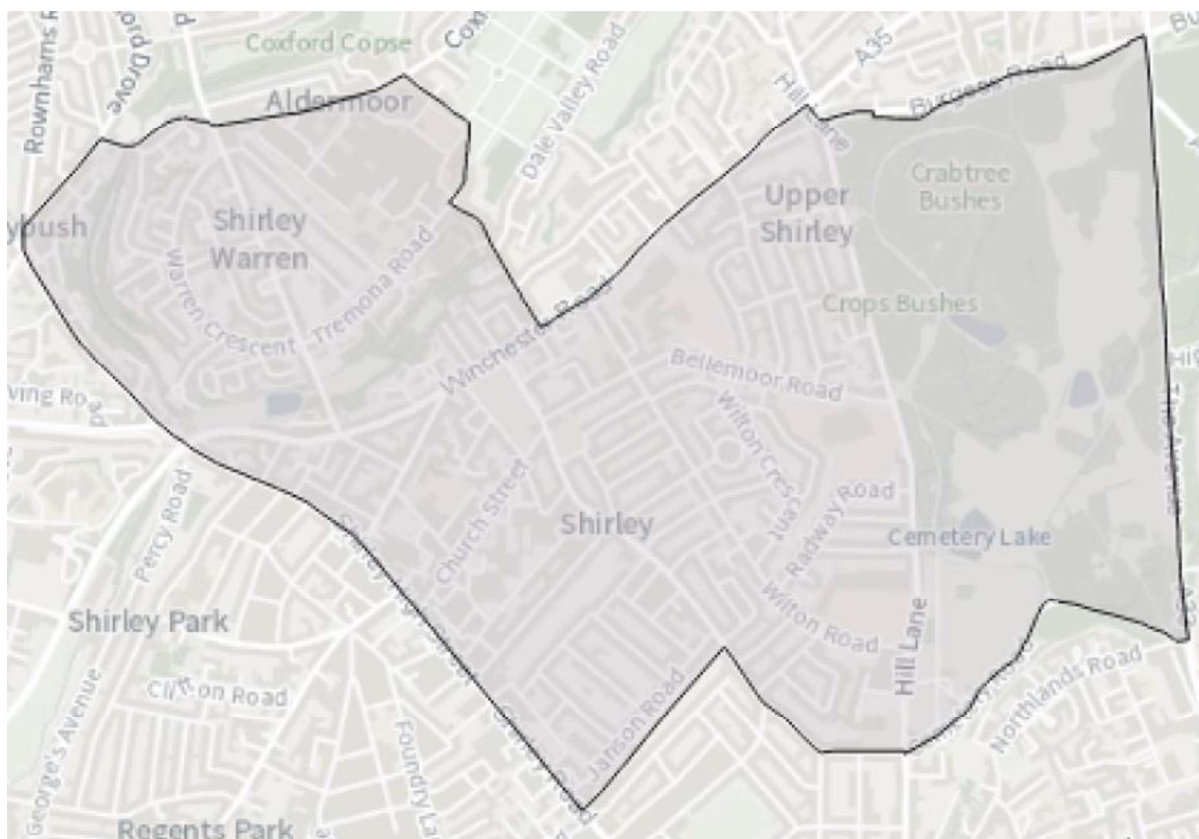
Shirley ward

As with a number of other wards in the western part of the city, this ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is within the permitted level of variance. As such we are not proposing any changes to this ward.

The unchanged northern boundary of the ward follows the principal roads of Burgess Road, Hill Lane, Winchester Road, Dale Road, Tremona Road, and Coxford Road.

To the west the boundary continues to follow Coxford Road, Romsey Road, Shirley High Street and Shirley Road. In the south the unchanged boundary follows the Gipsy Grove pathway between Janson Road and Newlands Avenue before joining Raymond Road. From there it continues to follow the principal roads of Raymond Road, and Cemetery Road.

The unchanged eastern boundary continues to follow the principal road of The Avenue/A33.

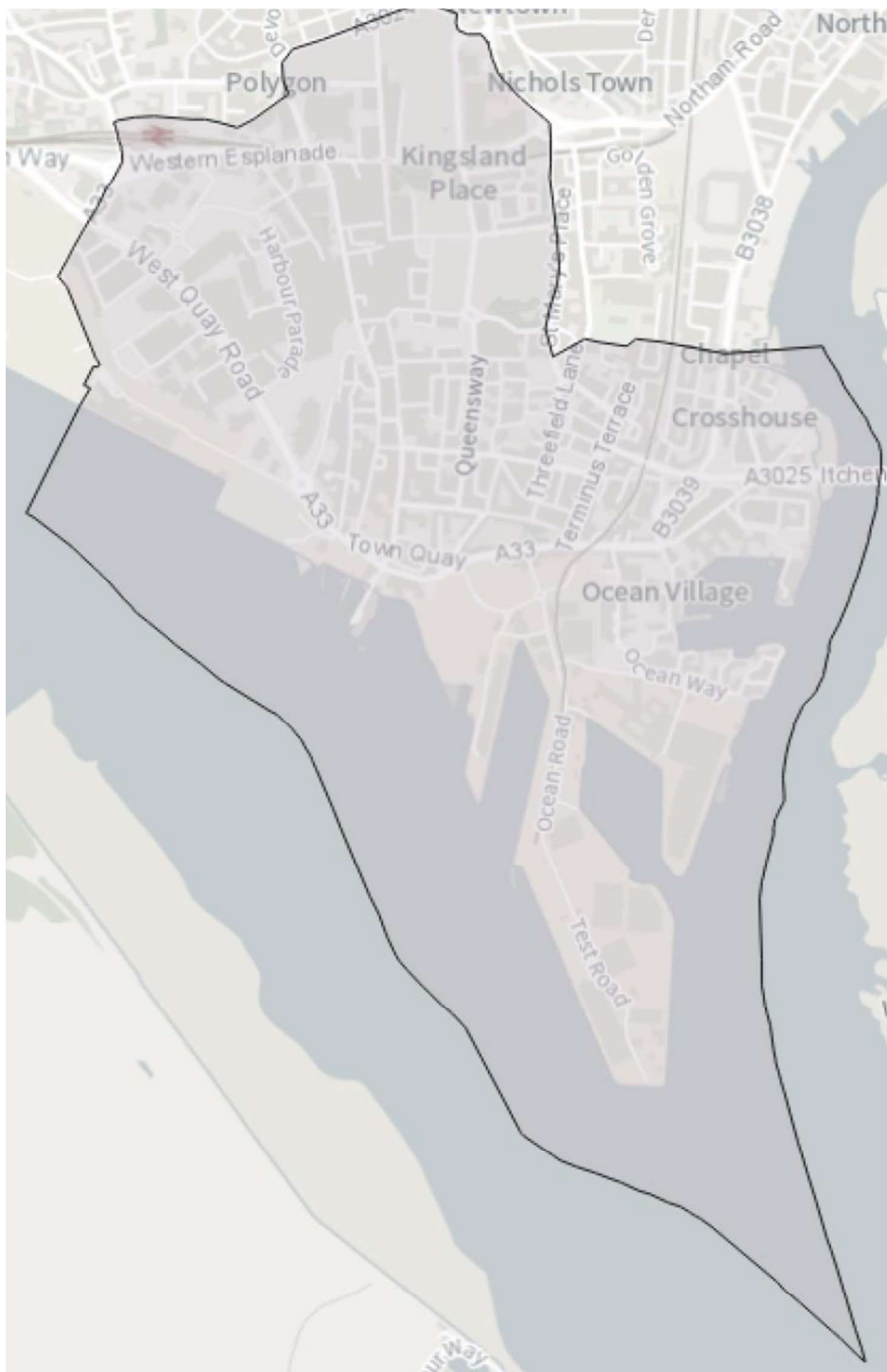


Bargate South

With significant electoral inequality compared to other wards in the city, the Bargate ward was another of the 'triggers' for the current electoral review, with a projected variance of +44% by 2027. This ward has seen major growth in recent years, with further development projected by 2027 that will result in over 3,000 additional electors. Our proposal for this part of the city includes the creation of an additional ward, with the new/revised Bargate South ward comprising the Kingsland and Ocean Village areas of the city.

To the south and east the River Test and River Itchen provide natural boundaries. The revised western boundary follows the eastern edge of the City Cruise Terminal before continuing along the principal roads of Solent Road and Southern Road/A33.

In the north, the new ward boundary follows the principal roads of Southbrook Road, West Park Road, Cumberland Place, Brunswick Place, St Andrews Road, Kingsway, St Marys Place, St Mary Street and Chapel Road, before continuing along the northern boundary of American Wharf in Marine Parade.

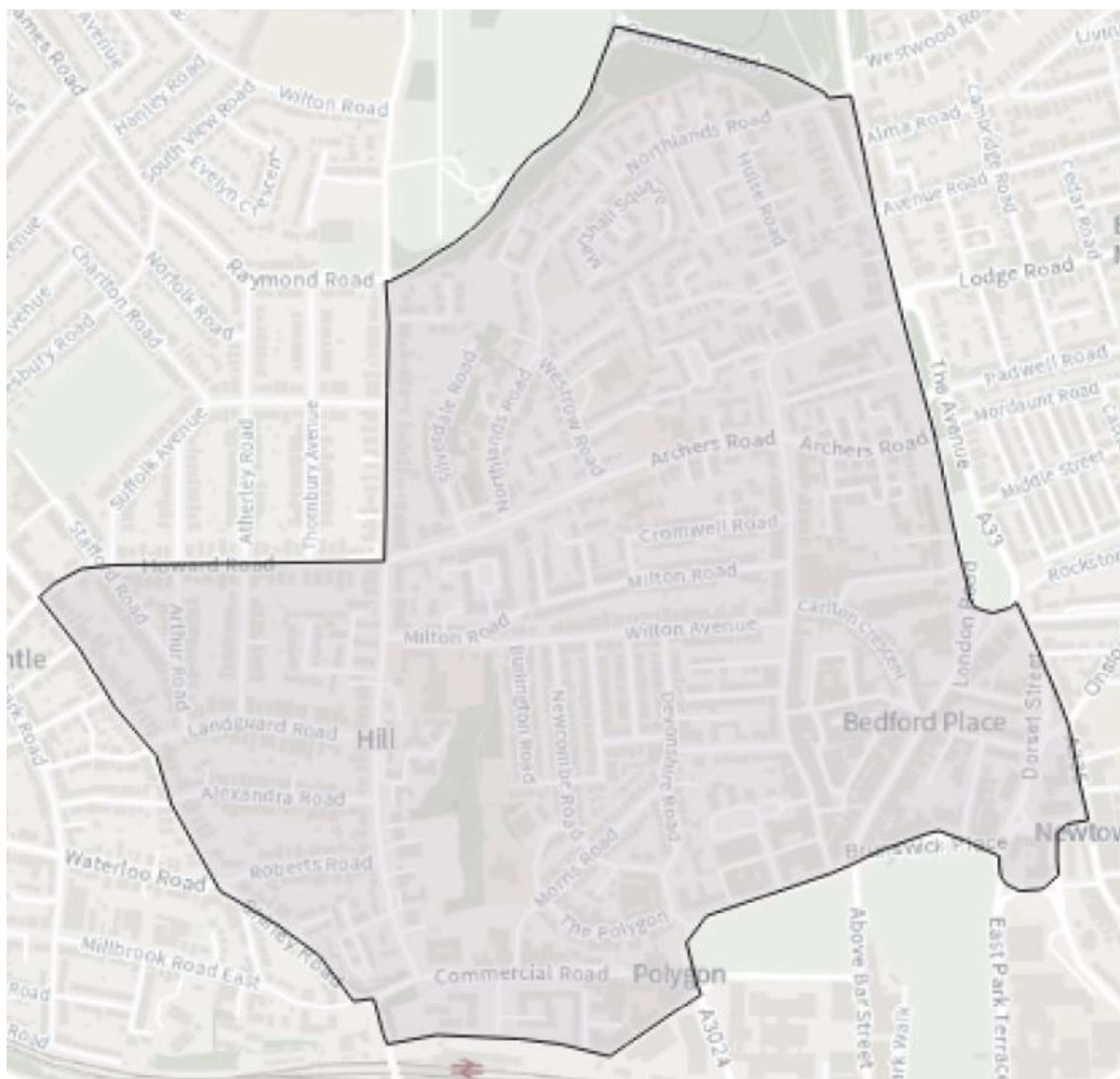


Bargate North

As indicated above, the Bargate ward has seen major growth in recent years, with further development projected by 2027. Our proposal for this area includes the creation of an additional ward, and the new Bargate North ward seeks to bring together student communities from the former Bargate, Bevois and Freemantle wards.

In the south, the new ward boundary follows the principal roads of Southbrook Road, West Park Road, Cumberland Place, and Brunswick Place. The new eastern boundary follows the principal roads of St Marys Road, and The Avenue/A33, whilst the northern boundary follows Cemetery Road.

In the west, the new ward boundary follows the principal roads of Hill Lane, Howard Road, and Shirley Road.



Freemantle ward

Whilst this ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, by 2027 it is projected to have an electorate that is within the permitted level of variance. However, with the requirement to accommodate an additional ward in the western part of the city, we are proposing changes to the eastern and western boundaries.

The River Test forms a natural boundary to the south, whilst the unchanged northern boundary follows the principal roads of Shirley High Street, Shirley Road, the Gipsy Grove pathway between Janson Road and Newlands Avenue, and Raymond Road.

To the east the revised ward boundary follows the principal roads of Hill Lane, Howard Road, Shirley Road, Southern Road and Solent Road, before continuing along the western boundary of City Cruise Terminal.

In the west, the revised ward boundary follows the principal roads of Park Street, Waterhouse Lane (continuing along the rear boundary of the properties located on the western side, including Endeavour Close and Latham Court), and around the boundary of numbers 1 to 8 Waterhouse Way. From there the revised ward boundary continues along Waterhouse Way, Waterhouse Lane, and continues around the northern and western boundaries of Blighmont Crescent, before joining Millbrook Road West/A33. From there, the boundary follows the principal roads of Millbrook Road West/A33 and Millbrook Point Road to the city boundary.

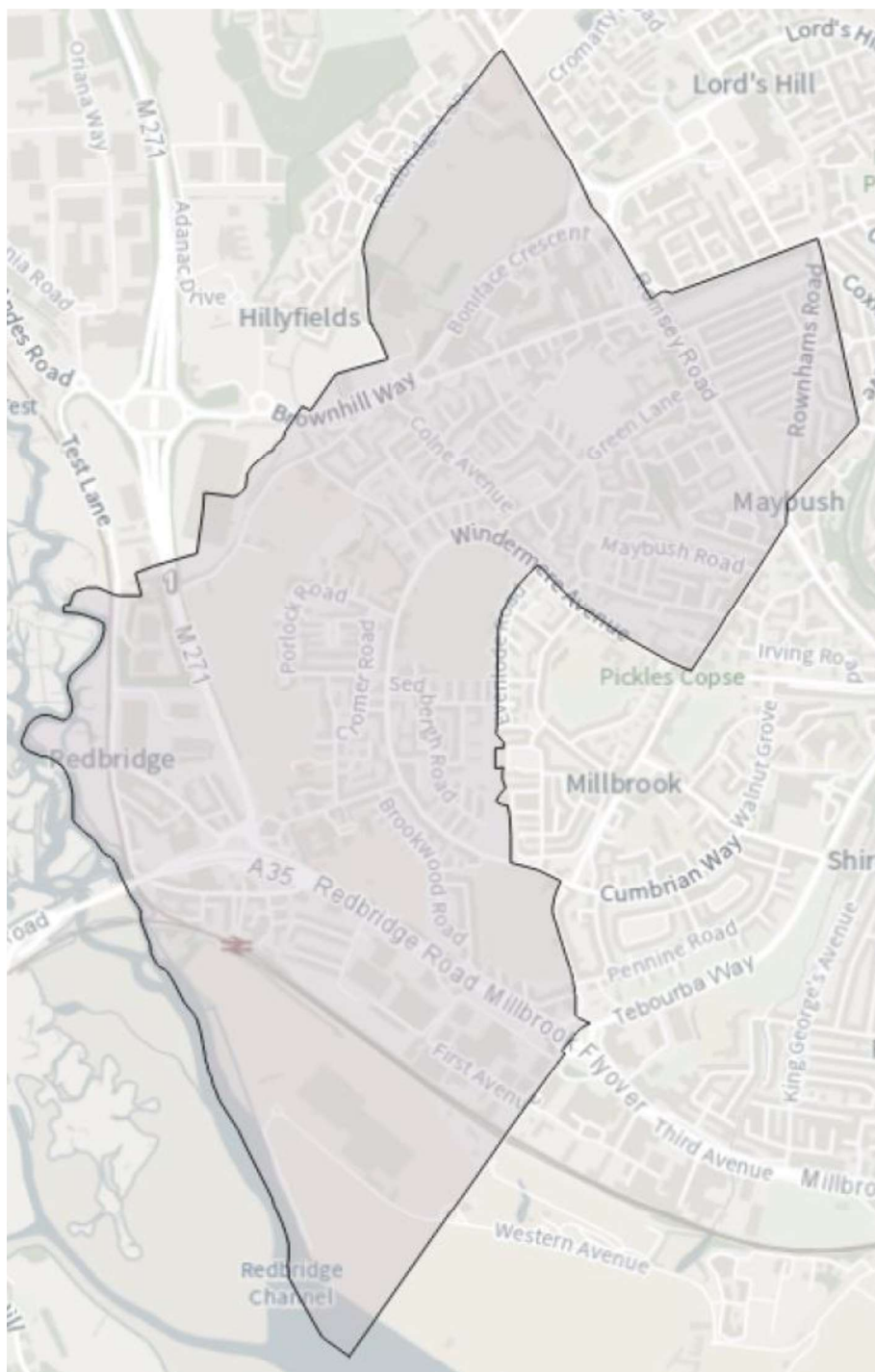


Redbridge ward

This ward has proved to be effective as an area of local government, with an electorate in 2027 that is projected to be at the higher end of the permitted level of variance. In view of this, and to facilitate the inclusion of a larger part of the Millbrook area of the city in the Millbrook ward, we are proposing to make a change to the current ward boundary in the east.

In the south the River Test forms a natural boundary, whilst to the west the ward boundary follows both the city boundary and the River Test. On the northern side the unchanged boundary follows the principal roads of Romsey Road/A3057, and Upper Brownhill Road.

To the east the revised ward boundary runs along the principal roads of Alder Road, Coxford Road, Wimpson Lane, Windemere Avenue, Evenlode Road, before following the western boundaries to the rear of Waveney Green, Cherwell Crescent, Isis Close and Calder Close, to Kendal Avenue. From there the revised boundary follows the principal roads of Kendal Avenue, Wimpson Lane, and First Avenue before continuing south to the city boundary.



Millbrook ward

As with the Redbridge ward above, this ward has also proved to be effective as an area of local government. However, with a projected electorate in 2027 that is just within the permitted level of variance, and to provide greater focus on the Shirley Park, Regents Park, and Millbrook area of the city, we are proposing to change the current ward boundaries in the east and west of the ward.

Whilst the River Test forms a natural boundary to the south, the revised ward boundary to the east follows the principal roads of Park Street, Waterhouse Lane (continuing along the rear boundary of the properties located on the western side, including Endeavour Close and Latham Court), and around the boundary of numbers 1 to 8 Waterhouse Way. From there the revised ward boundary continues along Waterhouse Way, Waterhouse Lane, and continues around the northern and western boundaries of Blighmont Crescent, before joining Millbrook Road West/A33. From there, the boundary follows the principal roads of Millbrook Road West/A33 and Millbrook Point Road to the city boundary.

The unchanged northern boundary follows the principal roads Romsey Road/A3057.

The revised boundary to the west follows the principal roads of Coxford Road, Wimpson Lane, Windemere Avenue, Evenlode Road, before following the western boundaries to the rear of Waveney Green, Cherwell Crescent, Isis Close and Calder Close, to Kendal Avenue. From there the revised boundary follows the principal roads of Kendal Avenue, Wimpson Lane, and First Avenue before continuing south to the city boundary.

