

# New electoral arrangements for Wychavon District Council Draft Recommendations

January 2022



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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)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- 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 there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward.

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 the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why Wychavon?

7 We are conducting a review of Wychavon District Council ('the Council') following a request from the Council. Additionally, its last review was completed in 2002, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.<sup>2</sup> Further, 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 Wychavon 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 Wychavon

9 Wychavon should be represented by 43 councillors, two fewer than there are now.

10 Wychavon should have 26 wards, six fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of most wards should change; four will stay the same.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

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

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the 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 consider any representations which are based on these issues.

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



## Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 11 January 2022 to 21 March 2022. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 21 March 2022 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 31 for how to send us your response.

## Review timetable

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

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
19 January 2021	Number of councillors decided
13 July 2021	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
20 September 2021	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
11 January 2022	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
21 March 2022	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
5 July 2022	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation<sup>3</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>4</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.

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

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

	2020	2027
Electorate of Wychavon	102,010	109,474
Number of councillors	43	43
Average number of electors per councillor	2,372	2,546

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Wychavon are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2027.

## Submissions received

23 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2027, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2022. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 7% by 2027.

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

<sup>3</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

## Number of councillors

26 Wychavon District Council currently has 45 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that decreasing by two will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

27 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 43 councillors: for example, 43 one-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

28 We received no submissions specifically about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a 43-councillor council.

## Ward boundaries consultation

29 We received 43 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included district-wide proposals from Wychavon Liberal Democrats, and the Council's Conservative Group who submitted two schemes, noting that one of them was their preferred option. The Council did not make a proposal to us. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for ward arrangements in particular areas of the district.

30 Cllr Elizabeth Eyre made a submission that did not offer specific comments on potential boundaries, but suggested that the size of wards should be influenced by a wide range of factors affecting a councillor's potential workload. We are constrained by legislation to consider our statutory criteria, which include the size of an electorate in an area rather than other detailed factors affecting workload.

31 The three district-wide schemes provided mixed patterns of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Wychavon. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that each of the schemes' proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

32 Our draft recommendations are based primarily on the proposals of the Liberal Democrats. They also take into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

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

## Draft recommendations

34 Our draft recommendations are for two three-councillor wards, 13 two-councillor wards and 11 one-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

35 The tables and maps on pages 9–25 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Wychavon. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>5</sup> criteria of:

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

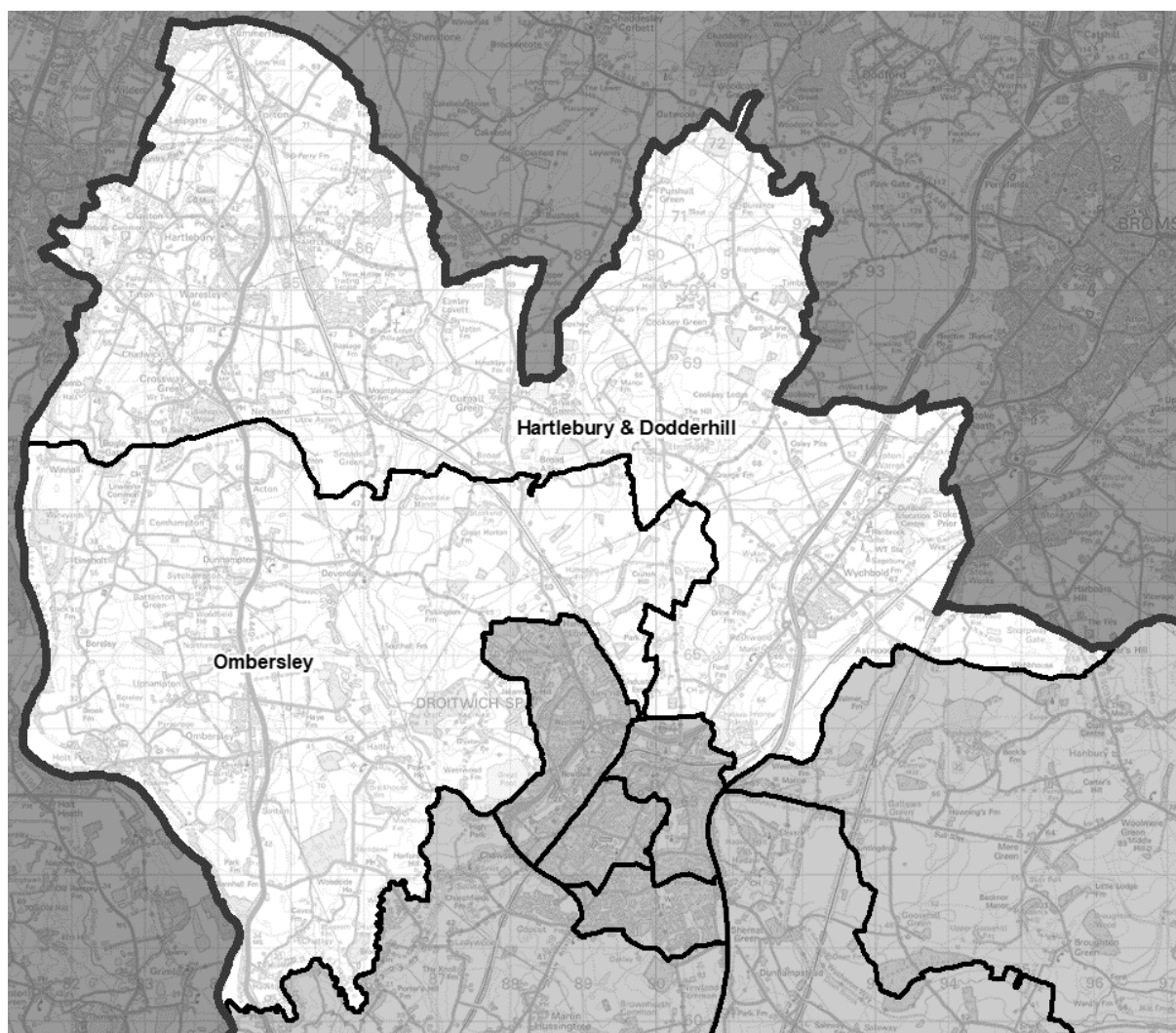
36 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 37 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

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<sup>5</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## Northern Wychavon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Hartlebury & Dodderhill	2	9%
Ombersley	1	-9%

### *Hartlebury & Dodderhill*

38 Both the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives proposed separate wards for Hartlebury and Dodderhill, with both Dodderhill wards (containing the parishes of Dodderhill, Elmbridge and Upton Warren) being proposed with an 11% variance. The Liberal Democrats proposed to place Elmley Lovett parish in a ward with Hartlebury, while the Conservatives proposed Hartlebury parish as a stand-alone ward, with Elmley Lovett placed into an Ombersley ward.

39 Both proposals placed Elmbridge and Elmley Lovett parishes into separate wards, and hence split the village of Cutnall Green between neighbouring wards. We visited Cutnall Green on our tour of Wychavon and consider that, despite being split

between parishes, the village is a unified community which should not be split between wards where a viable alternative exists.

40 As mentioned above, both proposals for Dodderhill ward had 11% more electors per councillor than average. We looked to see if we could find an alternative warding pattern that would improve this level of electoral inequality. Merely adjusting the boundary to place the entirety of Cutnall Green village in an alternative ward with the remainder of Elmley Lovett parish (Hartlebury ward under the Liberal Democrat proposal, Ombersley ward under the Conservative proposal) would have the effect of increasing that ward's variance beyond the limits of good electoral equality, to 11% and 12% respectively. We have therefore not adopted these possibilities.

41 We considered adding just the dwellings in the built-up area of Cutnall Green village to the Liberal Democrats' proposed Ombersley ward and leaving the remaining part of Elmley Lovett parish in a Hartlebury ward and the remaining part of Elmbridge parish in Dodderhill ward. This would result in good electoral equality for all three wards in question. However, this would require the creation of parish wards for the parishes of both Elmley Lovett and Elmbridge. The parish wards in question would have relatively few electors in; and as we consider that these small wards would not facilitate effective & convenient local government, we have not been persuaded to adopt this warding arrangement.

42 Instead, we propose to combine the Liberal Democrats' proposed Dodderhill and Hartlebury wards into a two-member ward, comprising the parishes of Dodderhill, Upton Warren, Elmbridge, Elmley Lovett and Hartlebury, with 9% more electors per councillor than average. We acknowledge that this ward is relatively large geographically, and we would particularly welcome further views with regard to whether this ward offers a good reflection of community identity, or whether community identity would be better reflected by two separate, single-councillor wards in this area.

### *Ombersley*

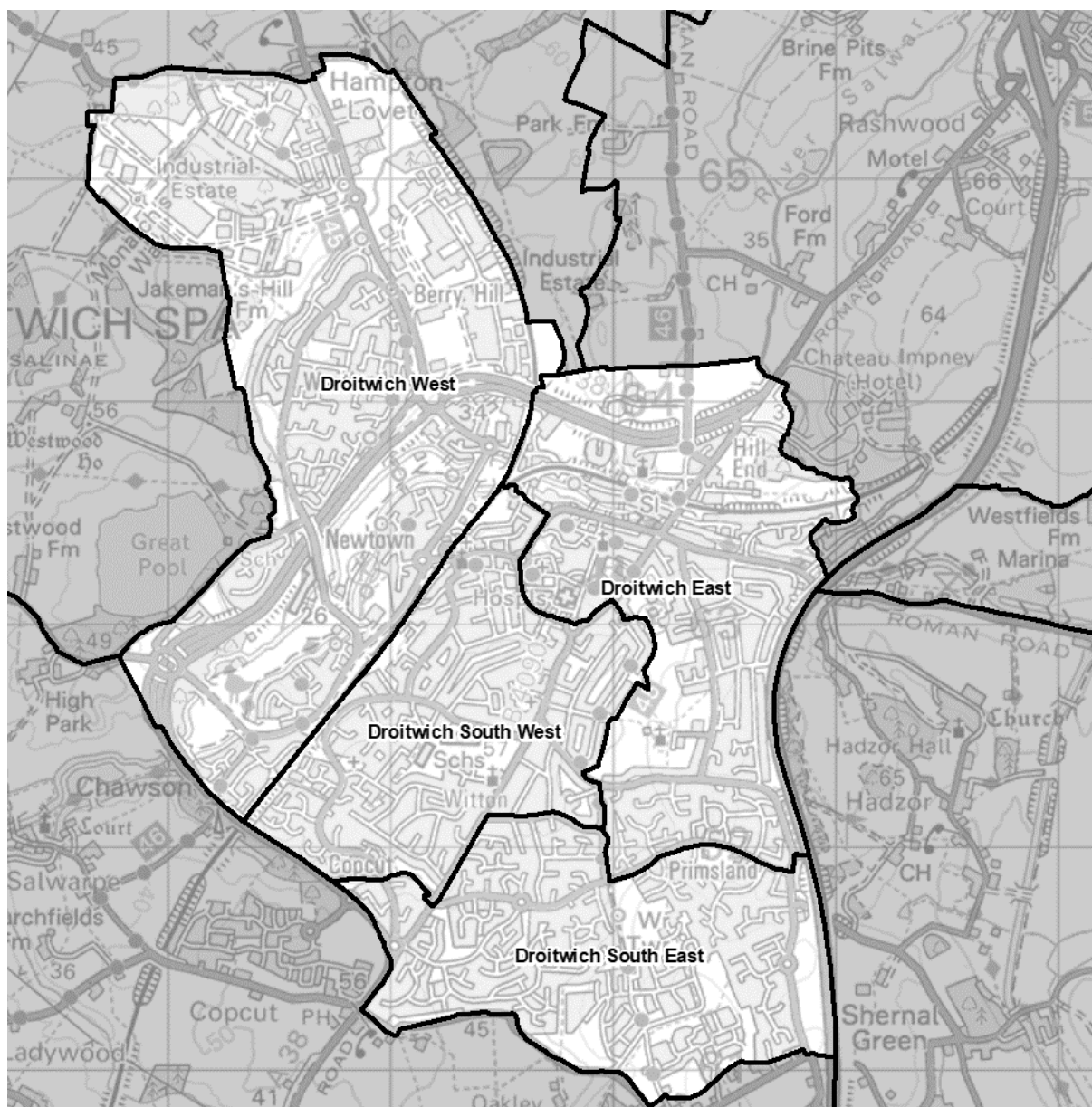
43 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed broadly similar Ombersley wards, differing only in the placement of Elmley Lovett, and Westwood parishes. Given that Hampton Lovett and Westwood parishes are grouped with a single parish council, we do not consider that it would reflect community identities for these parishes to be placed in separate wards. The Liberal Democrats provided evidence that Elmley Lovett looks to Hartlebury for amenities and public services, and we have therefore placed these parishes into a single ward, and adopted their proposed Ombersley ward, consisting of Ombersley, Doverdale and Westwood parishes, together with the majority of Hampton Lovett parish.

44 As discussed below (paras 50–52), we propose to move the Doverdale Park area into a Droitwich-based ward. This leaves Ombersley ward with 9% fewer

electors per councillor than average – still within the range of what we consider to be good electoral equality.



## Droitwich



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Droitwich East	2	-7%
Droitwich South East	2	5%
Droitwich South West	2	9%
Droitwich West	2	-8%

### *Droitwich East, Droitwich South East and Droitwich South West*

45 We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for the majority of Droitwich Spa, which included the removal of the existing Droitwich Central ward, and a boundary along the railway line running through the centre of the town. We visited

this area on our tour of Wychavon and consider that the railway line is indeed a strong and clear boundary that forms a good basis for a number of wards.

46 The Conservatives proposed a number of modifications to the existing wards, but described these purely in terms of the numbers of electors to move, rather than the boundaries to be adopted. Without further information as to the specific boundaries proposed, it is difficult to accurately assess these proposals against our statutory criteria, and hence we have not adopted them. We considered attempting to identify our own boundaries based on the approximate number of electors to be moved between wards, but we consider that this would be inferior to locally generated proposals.

47 We considered modifying the Liberal Democrat proposals, by moving the boundary between Droitwich East and Droitwich South West to Ombersley Way, rather than following the existing boundary along Hampton Road. This would marginally improve the electoral equality of these wards (from variances of 9% and -7% to 8% and -6%, respectively). It would also allow electors in the Netherwich area, and future electors in the new developments in this area, to have convenient access to the remainder of their ward. However, given the arrangement of Worcestershire County Council divisions in this area (which cannot be amended as part of this review), this would require the creation of a very small parish ward in this area, which we do not consider would be compatible with effective and convenient local government.

48 The Conservatives mentioned in their submission that they would place the Copcut Lane area, in Salwarpe parish, within Droitwich South West ward based on economic links between the areas. As mentioned below (paras 55–56), we received evidence against this proposal from Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council. We would welcome further evidence of whether this area looks towards Droitwich for its community identity; and of how this area (forecast to have roughly 1,250 electors by 2027) might be integrated into a Droitwich-based ward while retaining good electoral equality for both Droitwich and our proposed North Claines & Salwarpe ward.

#### *Droitwich West*

49 The Liberal Democrat and Conservative proposals for this ward did not offer good electoral equality, with 11% fewer electors per councillor than average. While this is a relatively small departure from good electoral equality, we considered whether different warding patterns with better electoral equality that also meet our statutory criteria exist.

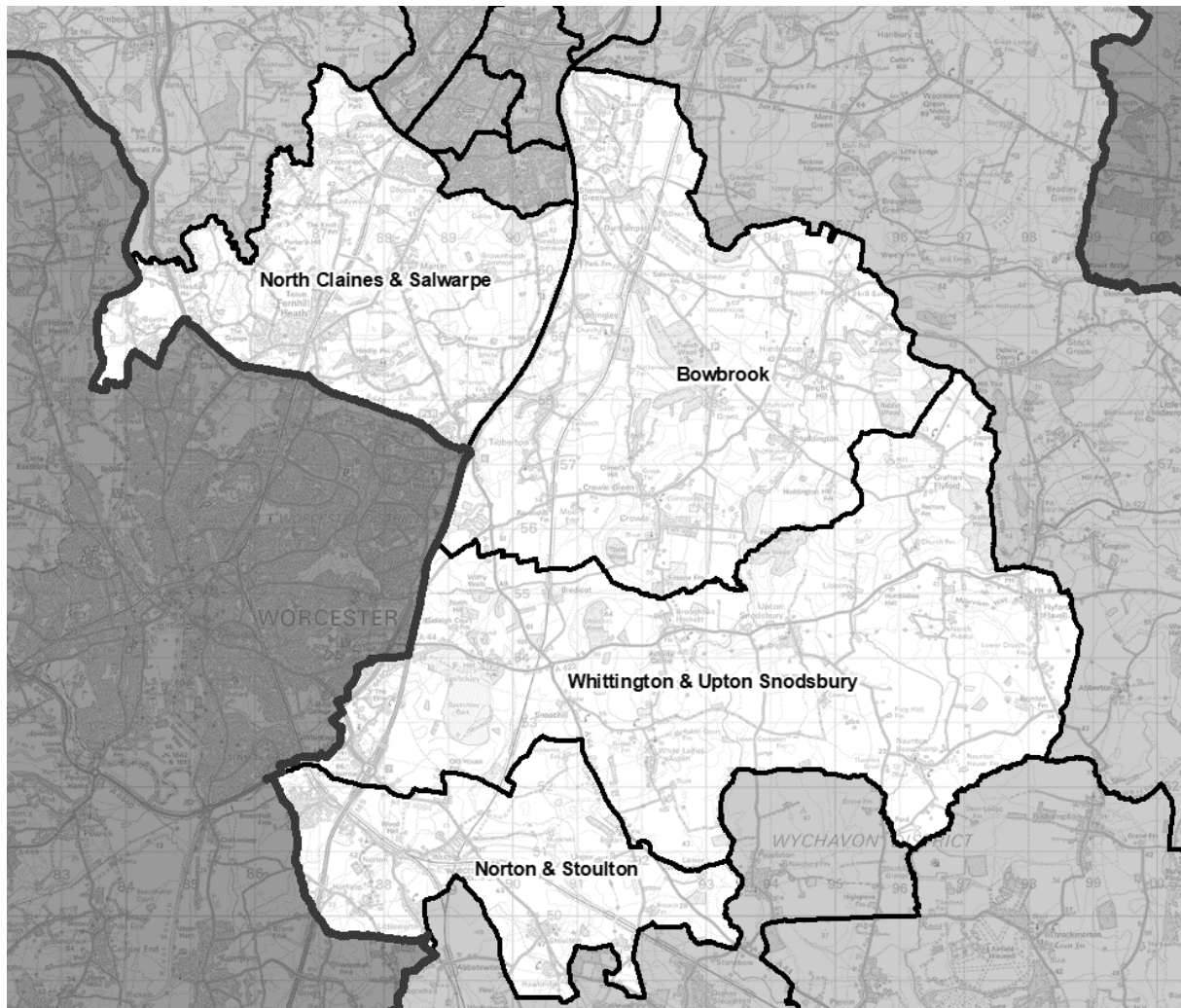
50 On our tour of Wychavon, we visited the Doverdale Park area, in order to consider whether this area has links to the northern portion of Droitwich. We received no evidence specifically referring to the community identity of this area, and

whether it looks to Droitwich or to the remainder of Hampton Lovett parish for services and amenities.

51 Based on our observations on tour, we consider that it is likely that the Doverdale Park area shares at least some community links with the Droitwich area. Accordingly, we propose to place this area, together with the neighbouring employment areas around Wassage Way and Pointon Way, within a Droitwich-based ward. This improves the electoral equality of Droitwich West and ensures that the warding arrangements for Hampton Lovett parish remain viable.

52 We would be particularly interested in further evidence from residents of Doverdale Park, as to whether our proposal is indeed an accurate reflection of their community identity.

## Western Wychavon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Bowbrook	1	-2%
North Claines & Salwarpe	2	4%
Norton & Stoulton	1	-4%
Whittington & Upton Snodsbury	1	8%

### *Bowbrook and North Claines & Salwarpe*

53 We have adopted the identical proposals of the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives for Bowbrook ward comprising the parishes of Hadzor, Himbleton, Oddingley, Huddington, Tibberton and Crowle; and the Liberal Democrat proposal for North Claines & Salwarpe. The three full schemes received proposed identical wards of Bowbrook, with the key difference in the proposed North Claines & Salwarpe wards being in the Copcut rise area of Salwarpe parish.

54 The Conservatives proposed that 800 electors should move from Copcut into a Droitwich-based ward. The Copcut area is forecast to have roughly 1,250 electors by

2027, and the Conservatives did not specify precisely where the boundary should be drawn between electors moving into Droitwich South West, and those remaining within a rural-based ward.

55 Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council provided evidence of the links between the three constituent parishes, and of the efforts to incorporate the Copcut Rise developments within Salwarpe parish.

56 We note that the Copcut Rise area appears to be of a somewhat different character from the remainder of Salwarpe parish, and that the access to this area is directly onto the A38 which forms the boundary of Droitwich parish. Given the evidence of the joint parish council, we propose to retain this area within North Claines & Salwarpe ward; but would be particularly interested in further evidence from residents of Copcut Rise as to where they consider their community identity lies.

57 North Claines Parish Council, although basing their submission on overall population rather than electorates, supported the concept of a ward uniting the villages to the south of Droitwich.

#### *Norton & Stoulton and Whittington & Upton Snodsbury*

58 We have based our draft recommendations for these wards on the proposal by the Liberal Democrats. The Conservative proposals for this area did not offer good electoral equality, with their preferred proposal placing Whittington and Norton-Juxta-Kempsey parishes in a Drakes Broughton ward with 11% more electors per councillor than average. In contrast, the Liberal Democrat proposal offers good equality, and some evidence of community links between the various settlements included in each of the wards.

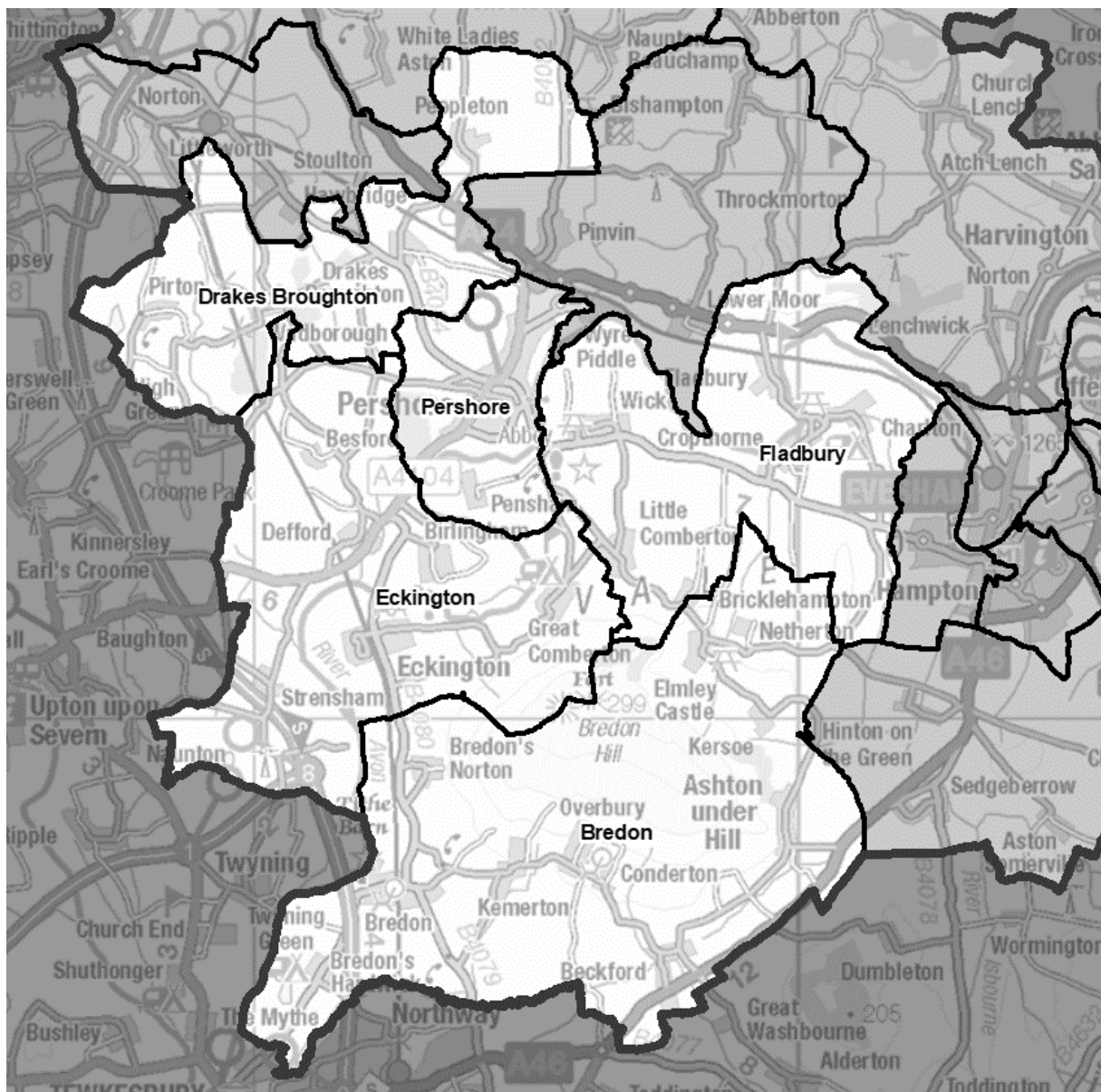
59 We received submissions from both Norton Juxta Kempsey and Whittington parish councils supporting the retention of the existing Norton & Whittington ward. Such a ward would be forecast to have 31% more electors than average – well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality. Limited evidence was provided to justify this retention, with submissions focussed on satisfaction with existing representation rather than providing details of how the two areas were linked.

60 We visited this area on our tour of Wychavon. We were not persuaded that there was sufficient evidence of links between electors in Whittington parish on the edge of Worcester and those in the village of Brockhill in Norton Juxta Kempsey parish. A two-member ward which kept Whittington and Norton Juxta Kempsey within the same ward, while offering good electoral equality, would be geographically relatively large. We would be interested in further evidence as to whether a two-member ward covering the combined areas of our proposed Norton & Stoulton and

Whittington & Upton Snodsbury wards would be an effective reflection of community identity and would facilitate effective & convenient local government.

61 We propose, as part of our draft recommendations, a Whittington & Upton Snodsbury ward comprising the parishes of Whittington, Spetchley, Bredicot, Broughton Hackett, Churchill, White Ladies Aston, Upton Snodsbury, Grafton Flyford, North Piddle, Naunton Beauchamp and Flyford Flavell, and a Norton & Stoulton ward comprising the parishes of Norton-Juxta-Kempsey and Stoulton.

## South Western Wychavon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Bredon	2	-7%
Drakes Broughton	1	3%
Eckington	1	5%
Fladbury	1	5%
Pershore	3	-5%

### *Bredon*

62 Our proposals in this area are based on those of the Liberal Democrats. The Conservatives proposed a Bredon ward, stretching from Bredon to Defford, with 17% more electors per councillor than average, and a South Bredon Hill ward with 20% fewer electors than average. The Conservatives' alternative plan offered better

equality, with a -8% variance for a Bredon-based ward, but this also relied on splitting the town of Pershore, and placing Little Comberton parish into a Sedgeberrow-based ward with which it would have poor access.

63 The Liberal Democrat proposal offered better, although still not ideal, electoral equality with a proposed South Bredon Hill ward stretching from Kemerton to Netherton parishes having 11% fewer electors than average. We considered adding a neighbouring parish to this ward in order to improve the equality, but this is not possible without compromising the viability of neighbouring wards.

64 We therefore propose to combine the Liberal Democrat proposals for Bredon and South Bredon Hill wards into a two-member ward with good electoral equality, comprising the parishes of Bredon's Norton, Bredon, Kemerton, Overbury, Conderton, Elmley Castle, Beckford, Ashton under Hill and Netherton. We would particularly welcome further information on a potential name for this ward, as well as any comments on whether the community identity of the Liberal Democrats' proposed South Bredon Hill ward is sufficiently strong to justify a modest departure from good electoral equality.

#### *Drakes Broughton, Eckington and Fladbury*

65 We have based our proposed wards in this area on those proposed by the Liberal Democrats. The Conservatives' preferred proposals in this area relied on a split of Pershore, which we do not consider would reflect community identity, as well as offering poor electoral equality in a number of areas. The Conservatives' alternative, less preferred option, offered better equality for a two-member ward stretching from Whittington to Walcot, but provided little evidence of community identity and relied on proposals for neighbouring wards which we have not adopted.

66 We have modified the Liberal Democrat proposal for Eckington and Fladbury wards, bringing Charlton parish into Fladbury owing to the lack of access between Charlton and the Harvington & Norton area, and Great Comberton parish into Eckington ward in order to provide good electoral equality for both wards. The Liberal Democrats proposed to add Charlton to a proposed Harvington & Norton ward, discussed in more detail below (para 92). As we have chosen to place this parish in Fladbury ward, a consequential change is required to retain good electoral equality. If Fladbury retained both Great Comberton and Charlton parishes, it would have 16% more electors than average.

67 The Liberal Democrats provided evidence that Fladbury ward was a collection of villages which shared community interest, and also looked primarily towards Pershore rather than Evesham for services. Our proposed Fladbury ward consists of the parishes of Wick, Little Comberton, Bricklehampton, Crophorne, Fladbury and Charlton; while our proposed Eckington ward includes the parishes of Besford, Defford, Strensham, Eckington, Great Comberton and Birlingham.



68 We received no specific evidence of any community links between Great Comberton and Little Comberton parishes, and therefore propose to place these parishes in different wards in order to accommodate good electoral equality for both Eckington and Fladbury. We would particularly welcome further evidence as to the community identity of these areas in our consultation on these draft recommendations.

69 The Liberal Democrats provided evidence that the separate villages within our proposed Drakes Broughton ward share issues around development, and look towards Pershore for the majority of their services. We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for this ward, which comprises the parishes of Pirton and Drakes Broughton & Wadborough.

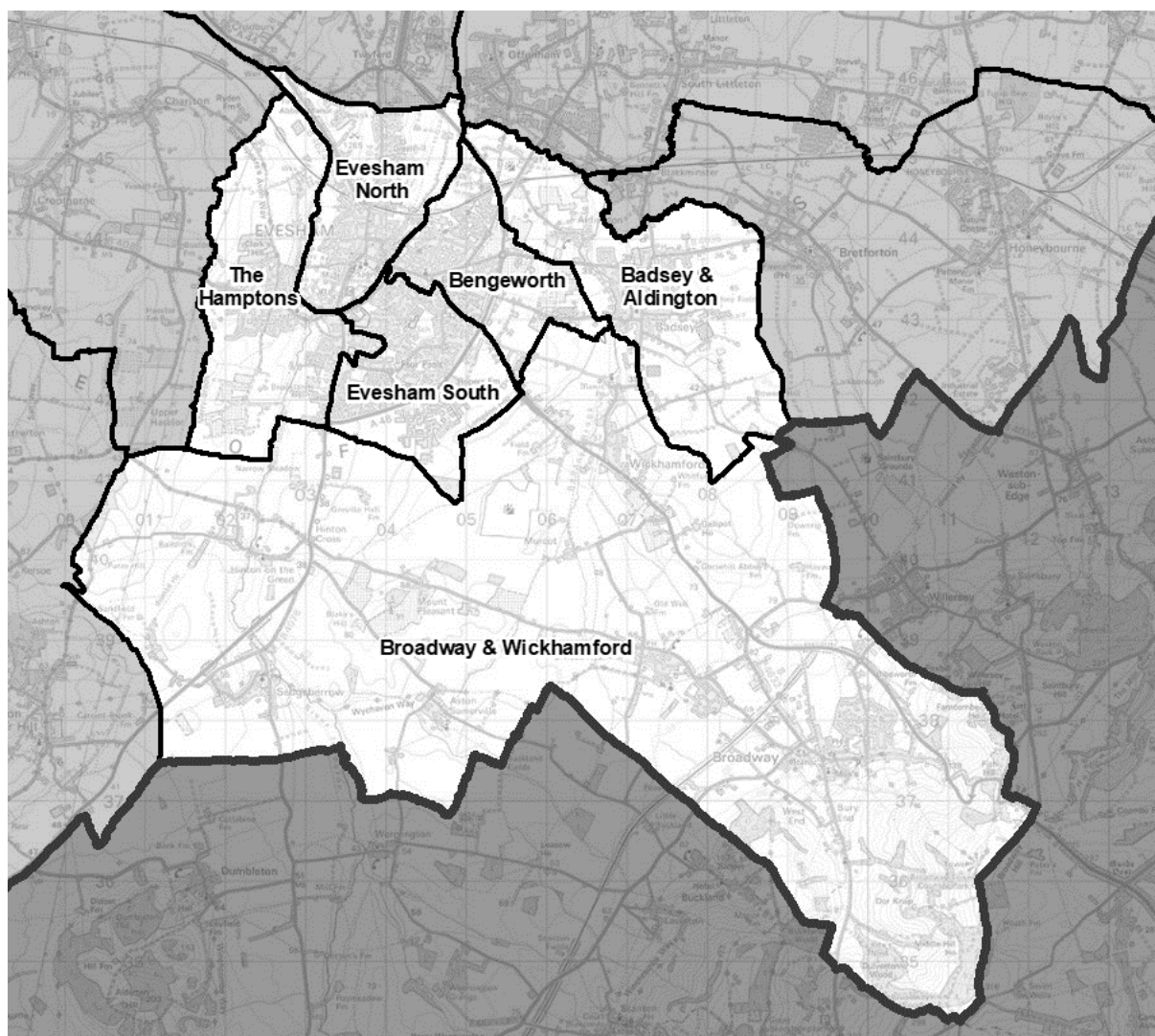
### *Pershore*

70 The Liberal Democrat proposal for Pershore was to retain the existing three-member ward, covering the entire Town Council area. This submission stated that there were few community divisions of significance within the town, but that the area was sufficiently different from the neighbouring rural area to warrant separate representation.

71 This was supported by Cllr Dan Boatright, who supported the proposal for a three-member ward. Pershore Town Council suggested that having fewer than three members representing the town would not provide effective representation.

72 The Conservatives offered alternative proposals for Pershore, but both proposals involved splitting the town, and placing segments within various neighbouring parishes. As well as the options in some cases not offering good electoral equality, little evidence was provided to justify the splitting of the town itself. We have therefore not adopted this proposal. We consider a three-member ward comprising the whole of Pershore parish will reflect community identity and provide for effective and convenient local government, and we have adopted this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

## Evesham and Southern Wychavon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Badsey & Aldington	1	-4%
Bengeworth	2	3%
Broadway & Wickhamford	2	9%
Evesham North	2	-2%
Evesham South	3	-8%
The Hamptons	2	-7%

### *Badsey & Aldington, Bengeworth and Evesham North*

73 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats both proposed similar wards for Badsey & Aldington and Bengeworth. Within the town of Evesham, we also received a proposal from Mid Worcestershire and The Vale Green Party ('Greens').

74 Our proposed Badsey & Aldington ward mirrors the existing ward in this area, with the exception of the Orchards area (discussed below at para 77).

75 The Liberal Democrats' and Greens' proposed Bengeworth ward had a northern boundary coincident with the boundary of Evesham town, and a western boundary at the River Avon. Multiple submissions provided evidence that the river was a clear boundary, and that a ward crossing the river would not reflect community identity.

76 The Greens proposed a southern boundary of Bengeworth ward running the length of Port Street. We visited this area on our tour of Wychavon, but did not consider that Port Street represented a strong and clear boundary, or that there were separate communities on either side. We have therefore not adopted this proposal. The Conservatives suggested that, in order to improve electoral equality, 300 electors from the Port Street area should move into Evesham South, but did not offer a suggested boundary.

77 Cllr Mark Goodge proposed that the Orchards area, in Aldington parish, was essentially contiguous with Evesham, and that this area should be placed in an Evesham-based ward. We note in particular that the parish boundary in this area, and hence the existing ward boundary splits Sunset Way in an arbitrary manner, and that electors on Sunset Way and Lambourne Close have no vehicular access other than through Evesham parish. We have adopted Cllr Goodge's proposal, and included this area within Bengeworth ward as part of our draft recommendations.

78 The Liberal Democrats, Greens and Cllr Goodge proposed identical boundaries for Evesham North ward, which we have adopted. The Conservatives proposed, in order to improve equality, that 400 of the roughly 700 electors in the current Bengeworth ward to the west of the River Avon should move into Evesham North. Again, no specific proposal for a boundary was received, and we consider that our interpretation of the proposals would be inferior to a locally-generated proposal.

79 Cllr Goodge suggested that a name of 'Evesham Central' or 'Evesham Abbey' would be more appropriate for this ward. In the absence of wider support, we are not proposing these names as part of our draft recommendations, but we welcome further evidence and views on the ward names in this area.

#### *Broadway & Wickhamford, Evesham South and The Hamptons*

80 The current Evesham South ward is projected to have an electoral variance of -19% by 2027. In order to improve this electoral equality, varying proposals were received from the Liberal Democrats, Greens and Conservatives.

81 The Liberal Democrats proposed including Wickhamford parish within an Evesham South ward, citing the Vale Park South employment area as bridging the divide between the town and the rural settlements. However, we consider that Wickhamford has a separate community identity from Evesham, that would not be

reflected by placing it in an Evesham-based ward. We therefore propose to add Wickhamford to the Liberal Democrats' proposed Broadway ward, which includes the parishes of Hinton on the Green, Sedgberrow, Aston Somerville, Wickhamford, Childswickham and Broadway. This offers better electoral equality than the Conservatives' proposals to the south of Evesham, which were for a Broadway & Wickhamford ward with -12% variance, and a ward stretching from Aston Somerville to Great Comberton with a -15% variance.

82 The Greens proposed a boundary between Evesham South and The Hamptons running along Fairfield Road and Cheltenham Road. We visited this area on our tour of Wychavon, and consider that, while recognisable on a map, Fairfield Road does not mark a clear boundary between communities.

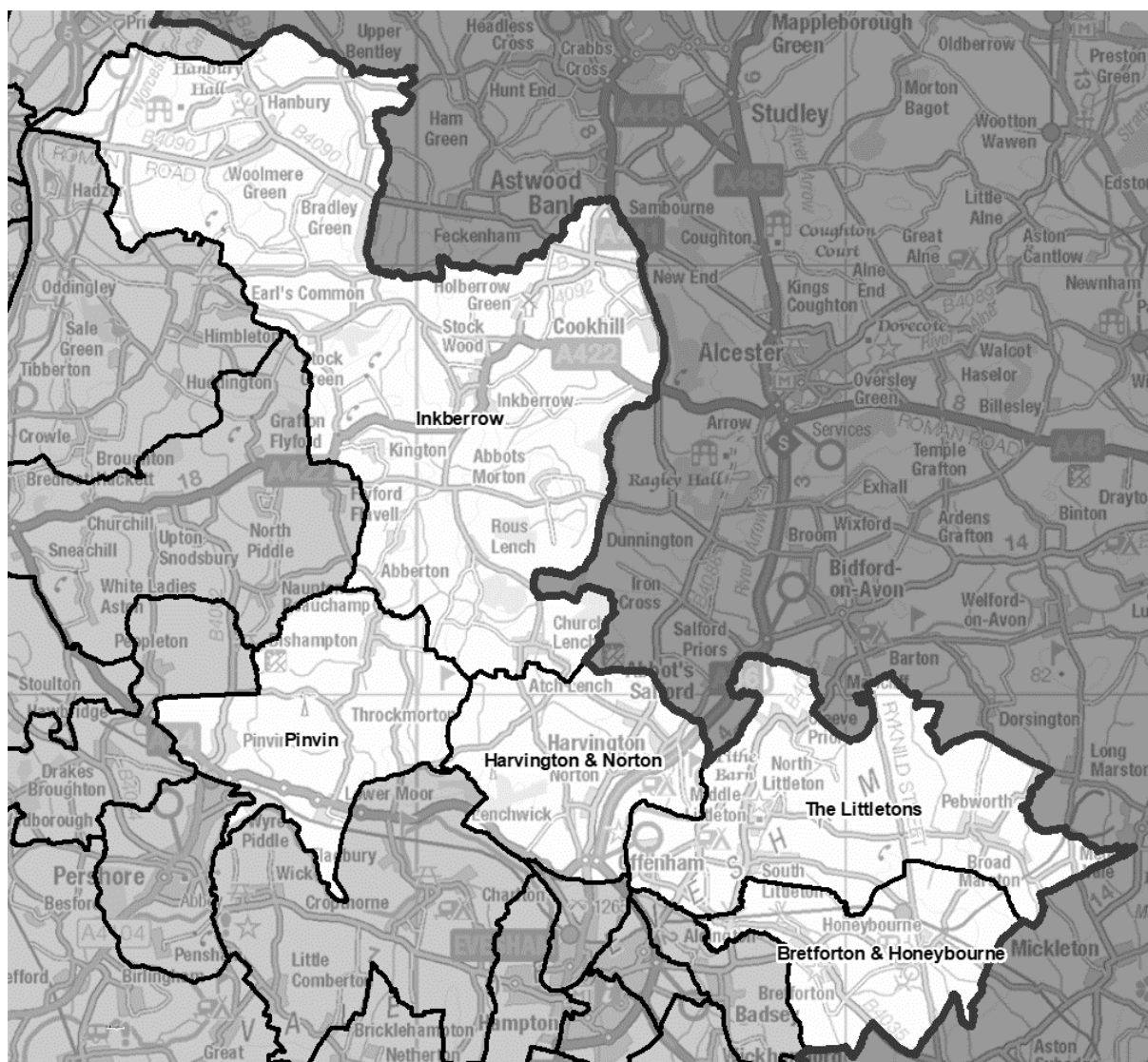
83 Because we were not persuaded that the locally generated proposals will reflect the statutory criteria in this area, we are proposing our own boundary which we consider offers the best balance of our statutory criteria. We propose placing the Charity Brook area, between Davies Road and the A46, into an expanded, three-councillor Evesham South ward, while retaining Fairfield Road and neighbouring streets within The Hamptons ward. We consider that the Charity Brook area has better access to the remainder of Evesham South than to the Hamptons, particularly Great Hampton. We would particularly welcome evidence from residents of this area as to where they consider that their community identity lies.

84 The current Great Hampton ward is forecast to have a variance of 14% by 2027. The Conservatives proposed moving 400 electors from Great Hampton into Little Hampton, but did not specify a precise boundary. Cllr Godge suggested retaining the existing boundary along the River Isbourne. While recognisable, this would not offer good electoral equality, and we have not adopted this proposal.

85 Both the Greens and Liberal Democrats proposed combining the existing Great Hampton and Little Hampton wards to form a single, three-councillor ward named The Hamptons, differing only in the area around Fairfield Road. As discussed above (paras 82–83), and consequential on our decision to place the Charity Brook area within Evesham South ward, we propose a smaller ward, retaining the name of The Hamptons, but with two councillors. The constraints of electoral equality offer relatively little flexibility as to the precise boundary, but we welcome all evidence as to whether our proposals accurately reflect community identity.



## Eastern Wychavon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Bretforton & Honeybourne	1	9%
Harvington & Norton	1	-7%
Inkberrow	2	6%
Pinvin	1	0%
The Littletons	2	2%

### *Bretforton & Honeybourne and The Littletons*

86 The Conservatives proposed retaining the existing wards of Bretforton & Offenham, Honeybourne & Pebworth and The Littletons. As Honeybourne & Pebworth ward would be forecast to have 19% more electors per councillor than average by 2027, well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality, we have not adopted this proposal. Instead, we have based our draft recommendations in this area on one of the proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrats, which offers

good electoral equality. Our proposed Bretforton & Honeybourne ward includes the parishes of this name together with the northern section of Badsey parish; while The Littletons ward includes the parishes of Pebworth, Bickmarsh, Cleeve Prior, North & Middle Littleton, South Littleton and Offenham.

87 The Liberal Democrats also provided an alternative proposal, of two single-member wards, with Offenham and South Littleton forming one ward and the remaining parishes in this area a second ward. We would welcome further evidence as to whether this would be an effective reflection of community identity, or whether the communities of North Littleton, Middle Littleton and South Littleton should be kept together within a single ward in order to reflect a shared identity.

#### *Harvington & Norton, Inkberrow and Pinvin*

88 The Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Bishampton & Throckmorton Parish Council all argued for the retention of the existing Pinvin ward. The existing ward is forecast to retain excellent electoral equality, and we have adopted these proposals in our draft recommendations. The ward includes the parishes of Pinvin, Wyre Piddle, Hill & Moor, Throckmorton and Bishampton.

89 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats both proposed a relatively large, two-member, Inkberrow ward, stretching from South Lenches parish in the south to Hanbury in the north. The only variation in the proposals was the Liberal Democrats' inclusion of Dormston and Kington parishes in Inkberrow ward, while the Conservatives proposed retaining the existing ward and placed these parishes in their proposed Upton Snodsbury ward. We received no specific evidence regarding these parishes, and as we have not adopted the Conservatives' proposed Upton Snodsbury ward, we have adopted the Liberal Democrats' proposals to include these parishes in Inkberrow ward.

90 Both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a Harvington & Norton ward. The Conservatives proposed retaining the existing ward, which would be forecast to have 12% fewer electors than average – slightly outside the bounds of good electoral equality.

91 Norton & Lenchwick Parish Council supported the retention of existing links with Harvington but did not offer any evidence of community links with other neighbouring parishes or areas.

92 The Liberal Democrats proposed adding Charlton parish to a Harvington & Norton ward. We note that there is no direct road access between Charlton village and the remainder of the proposed ward, and hence we do not consider that proposing this ward would promote effective and convenient local government.

93 We considered adopting the Conservatives' proposal for a ward with 12% fewer electors per councillor. However, given the existence of plausible alternatives we were not persuaded at this stage to depart from good electoral equality.

94 We further considered combining Harvington and Norton & Lenchwick parishes with the remainder of Inkberrow to form a three-member ward which would have good electoral equality (2% variance). However, this three-councillor Inkberrow ward would be geographically large, touching the outskirts of both Droitwich and Evesham, and we consider that it would not be easy to represent such a large ward effectively. We have therefore not adopted this proposal as part of our draft recommendations, but would welcome further evidence as to whether this proposal might offer a better reflection of community identity.

95 We therefore propose, as part of our draft recommendations, a single-member Harvington & Norton ward, comprising the parishes of Harvington and Norton & Lenchwick and also including the southern section of South Lenches parish, south of the villages of Church Lench and Atch Lench. This allows Harvington & Norton to have good electoral equality, and also reduced the geographic size of Inkberrow ward, which now comprises the northern section of South Lenches parish together with Abberton, Rous Lench, Abbots Morton, Kington, Dormston, Inkberrow, Cookhill, Stock & Bradley and Hanbury parishes.

96 We would be particularly interested in further evidence as to whether this proposal accurately reflects the community identity of the area around Sheriff's Lench, and if our proposed boundary following ground features is clear and recognisable.





## Conclusions

97 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Wychavon, referencing the 2020 and 2027 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

	Draft recommendations	
	2020	2027
Number of councillors	43	43
Number of electoral wards	26	26
Average number of electors per councillor	2,372	2,546
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	4	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

#### Draft recommendations

Wychavon District Council should be made up of 43 councillors serving 26 wards representing 11 single-councillor wards, 13 two-councillor wards and two three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

#### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Wychavon.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Wychavon on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

### Parish electoral arrangements

98 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.

99 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, Wychavon 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.

100 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 Badsey & Aldington, Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Hampton Lovett & Westwood, and South Lenches.

101 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for the grouped parishes of Badsey & Aldington parish.

#### Draft recommendations

Badsey & Aldington Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Aldington Village	1
Badsey	9
Blackminster	1
Bowers Hill	1
Orchards	1

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

#### Draft recommendations

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

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

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

**Draft recommendations**

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

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Abbey	1
Bengeworth	5
Charity Brook	3
Evesham Avon	2
Evesham South	5
Evesham Twyford	2
Great Hampton	3
Hospital	1
Little Hampton	2

104 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hampton Lovett & Westwood parish.

**Draft recommendations**

Hampton Lovett & Westwood Parish Council should comprise five councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Hampton Lovett Rural	2
Wassage	2
Westwood Parish	1

105 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for South Lenches parish.

**Draft recommendations**

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

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Church Lench	6
Sheriff's Lench	1



## Have your say

106 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole district or just a part of it.

107 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Wychavon, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

108 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps. You can find it at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

109 Submissions can also be made by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (Wychavon)**  
**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**PO Box 133**  
**Blyth**  
**NE24 9FE**

110 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Wychavon which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of electors.
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

111 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of electors.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

112 Electoral equality:

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

113 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

114 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

115 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk) A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

116 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

117 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

118 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Wychavon District Council in 2023.





## Equalities

119 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

### Draft recommendations for Wychavon

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Badsey & Aldington	1	2,380	2,380	0%	2,452	2,452	-4%
2	Bengeworth	2	4,910	2,455	3%	5,236	2,618	3%
3	Bowbrook	1	2,395	2,395	1%	2,501	2,501	-2%
4	Bredon	2	4,544	2,272	-4%	4,754	2,377	-7%
5	Bretforton & Honeybourne	1	2,660	2,660	12%	2,776	2,776	9%
6	Broadway & Wickhamford	2	5,244	2,622	11%	5,566	2,783	9%
7	Drakes Broughton	1	2,330	2,330	-2%	2,625	2,625	3%
8	Droitwich East	2	4,265	2,133	-10%	4,712	2,356	-7%
9	Droitwich South East	2	5,066	2,533	7%	5,337	2,669	5%
10	Droitwich South West	2	5,358	2,679	13%	5,547	2,774	9%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11 Droitwich West	2	4,506	2,253	-5%	4,682	2,341	-8%
12 Eckington	1	2,565	2,565	8%	2,684	2,684	5%
13 Evesham North	2	4,466	2,233	-6%	5,005	2,503	-2%
14 Evesham South	3	6,592	2,197	-7%	7,008	2,336	-8%
15 Fladbury	1	2,567	2,567	8%	2,671	2,671	5%
16 Hartlebury & Dodderhill	2	5,303	2,652	12%	5,545	2,773	9%
17 Harvington & Norton	1	2,289	2,289	-4%	2,362	2,362	-7%
18 Inkberrow	2	5,226	2,613	10%	5,394	2,697	6%
19 North Claines & Salwarpe	2	4,592	2,296	-3%	5,299	2,650	4%
20 Norton & Stoulton	1	2,352	2,352	-1%	2,446	2,446	-4%
21 Ombersley	1	2,223	2,223	-6%	2,319	2,319	-9%
22 Pershore	3	6,560	2,187	-8%	7,284	2,428	-5%
23 Pinvin	1	2,506	2,506	6%	2,557	2,557	0%
24 The Hamptons	2	4,397	2,199	-7%	4,759	2,380	-7%

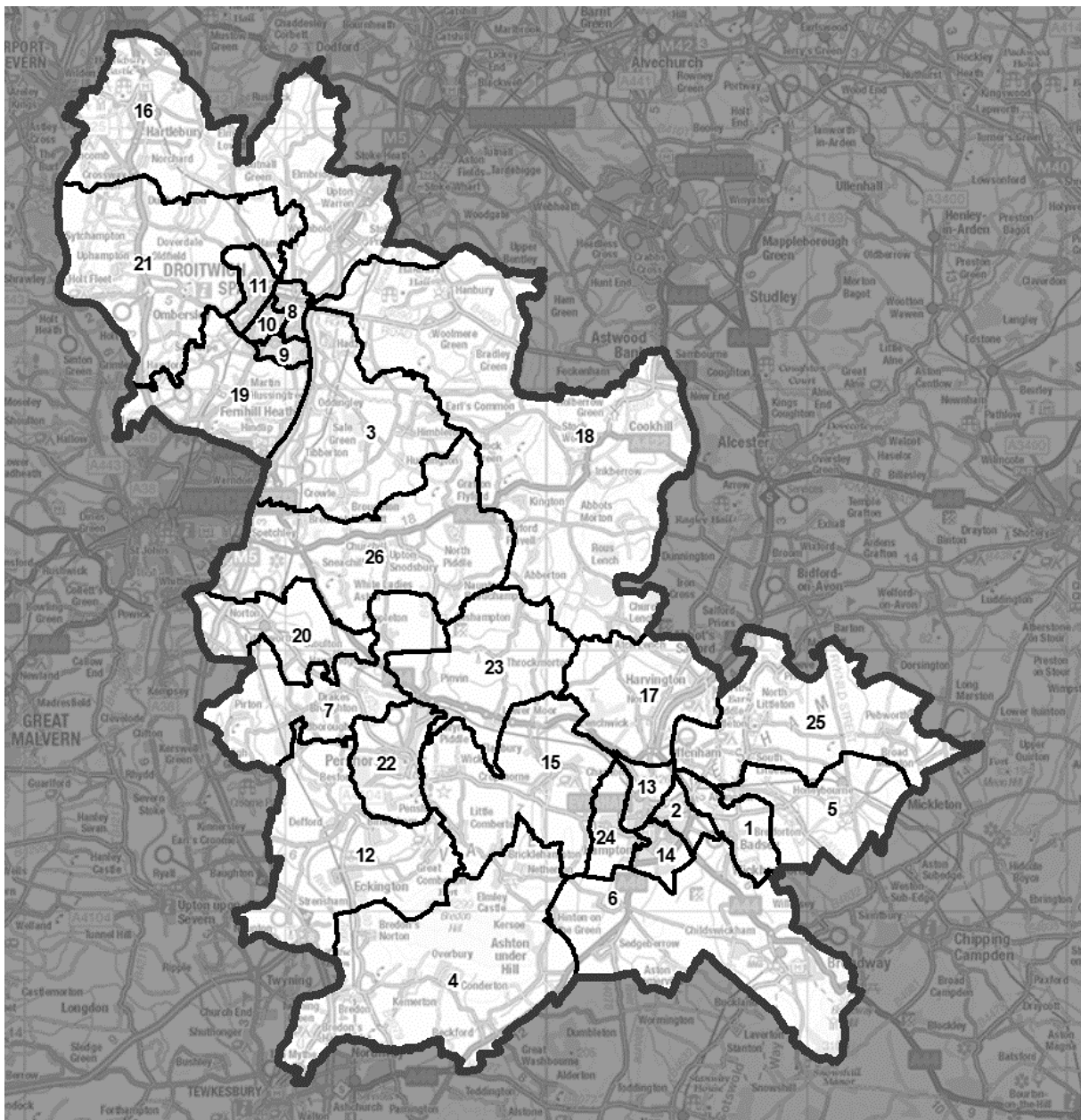
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
25 The Littletons	2	4,385	2,193	-8%	5,206	2,603	2%
26 Whittington & Upton Snodsbury	1	2,329	2,329	-2%	2,747	2,747	8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>102,010</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>109,474</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,372</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,546</b>	<b>–</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Wychavon 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



Number	Ward name
1	Badsey & Aldington
2	Bengeworth
3	Bowbrook
4	Bredon
5	Bretforton & Honeybourne
6	Broadway & Wickhamford
7	Drakes Broughton
8	Droitwich East

9	Droitwich South East
10	Droitwich South West
11	Droitwich West
12	Eckington
13	Evesham North
14	Evesham South
15	Fladbury
16	Hartlebury & Dodderhill
17	Harvington & Norton
18	Inkberrow
19	North Claines & Salwarpe
20	Norton & Stoulton
21	Ombersley
22	Pershore
23	Pinvin
24	The Hamptons
25	The Littletons
26	Whittington & Upton Snodsbury

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/west-midlands/worcestershire/wychavon](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/worcestershire/wychavon)



## Appendix C

### Submissions received

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

[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/worcestershire/wychavon](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/worcestershire/wychavon)

#### *Political Groups*

- Conservative Group on Wychavon District Council
- Mid Worcestershire and The Vale Green Party
- Wychavon Liberal Democrats

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor D. Boatright (Wychavon District Council and Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor E. Eyre (Wychavon District Council and Worcestershire County Council)
- Councillor M. Goodge (Wychavon District Council and Evesham Town Council)

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Bishampton & Throckmorton Parish Council
- Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council
- North Claines Parish Council
- Norton & Lenchwick Parish Council
- Norton-Juxta-Kempsey Parish Council
- Pershore Town Council
- Whittington Parish Council

#### *Local Residents*

- 30 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

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[www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

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