



New electoral arrangements for Basildon Council Final Recommendations

March 2023

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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 Commission² are:

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

² Peter Maddison QPM was present during Board meetings where draft/final recommendations were discussed and agreed. He ceased his role as a Commissioner on 31 December 2022.

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

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

Why Basildon?

7 We are conducting a review of Basildon Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2000, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.³ 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:

³ Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

- The wards in Basildon 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 Basildon

9 Basildon should be represented by 42 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Basildon should have 14 wards, two fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of eight wards should change; six will stay the same.

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

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 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.

Review timetable

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

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
25 April 2022	Number of councillors decided
10 May 2022	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
18 July 2022	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
4 October 2022	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second

	consultation
12 December 2022	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
7 March 2023	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation⁴ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁵ 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.

	2022	2028
Electorate of Basildon	138,769	142,805
Number of councillors	42	42
Average number of electors per councillor	3,304	3,400

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'. All of our proposed wards for Basildon will have good electoral equality by 2028.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2028, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2023. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 3% by 2028.

23 During the consultation on warding patterns we received comments about the Council's forecasts in the Westley Green area. As a result, we amended the figures to reflect the discrepancy between Westley Green and Lee Chapel South. In

⁴ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

⁵ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

response to the draft recommendations we received no significant comments on electorate figures and are satisfied that the Council's figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

Number of councillors

24 Basildon Council currently has 42 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 As Basildon Council elects by thirds (meaning it has elections in three out of every four years) there is a presumption in legislation⁶ that the Council have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. We will only move away from this pattern of wards should we receive compelling evidence during consultation that an alternative pattern of wards will better reflect our statutory criteria.

26 We received no significant comments on the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns or draft recommendations. We have therefore based our final recommendations on a 42-councillor council.

Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received 63 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included borough-wide proposals from the Council, the Labour Group and a local resident, all of which proposed uniform patterns of three-member wards.

28 Our draft recommendations were based on the proposals from the Council and resident in the northern area, while using elements of their proposals in the south, subject to a number of modifications to improve electoral equality or provide clearer boundaries.

29 Our draft recommendations also took into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

30 Our draft recommendations were for 14 three-councillor wards. We considered that these provided for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

⁶ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 2(3)(d) and paragraph 2(5)(c).

Draft recommendations consultation

31 We received 30 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. The majority of these put forward localised comments, including minor changes or ward name changes. The Council expressed support for the draft recommendations, subject to a ward name change. Quite a few respondents expressed general objections to the review.

Final recommendations

32 Our final recommendations are for 14 three-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.

33 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with a modification to the Nethermayne and Pitsea South East wards. We also propose a ward name change.

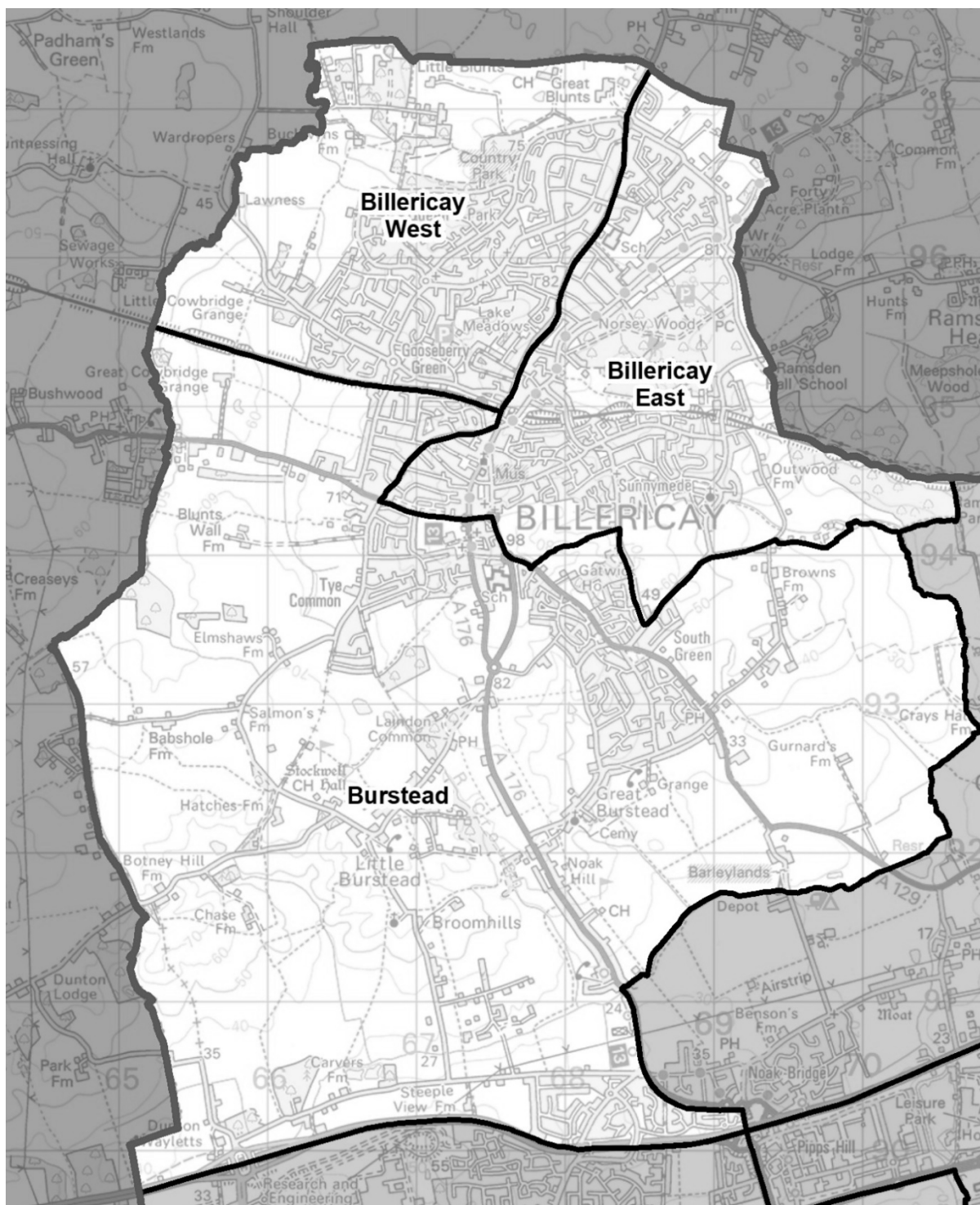
34 The tables and maps on pages 8–18 detail our final recommendations for each area of Basildon. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁷ criteria of:

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

35 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 25 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁷ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Billericay and Burstead



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Billericay East	3	-8%
Billericay West	3	-6%

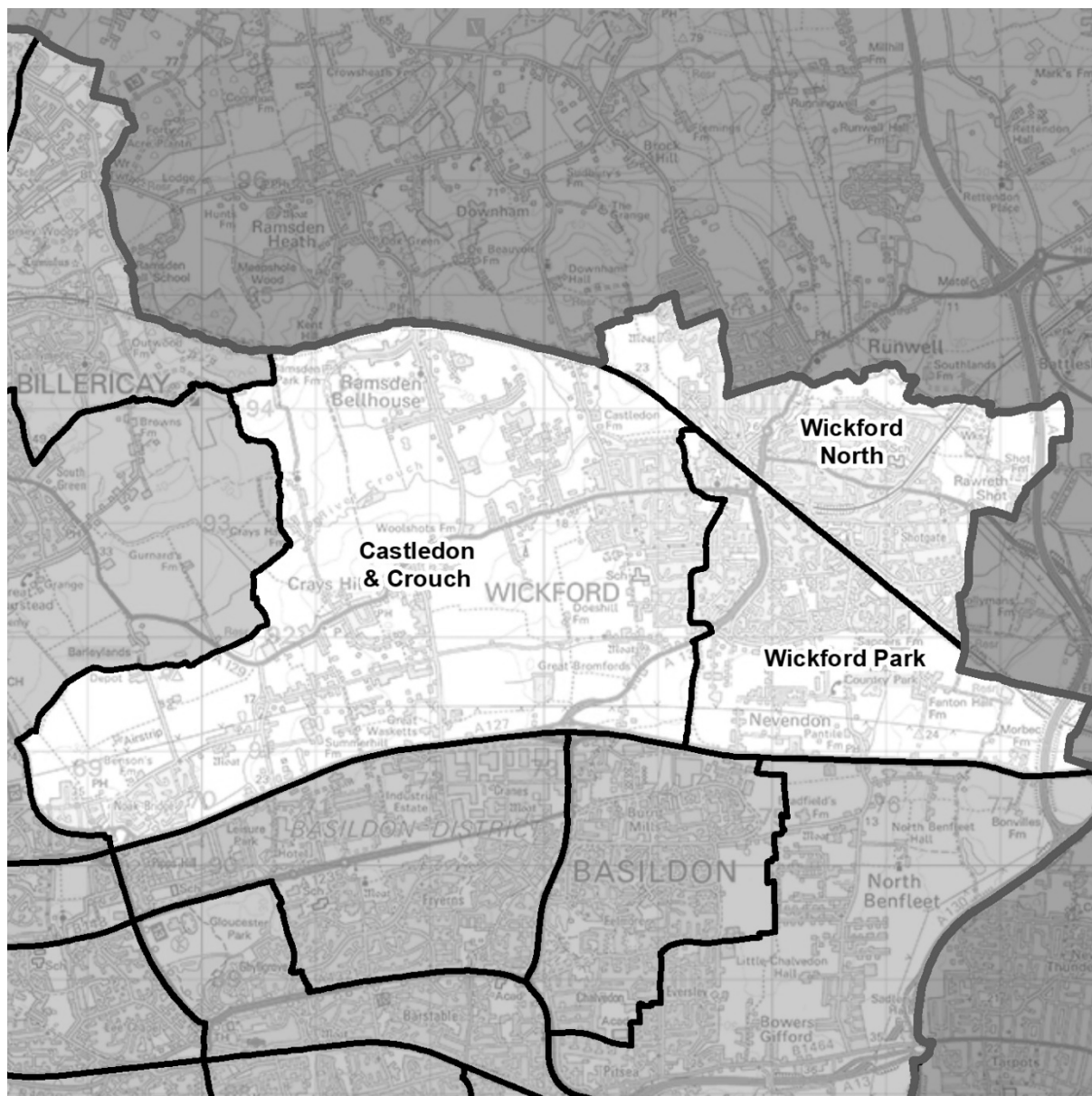
Billericay East, Billericay West and Burstead

36 We received limited comments on this area in response to the draft recommendations. The Council expressed general support. Councillor Schrader also expressed support for the draft recommendations in this area, including the inclusion of the Steeple View area in Burstead ward. A number of residents argued that the Noak Bridge and/or Crays Hill areas should be Burstead ward, rather than Crouch ward.

37 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the general support. We also note the comments about transferring the Noak Bridge and/or Crays Hill areas to Burstead ward. However, these areas contain a significant number of electors and transferring them to Burstead would significantly worsen electoral equality. We have not been persuaded that the evidence justifies this and are therefore not making this change. We are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

38 Our three-councillor Billericay East, Billericay West and Burstead wards would have 8% fewer, 6% fewer and 7% more electors than the borough average by 2028, respectively.

Wickford and Crouch



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Castledon & Crouch	3	-10%
Wickford North	3	4%
Wickford Park	3	-9%

Castledon & Crouch, Wickford North and Wickford Park

39 The Council and Councillor Schrader expressed general support for the draft recommendations in this area, but argued that Crouch ward should be renamed Castledon & Crouch. Councillor Schrader stated that this would reflect the identity of the part of Wickford parish in the ward. Councillor Schrader also argued that Wickford Park ward should 'logically' be renamed Wickford South to reflect the fact

that Wickford North has 'North' in the name. Wickford Independents stated that Wickford Park should be named Wickford South. A resident argued that since Crouch ward includes part of Wickford, then it should be named Wickford Crouch. The resident also argued that the boundary between Wickford Park and Crouch should run along Nevendon Road (A132).

40 Councillor Jeffery and two residents put forward changes for transferring the Wickford High Street area from our proposed Wickford Park ward to Crouch ward. They proposed offsetting this by transferring an area to the south of Crouch ward around Nevendon Road to Wickford Park ward. These respondents provided some good evidence for links between High Street and parts of our proposed Crouch ward. They also provided evidence of links between the south area of Crouch ward and Wickford Park ward.

41 As discussed in the Billericay and Burstead section above, a number of residents argued that the Noak Bridge and/or Crays Hill areas should be in Burstead ward, rather than Crouch. Another resident objected to the inclusion of Crouch and Castledon in the same ward, while another said Crouch ward is too large.

42 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. As discussed in the Billericay and Burstead section above, moving Noak Bridge and/or Crays Hill areas to Burstead would significantly worsen electoral equality and we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify this. Therefore, we have not adopted this suggestion.

43 We also note the proposed amendments from Councillor Jeffery and local residents. While they have provided some good evidence for an amendment, their transfer of the High Street area to Crouch ward would move more electors than the transfer of the southern area of Crouch to Wickford Park. This would result in a Wickford Park ward with 13% fewer electors than the council average by 2028. This is a poor level of electoral equality, particularly when we are of view that our draft recommendations use clear boundaries and secure better electoral equality. Therefore, we are not adopting this proposed change.

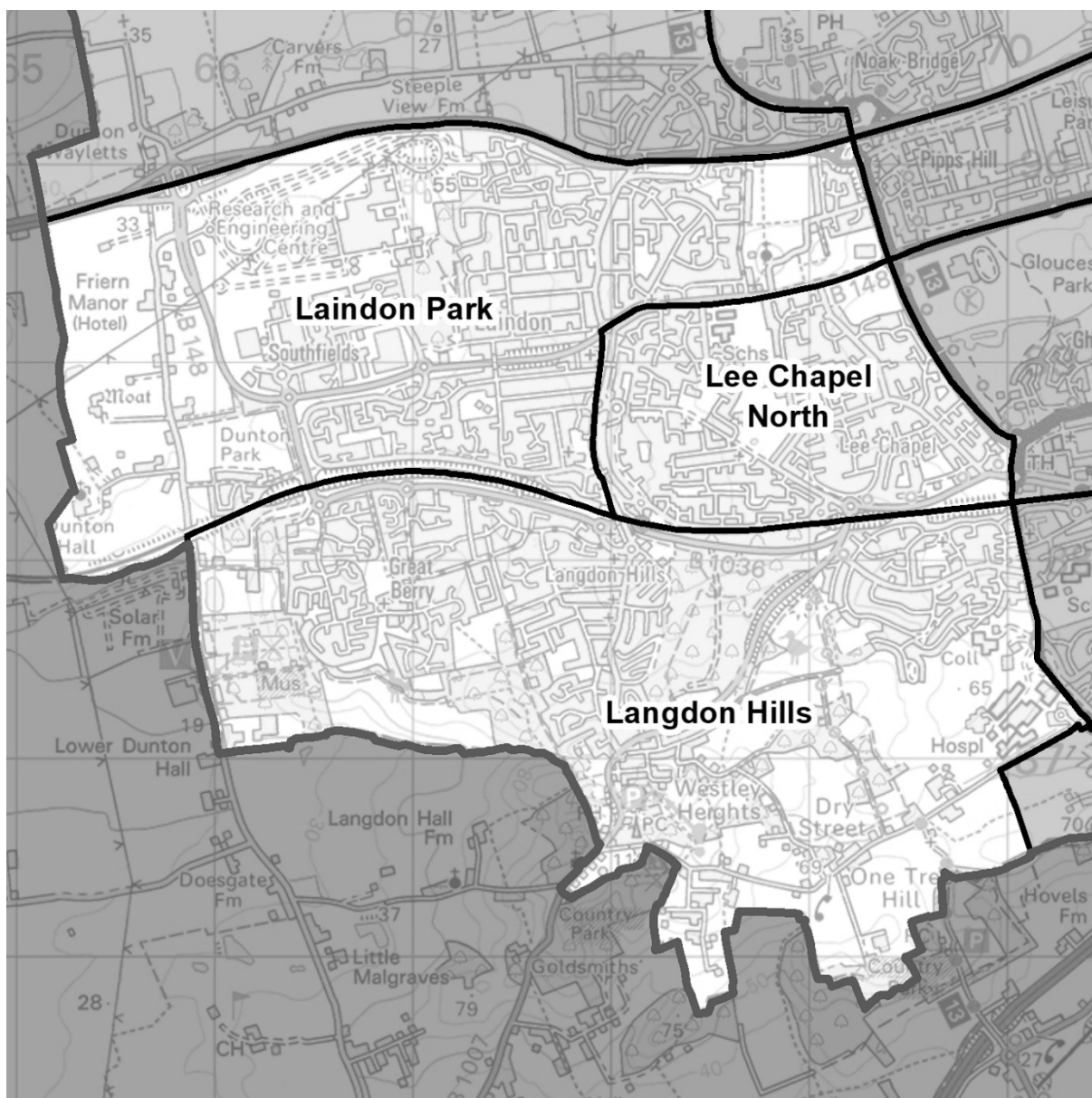
44 We note the suggestion from another resident for running the boundary along Nevendon Road, but no other respondents suggested this modification and there was support for the draft recommendations. We are therefore confirming the draft recommendations for ward boundaries in this area as final.

45 We have also given careful consideration to the evidence about ward names. We note the concerns about including a name related to the inclusion of part of Wickford parish in Crouch ward. On balance, we consider the proposal from the Council and Councillor Schrader to name the ward Castledon & Crouch provides the best reflection of the area. We also note the suggestion of renaming Wickford Park

as Wickford South, to reflect the fact there is a Wickford North ward. However, we do not consider this necessary when there is a third area of Wickford parish (the Castledon area) in another ward that does not have a geographic orientation. We are therefore retaining the Wickford Park name.

46 Our three-councillor Castledon & Crouch, Wickford North and Wickford Park wards would have 10% fewer, 4% more and 9% fewer electors than the borough average by 2028, respectively.

Laindon Park, Langdon Hills and Lee Chapel North



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Laindon Park	3	-1%
Langdon Hills	3	10%
Lee Chapel North	3	2%

Laindon Park, Langdon Hills and Lee Chapel North

47 We received limited comments on this area in response to the draft recommendations. The Council and Councillor Schrader provided general support. Councillor Schrader argued that Langdon Hills ward should be named Langdon Hills & Chapel Hills South ward to reflect the identity of Chapel Hills South. A resident mistakenly objected to The Knares area (Lee Chapel South) being moved out of Lee

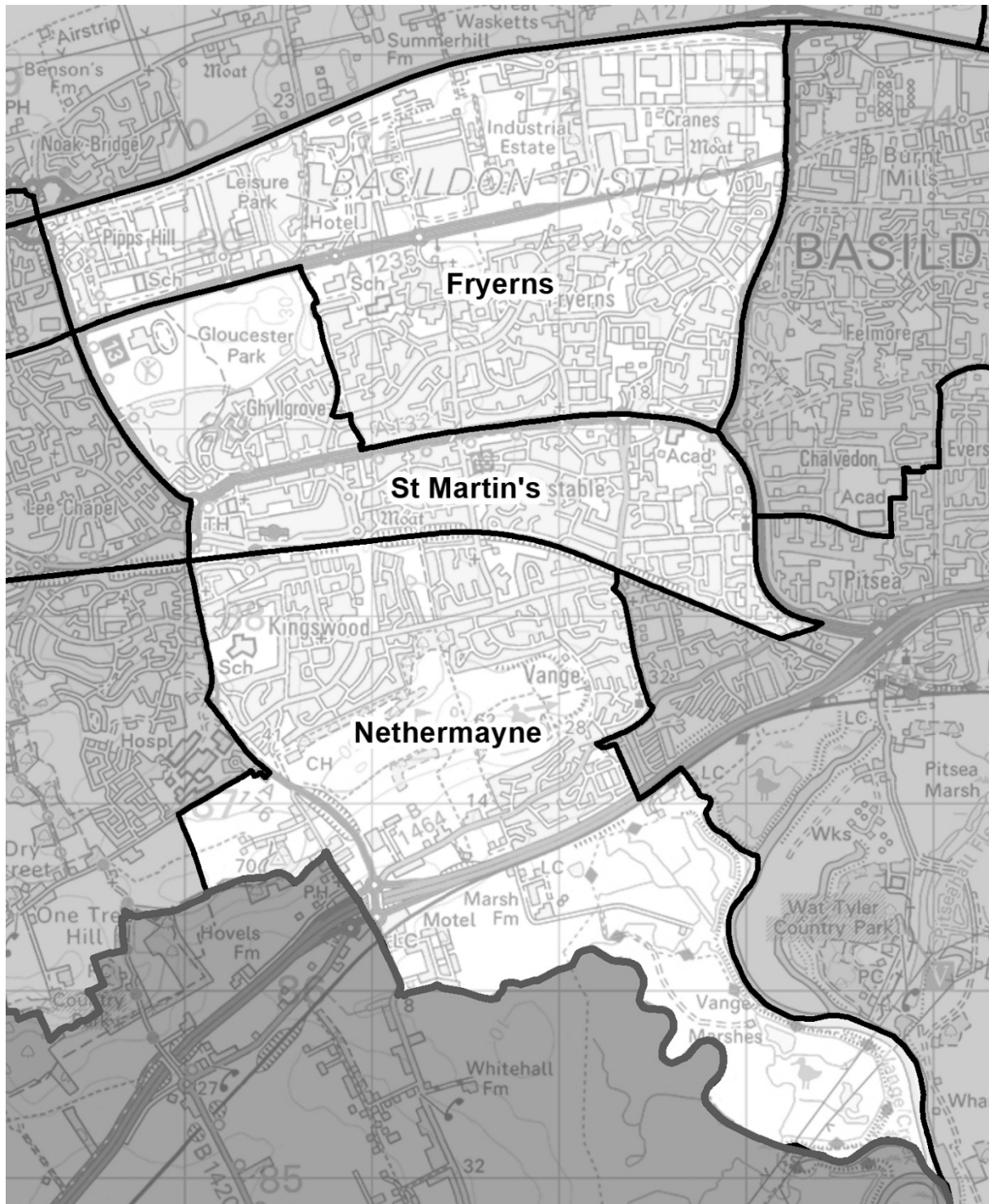
Chapel North to Langdon Hills ward – this area is in fact currently in Nethermayne ward.

48 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the objections to the inclusion of Lee Chapel South in Langdon Hills ward; however, this is necessary to secure electoral equality. Including it in either our proposed Lee Chapel North or Nethermayne wards results in these wards having more than 30% more electors than the average by 2028. We do not consider this level of electoral inequality has been justified by the evidence and are therefore not adopting this proposed amendment as part of our final recommendations.

49 We also note the proposed name change from Councillor Schrader, but note that no other respondents suggested such a name change. It would also result in a relatively lengthy name. Therefore, on balance, we have not been persuaded to adopt this suggestion. We are confirming our draft proposals for these wards as final.

50 Our three-councillor Laindon Park, Langdon Hills and Lee Chapel North wards would have 1% fewer, 10% more and 2% more electors than the borough average by 2028, respectively.

Central Basildon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Fryerns	3	9%
Nethermayne	3	0%

Fryerns, Nethermayne and St Martin's

51 In response to the draft recommendations for this area, the Council and Councillor Schrader provided general support. Councillor Schrader also argued that Barstable and Vange should be retained in the ward names in this area, noting that Barstable reflects a previous ward name for some of the area covered by St Martin's ward. He proposed renaming Nethermayne ward as Vange South & Kingswood and St Martin's as Barstable & Vange North.

52 Councillor Smith proposed an amendment between Nethermayne and Pitsea South East wards, to place the whole of Kent View Road area in Pitsea South East ward. He argued that the draft recommendations split an active community, noting that the area is served by the Kent View Community Centre. He also suggested that St Martin's ward is renamed Barstable, reflecting the fact it unites east and west Barstable in a ward.

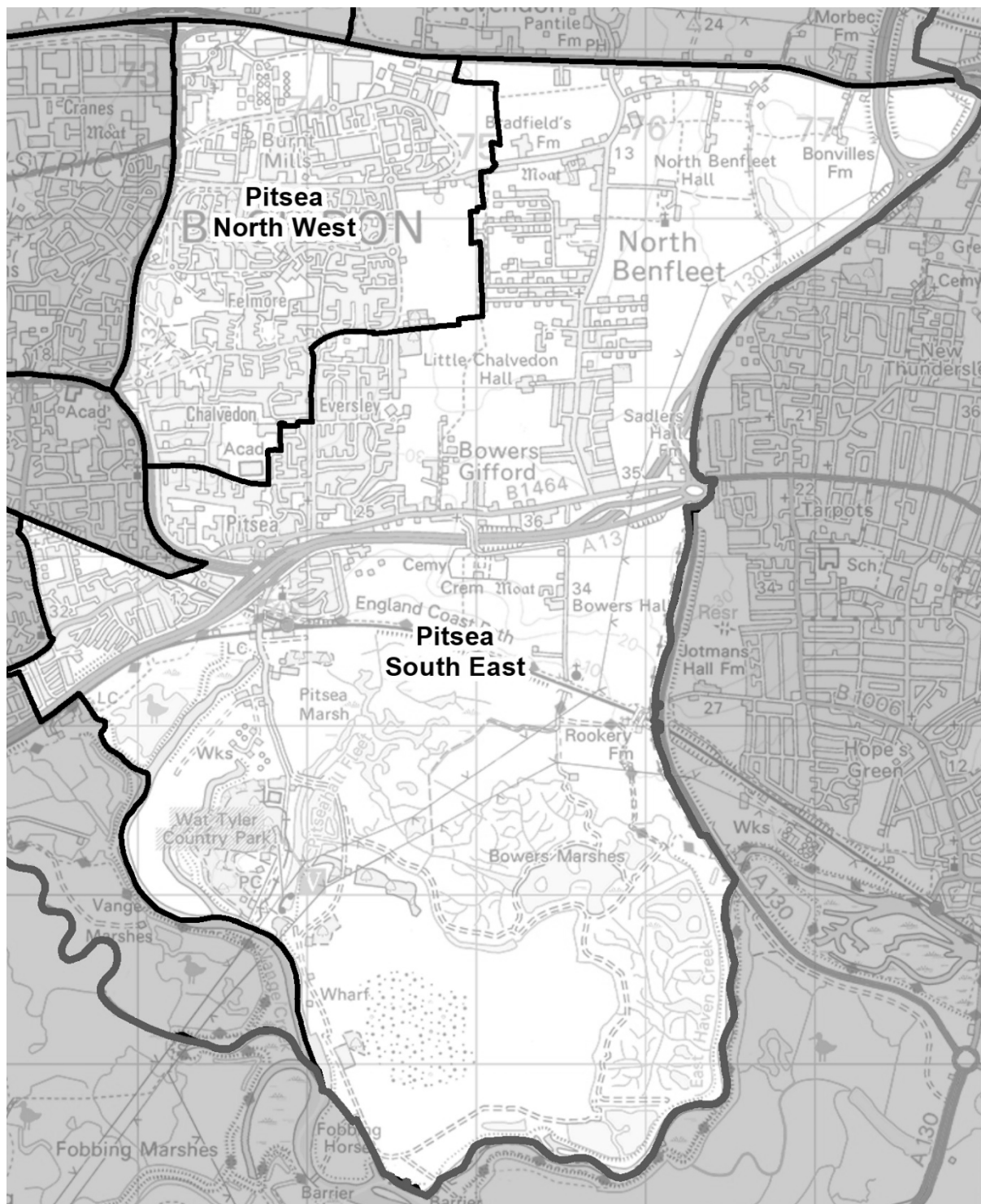
53 A number of local residents objected to the loss of Vange ward, but did not put forward specific alternative proposals. Another resident stated that Nethermayne ward is too large.

54 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the general support for the draft recommendations, as well as the objections. We note Councillor Smith's argument that the proposals divide the Kent View Road community. We find this argument persuasive and note that running the boundary along Clay Hill Road provides a clearer boundary while uniting the Kent View Road area in a single ward. In addition, the modification improves electoral equality in Nethermayne and Pitsea South East wards from 2% more and 2% fewer electors than the borough average by 2028, respectively, to both wards having a variance of 0%. We are therefore adopting Councillor Smith's amendment as part of our final recommendations.

55 We also note the suggested ward name changes and while there was some agreement that Barstable might reflect the St Martin's area, there wasn't agreement on a specific name. We only received one suggested name change for the Nethermayne area. Therefore, given the lack of agreement and general support for our draft recommendation, we are not renaming any of these wards.

56 Our three-councillor Fryerns, Nethermayne and St Martin's wards would have 9% more, 0% and 8% more electors than the borough average by 2028.

Pitsea



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Pitsea North West	3	-7%
Pitsea South East	3	0%

Pitsea North West and Pitsea South East

57 In response to the draft recommendations for this area, the Council and Councillor Schrader provided general support. Councillor Schrader argued Pitsea North West ward should simply be called Pitsea North. He suggested that Pitsea South East ward should reflect some of the constituent areas, so suggested 'Pitsea South, Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet', which he acknowledged is 'a rather long name'.

58 As discussed in the Fryerns, Nethermayne and St Martin's section above, Councillor Smith proposed an amendment between Nethermayne and Pitsea South East wards, to place the whole of Kent View Road area in Pitsea South East ward. He argued that the draft recommendations split an active community, noting that the area is served by the Kent View Community Centre.

59 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the general support for the draft recommendations. However, as discussed in the Fryerns, Nethermayne and St Martin's section above, we find Councillor Smith's argument persuasive and note that running the boundary along Clay Hill Road provides a clearer boundary while uniting the Kent View Road area in a single ward, Pitsea South East ward. In addition, it improves electoral equality in Nethermayne and Pitsea South East wards from 2% more and 2% fewer electors than the borough average by 2028, respectively, to both wards having a variance of 0% from the average. We are therefore adopting Councillor Smith's amendment.

60 Finally, we note the proposed name changes from Councillor Schrader, but as he notes, one of these is very long and, in addition, we received no other comments in support of them. We are therefore retaining the names put forward in the draft recommendations.

61 Our three-councillor Pitsea North West and Pitsea South East wards would have 7% fewer and 0% electors than the borough average by 2028.

Conclusions

62 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Basildon, referencing the 2022 and 2028 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2022	2028
Number of councillors	42	42
Number of electoral wards	14	14
Average number of electors per councillor	3,304	3,400
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	1	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendations

Basildon Council should be made up of 42 councillors serving 14 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 Basildon Council. You can also view our draft recommendations for Basildon Council on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

63 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.

64 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, Basildon 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.

65 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 Wickford Parish Council.

66 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Wickford parish.

Final recommendations

Wickford Parish Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Wickford Castledon	4
Wickford North	7
Wickford Park	9

What happens next?

67 We have now completed our review of Basildon Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2024.

Equalities

68 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Basildon Council

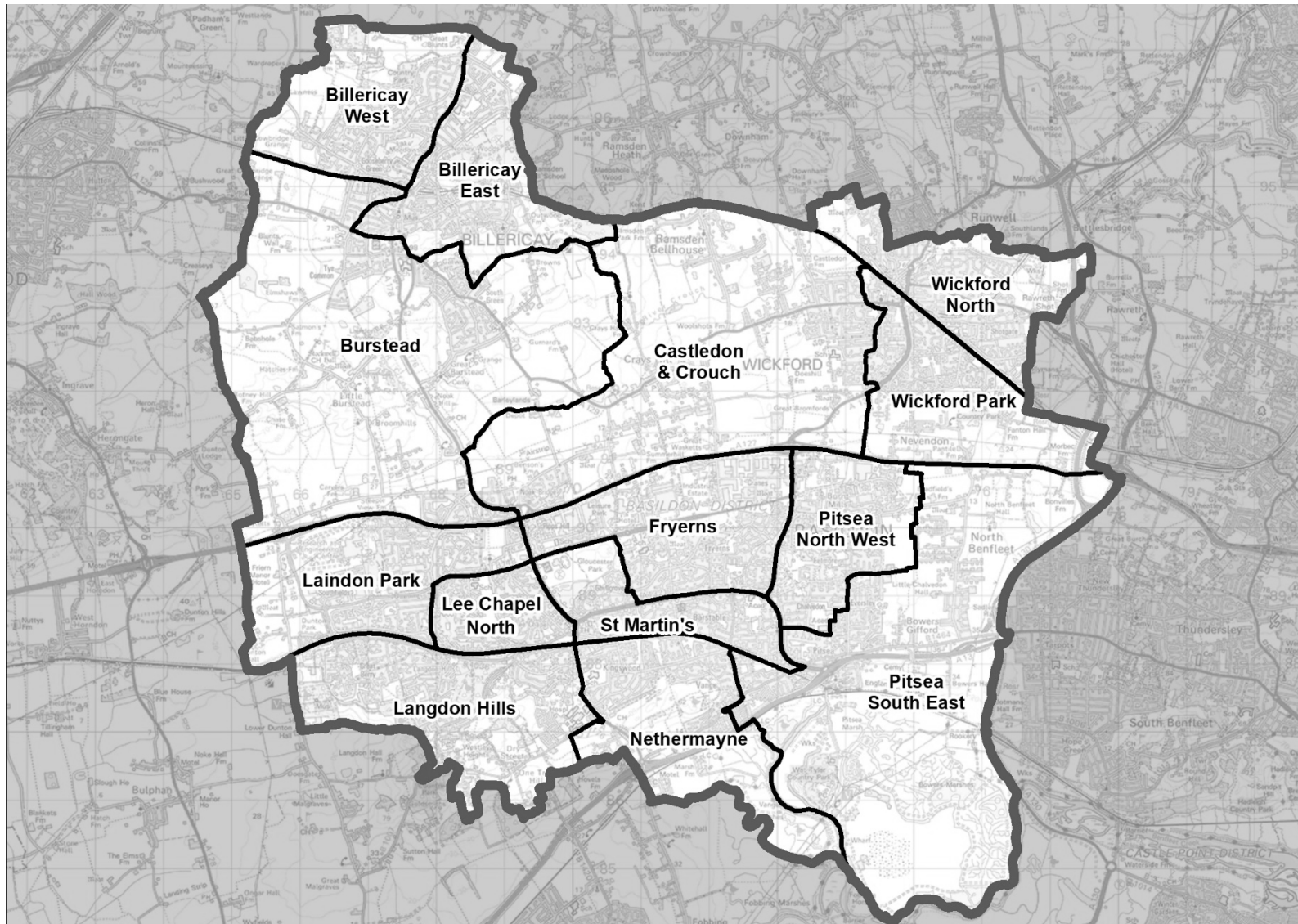
	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Billericay East	3	9,433	3,144	-5%	9,419	3,140	-8%
2	Billericay West	3	9,427	3,142	-5%	9,616	3,205	-6%
3	Burstead	3	11,018	3,673	11%	10,964	3,655	7%
4	Castledon & Crouch	3	9,271	3,090	-6	9,230	3,077	-10%
5	Fryerns	3	10,369	3,456	5%	11,115	3,705	9%
6	Laindon Park	3	9,959	3,320	0%	10,100	3,367	-1%
7	Langdon Hills	3	10,449	3,483	5%	11,229	3,743	10%
8	Lee Chapel North	3	10,076	3,359	2%	10,410	3,470	2%
9	Nethermayne	3	9,967	3,322	1%	10,173	3,391	0%
10	Pitsea North West	3	9,412	3,137	-5%	9,445	3,148	-7%
11	Pitsea South East	3	10,275	3,425	4%	10,225	3,408	0%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12 St Martin's	3	9,780	3,260	-1%	11,054	3,685	8%
13 Wickford North	3	10,400	3,467	5%	10,577	3,526	4%
14 Wickford Park	3	8,933	2,978	-10%	9,248	3,083	-9%
Totals	42	138,769	-	-	142,805	-	-
Averages	-	-	3,304	-	-	3,400	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Basildon 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



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/eastern/essex/basildon

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/essex/basildon

Local Authority

- Basildon Council

Political Groups

- Wickford Independents Group

Councillors

- Councillor G. Jeffery (Basildon Council)
- Councillor A. Schrader (Basildon Council)
- Councillor K. Smith (Basildon Council)

Local Residents

- 25 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

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

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

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

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