

# New electoral arrangements for North Northamptonshire Council Final Recommendations

October 2023

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# Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for North Northamptonshire Council

Electoral review

October 2023



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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<sup>2</sup> are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- 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.

<sup>2</sup> Susan Johnson OBE was a Commissioner for the Draft Recommendations of this review.

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 North Northamptonshire?

7 We are conducting a review of North Northamptonshire Council ('the Council') as this is a new authority, whose electoral arrangements have not been reviewed since the creation of the authority in 2021. The existing electoral arrangements are interim arrangements, based on divisions of the former Northamptonshire County Council.

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

- The wards in North Northamptonshire 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 authority.

## Our proposals for North Northamptonshire

9 North Northamptonshire should be represented by 68 councillors, 10 fewer than there are now.

10 North Northamptonshire should have 31 wards, four more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of all wards should change.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for North Northamptonshire.

## 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 unitary authority 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 North Northamptonshire. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the authority. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
15 November 2022	Number of councillors decided
29 November 2022	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
6 March 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
30 May 2023	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
7 August 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
31 October 2023	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and final recommendations

17 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.

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 North Northamptonshire	261,970	286,376
Number of councillors	68	68
Average number of electors per councillor	3,853	4,211

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. Thirty of our proposed wards for North Northamptonshire are forecast to 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](http://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 9% by 2028.

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

<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.

24 Initially published figures for the electorate forecast were subsequently revised after suggestions that full account had not been taken of new developments on the outskirts of the major towns of North Northamptonshire. We believe that the figures used for these final recommendations are the best available, and note that there is considerable benefit in ‘drawing a line’ and ensuring that all interested parties are able to use the same set of electorate forecasts rather than making continual minor revisions.

## Number of councillors

25 North Northamptonshire Council currently has 78 councillors, which is the number established when the authority was created and based on the existing county divisions. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that decreasing by eight would ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

26 We based this initial decision for a Council size of 70 on a joint proposal from the Labour and Conservative groups. This proposal noted that, while 70 was the preferred number, the Council could be reduced to as few as 65 members without causing significant difficulties in representation

27 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 70 councillors: for example, 70 one-councillor wards, 35 two-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

28 We received one submission specifically about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. This suggested that 70 councillors might be too few to provide adequate representation, but did not offer specific evidence in favour of an alternative number.

29 As we developed our warding pattern for North Northamptonshire, we found that a 68-member pattern would ensure a more even spread of councillors across the area than 70 members. Therefore, our draft recommendations were based on a 68-member council. This approach is consistent with our guidance where we explain that it may be necessary to make a small alteration to council size to secure better and more clearly identifiable boundaries. As part of our final recommendations we are continuing to recommend 68 members.

## Ward boundaries consultation

30 We received 75 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included authority-wide proposals from the North Northamptonshire Council Conservative Group, North Northamptonshire Council Labour Group and a resident. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the authority.

31 The authority-wide schemes provided mixed patterns of one-, two- and three-member wards across North Northamptonshire. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries. In some areas, the schemes provided by Labour and the local resident proposed the aggregation of polling districts to produce wards, without offering any evidence as to how these proposed wards would reflect the community identity of the areas in question. We do not consider that polling districts typically reflect communities and we were generally not persuaded by proposals that were just based on them.

32 Our draft recommendations were based largely on the Labour Group and Kettering Constituency Labour Party proposals for Kettering, and the Conservative Group proposals outside this area. 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 North Northamptonshire helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

34 Our draft recommendations were for 13 three-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and five one-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

35 We received 88 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included submissions from various political parties covering the parliamentary constituencies which make up North Northamptonshire. The majority of the other submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in the north of Kettering.

## Final recommendations

36 Our final recommendations are for 12 three-councillor wards, 13 two-councillor wards and six one-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will

provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

37 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with modifications to the wards in the Kettering area based on a number of submissions regarding the community identity of this area. We also make minor modifications to our proposals for wards around the parish of Rockingham, and the boundary between Higham Ferrers and Rushden.

38 The tables and maps on pages 9–24 detail our final recommendations for each area of North Northamptonshire. 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.

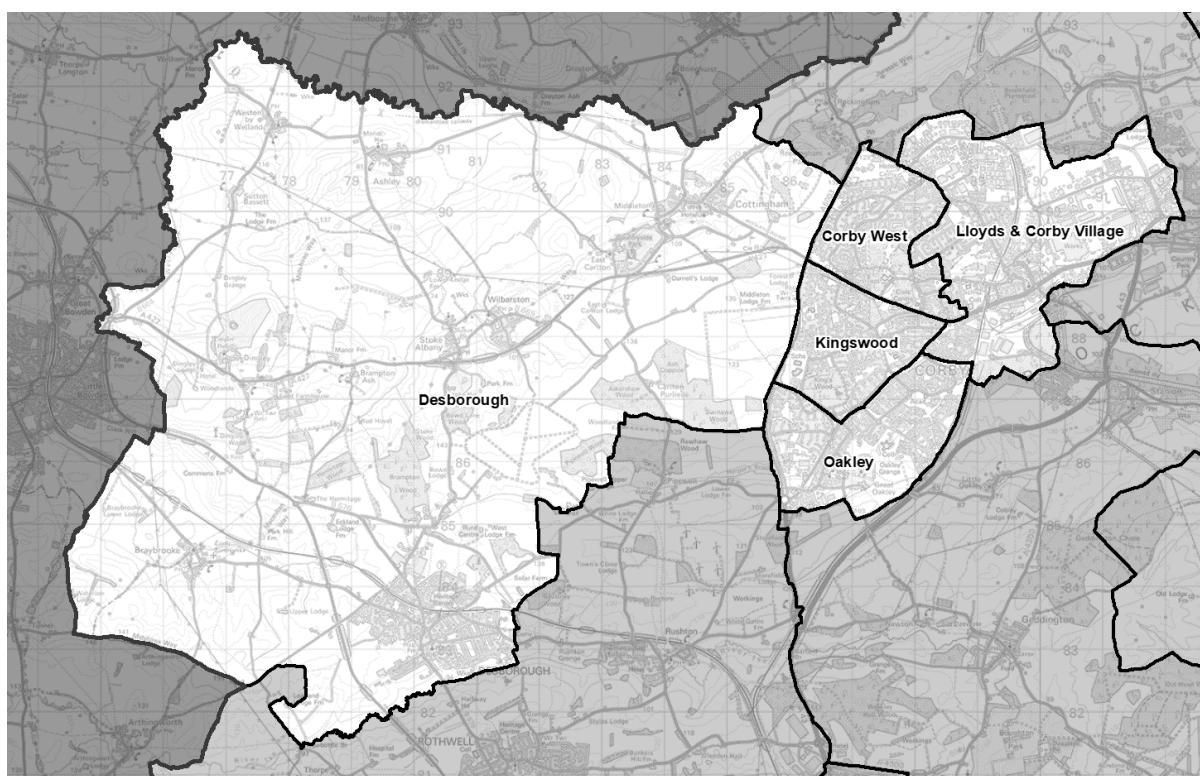
39 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 33 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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



## Corby & Desborough



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Corby West	3	-5%
Desborough	3	2%
Kingswood	3	-4%
Lloyds & Corby Village	2	7%
Oakley	3	7%

### *Corby West and Lloyds & Corby Village*

40 We received broad support for our proposals for these wards from the Corby & East Northamptonshire Conservative Association and Tom Pursglove MP, together with a number of residents.

41 Corby Town Council and Cllr M. Pengelly suggested a modification to the draft recommendations, with the boundary between Corby West and Lloyds & Corby Village to run along Studfall Avenue, Occupation Road and Forest Gate Road. This was described as keeping a conservation area together in a single ward, and reflecting the area traditionally thought of as 'Lloyds'. This amendment swaps two similarly sized areas between the two wards, meaning that both will retain good electoral equality, and we are persuaded to amend our draft recommendations to adopt this suggestion.

42 Corby Town Council also suggested that the area south of the A427, and west of the railway line, had relatively few links to the Lloyds area, and would be better

placed in a Kingswood ward. We considered this proposal carefully, but in the absence of a compensating change elsewhere, this would leave Lloyds & Corby Village ward with 15% fewer electors than average – considerably beyond the bounds of good electoral equality. We have therefore not adopted this proposal. The East Lloyds Community Association provided comments on the areas of West Lloyds and East Lloyds, but did not offer any specific suggestions for ward boundaries.

43 Corby Town Council suggested that the boundary of Corby parish should be extended to encompass some of the projected developments on the fringes of the town. We are unable to alter parish boundaries as part of this review – this is a matter for a Community Governance Review led by North Northamptonshire Council. If amendments to parish boundaries are made, we can subsequently adjust ward boundaries to match without the full process of a further electoral review.

### *Desborough*

44 We received mixed responses to our draft recommendations for Desborough ward. Tom Pursglove MP offered broad support, as did some residents. Other residents suggested that villages and parishes such as Cottingham, Middleton and East Carlton had closer links to Corby than to Desborough.

45 We visited Cottingham and Middleton on our tour of North Northamptonshire. While undoubtedly closer geographically to Corby than Desborough, we consider that the communities are somewhat self-contained, and that placing them in a ward with other rural villages in the north-west of the authority is likely to reflect the community identity. This also allows the use of the A6003 Uppingham Road as a strong boundary between Desborough and Corby-based wards, where any other boundary would be a parish boundary that is less clear and recognisable.

46 Desborough Town Council suggested that they would prefer a ward comprised of only the town of Desborough, with rural parishes placed in an alternative ward. Such a Desborough ward would have a variance of 13% as a two-councillor ward, and we have therefore not adopted it, preferring a ward which offers good electoral equality.

47 A resident suggested that the name of Desborough ward could be modified, to include reference to other settlements within the ward, or the River Welland. We considered this carefully, but note that other wards with significant rural components, such as Oundle and Thrapston, continue to be named after the largest town within them. We are not persuaded to alter our draft recommendations for the name of Desborough ward.

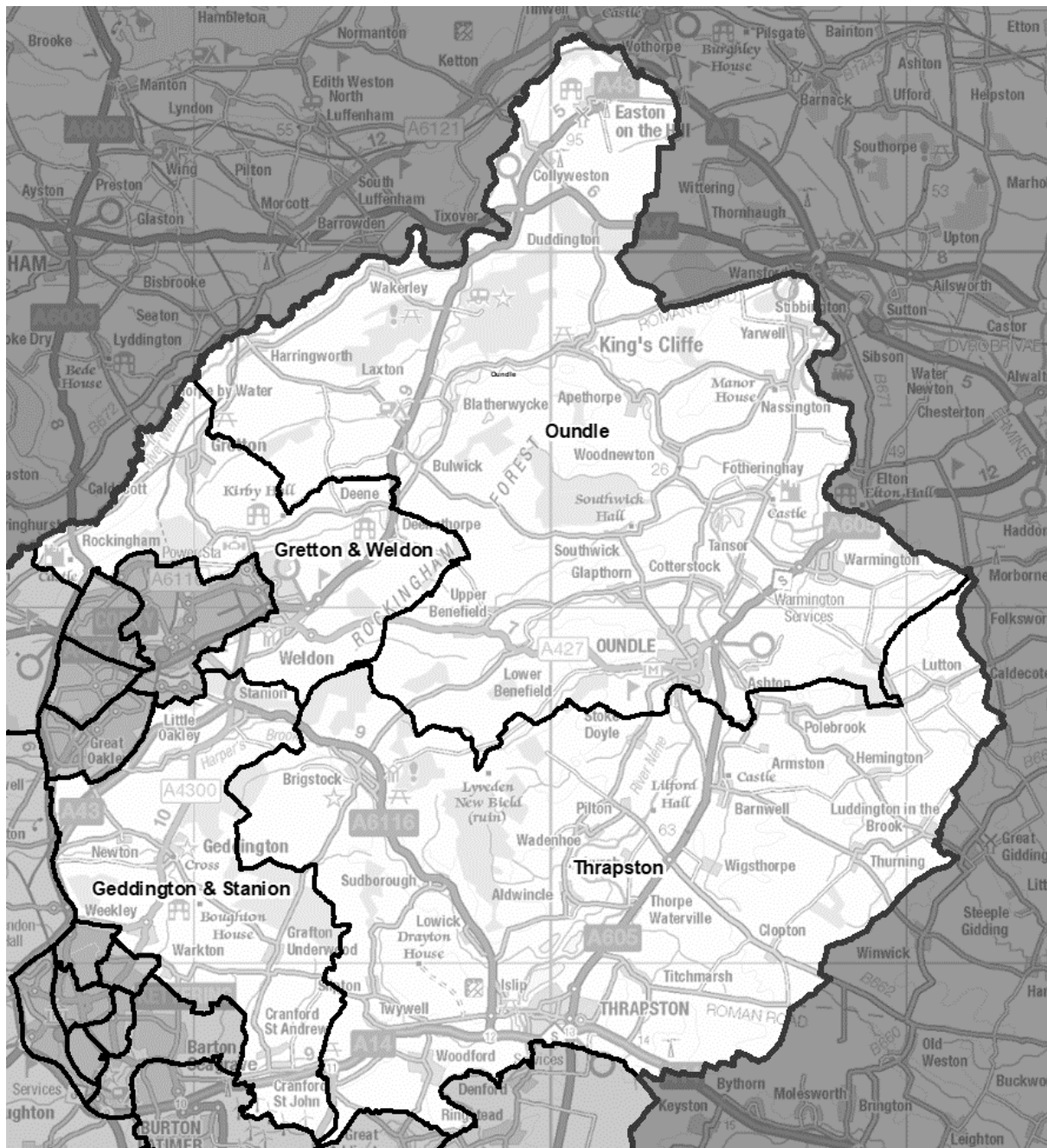
48 Tom Pursglove MP, the Corby & East Northamptonshire Conservative Association and Kettering Constituency Conservative Association provided evidence that the relatively small number of electors in Rockingham parish looked towards Gretton, rather than Cottingham, for their community identity, citing transport links,

and online discussion groups. It was also suggested that placing Rockingham parish in Gretton & Weldon ward would promote effective and convenient local government. The evidence of community identity, and the very limited impact upon electoral equality, has persuaded us to amend our draft recommendations, and place Rockingham parish within Gretton & Weldon ward. Apart from this change, we confirm our draft recommendations for Desborough as final.

#### *Kingswood and Oakley*

49 Apart from the proposal to place the area around Cecil Drive and Burghley Drive in Kingswood ward (discussed above at para 42), we received no proposals for changes to the boundaries of these wards. One resident provided a detailed proposal for amendments to the parish warding arrangements for Corby Town Council. We will generally not make amendments to parish warding arrangements where these are not required to reflect warding arrangements for North Northamptonshire Council. We are not persuaded to make such exceptional arrangements in this area, and we confirm our draft recommendations for Kingswood and Oakley wards as final.

## Rural Eastern North Northamptonshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Geddington & Stanion	1	7%
Gretton & Weldon	2	8%
Oundle	3	-4%
Thrapston	3	-5%

### *Geddington & Stanion and Gretton & Weldon*

50 We received few proposals for any changes to the boundaries of these wards, which were welcomed by Geddington, Newton & Little Oakley Parish Council,



Warkton Parish Council and Weekley Parish Council. The Kettering Conservative Association suggested that the boundary between these wards should run along the A6116, rather than following the boundary between Stanion and Weldon parishes. This would require a parish ward with very few electors, in a way that would not be compatible with effective and convenient local government, and we have not adopted it.

51 A resident noted the proximity of Little Stanion to Corby, and objected to having to alter arrangements with doctors and other services. There is no requirement for residents to use services within their wards – the wards we propose will be used only for the purposes of elections to North Northamptonshire Council.

52 A resident suggested that the name of Geddington & Stanion ward could be altered to ‘Queen Eleanor’ ward or similar. While the historical links are interesting, we broadly prefer to propose ward names which indicate where a ward is geographically, as this provides help to people who may not be familiar with the area.

53 Other than the addition of Rockingham parish to Gretton & Weldon ward, we confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

#### *Oundle and Thrapston*

54 We raised the question in our draft recommendations report of whether it would be a better reflection of community identity for our proposed Oundle ward to be split, with a two-member ward covering the town and surrounding area, and a single-member ward covering rural parishes to the north. This suggestion did not attract support, with Tom Pursglove MP, Cllr J. Smithers, Nassington Parish Council and residents generally supporting the draft proposal of a three-member ward. A small number of residents said that they would prefer a single-member ward comprising rural parishes in the north of the authority, but in light of the broad support for our draft recommendations for Oundle ward, we confirm them as final.

55 Pilton, Stoke Doyle & Wadenhoe Parish Council expressed a desire to be placed in a ward based on Oundle, rather than Thrapston, based on geographic proximity, the postcodes of residents, and leisure and retail facilities.

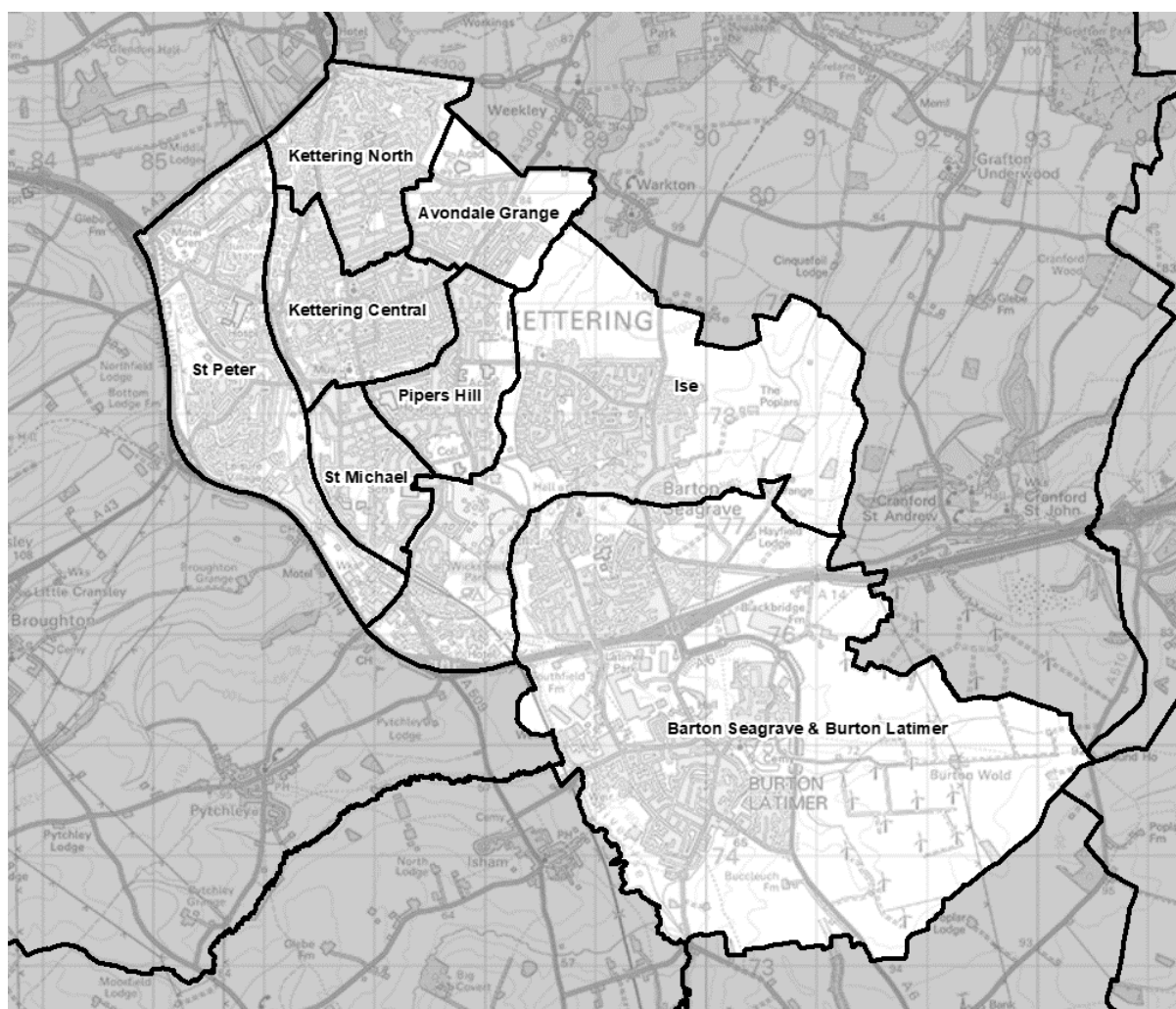
56 We considered this proposal carefully and, while we believed that the decision is finely balanced, we are not persuaded to alter our draft recommendations. We do not consider that postcodes, and the location of postal hubs, are a particularly strong indicator of community identity. We believe that, as grouped parishes, Pilton, Stoke Doyle and Wadenhoe should be in the same ward where possible, but note that while Stoke Doyle is closer to the town of Oundle rather than Thrapston, Wadenhoe is roughly equidistant from each town. Moving the parishes into Oundle ward would worsen electoral equality, with Thrapston ward having 10% fewer electors than

average, and attracted no support from other stakeholders who supported the draft recommendations. We have not adopted this proposal.

57 Thrapston Town Council expressed a preference for three-member wards across North Northamptonshire, in the interests of consistency. No evidence relating to our statutory criteria was offered. Where a council elects 'all-out', as North Northamptonshire Council does, there is no presumption in favour of a particular size of ward. Titchmarsh Parish Council welcomed remaining in the same ward as Thrapston.

58 Cllr D. Brackenbury suggested that Woodford parish should remain in an Irthlingborough ward, rather than Thrapston as proposed by the draft recommendations. Moving this parish in isolation would leave both Thrapston and Irthlingborough with poor electoral equality (-15% and +11%, respectively). Cllr Brackenbury also advocated for the use of the River Nene as a clear boundary – south of Thrapston the draft recommendations follow this boundary, whereas the existing arrangements with Denford and Ringstead parishes in Irthlingborough ward do not. In the region of Oundle, while Warmington and Ashton parishes are across the river from Oundle, the A605 provides easy and convenient access into the town. While the River Nene is a clear and identifiable boundary, we do not consider that this outweighs a ward which received support at draft recommendations, and offers good electoral equality and a reflection of community identity. We are not persuaded to amend our draft recommendations in this area.

## Kettering



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Avondale Grange	1	1%
Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer	3	2%
Ise	2	1%
Kettering Central	2	5%
Kettering North	2	-1%
Pipers Hill	1	5%
St Michael	1	5%
St Peter	1	8%

### *Avondale Grange, Kettering Central and Kettering North*

59 Comments on the draft recommendations for these wards were varied. The Kettering Constituency Labour Party, upon whose suggestions the draft recommendations were originally based, supported the proposals. The majority of other comments suggested changes to a greater or lesser extent, particularly to the

boundary between Kettering Central and the ward to the north (Brambleside in draft recommendations, Kettering North in final recommendations).

60 We received significant evidence regarding the community identity of the All Saints area from Cllr E. Fedorowycz, Cllr D. Dell, Cllr J. Towns, the Kettering Constituency Conservative Association and the Kettering Green Party. All of these suggested that the All Saints area had significant community links towards Brambleside, more so than towards the town centre. All Saints Church and Rockingham Road Pleasure Grounds were cited repeatedly as key community hubs in this area, along with social clubs and facilities across the north of Kettering.

61 On balance, we are persuaded to change our draft recommendations, and combine the All Saints area with Brambleside in a Kettering North ward. Regent Street was suggested as a suitable boundary – while this offers adequate electoral equality, we do not consider that it offers a particularly strong or clear boundary. While there is no obvious boundary in this area, we consider that it would be clearer to run the boundary behind houses on Regent Street, so that all addresses on this street are in Kettering North ward, while addresses on Wellington Street and Nelson Street south of Regent Street are in Kettering Central ward. This further improves the electoral equality, with two two-member wards with variances of -1% and 5%, respectively.

62 We received relatively few comments on the boundaries of our proposed Avondale Grange ward. The Kettering Constituency Conservative Association proposed moving Naseby Road, and neighbouring streets, into Avondale Grange ward from Pipers Hill. Evidence was provided of the community identity of this area, but moving roughly 800 electors into Avondale Grange, without significant changes elsewhere, would leave Pipers Hill with 15% fewer electors than average, and Avondale Grange with around 20% more electors than average. We do not consider that the evidence provided justifies this level of electoral inequality, and we have not adopted this proposal. We confirm our draft recommendations for Avondale Grange ward as final.

*Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer, Ise, Pipers Hill, St Peter and St Michael*

63 Cllr C. Skinner opposed our proposed Ise ward, arguing that there were community links between Ise and the Kettering Science Academy, located in Pipers Hill ward. He proposed crossing the River Ise, with a boundary running along Windmill Avenue. This change, in the absence of any compensation, would leave Pipers Hill ward with 15% fewer electors than average, and we have not been persuaded to adopt it. Cllr S Edwards argued against the combination of Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer, but did not offer an alternative, and noted that the existing arrangement was not working.

64 Kettering Town Council suggested that Ise ward should increase to three members, to account for future development on the eastern edge of Kettering. We



must take into account the five-year electorate forecast provided by North Northamptonshire Council, and not any potential development or growth beyond this period, meaning that Ise ward must retain two councillors to provide good electoral equality.

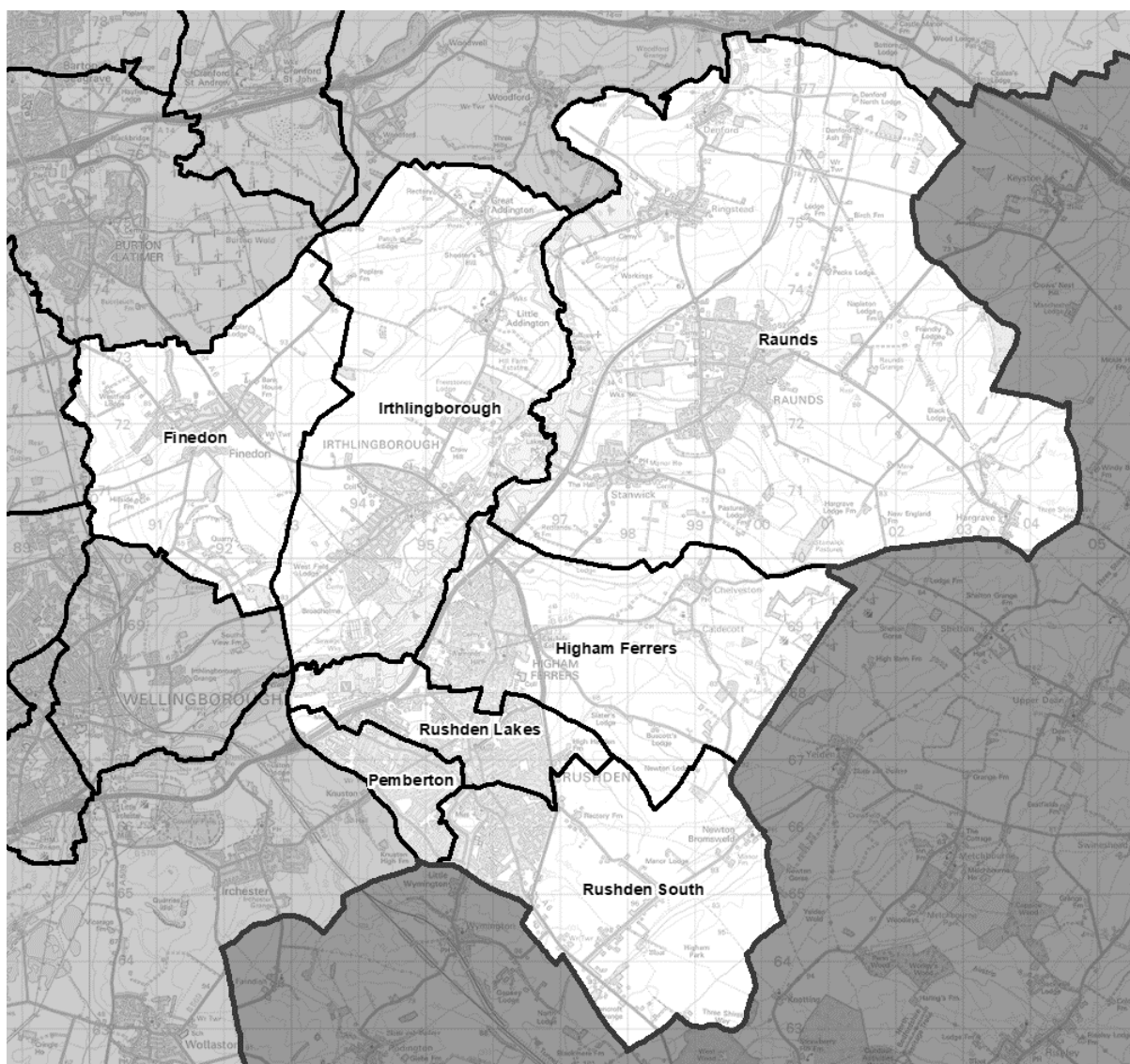
65 The Kettering Constituency Conservative Association (KCCA) proposed significant changes to wards in the south of the town, with the Wicksteed area east of the A509 Pytchley Road placed in a ward with Barton Seagrave; and the Hanwood Park area to the north and south of Cranford Road added to Ise. This offered good electoral equality, but required the creation of an additional parish ward for Barton Seagrave. In addition, as acknowledged by the KCCA, this proposal did not improve the reflection of community identity for the Wicksteed area over that of the draft recommendations – this area would be placed in a ward with Barton Seagrave, rather than one with Ise.

66 We considered the various proposals in this area carefully, and consider that this decision is particularly finely balanced. On balance, we are not persuaded to alter our draft recommendations in this area. We consider that the community identity of the development in the Hanwood Park area is likely to lie towards Barton Seagrave rather than Ise. We accept that the proposals are an imperfect reflection of the Wicksteed area's community identity, which lies towards the St Michaels area, but the constraints of electoral equality, and seeking to achieve the best possible balance of our criteria across the entirety of Kettering leads us to conclude that the alternatives for Ise do not represent an improvement on the draft recommendations.

67 Discussion around St Peter and St Michael wards focussed on whether this should be retained as a two-councillor ward, or split into separate single-councillor wards, with the railway line as a boundary. The Kettering Labour Party and Green Party supported the draft recommendations, while the KCCA and Town Council suggested that the wards should be split, noting that travel between the two sections of the ward was difficult due to the limited number of areas in which the railway can be crossed. The KCCA proposed a St Michael ward with boundaries of the A509 and the A6003 London Road – while offering reasonably strong and clear boundaries, this ward would be forecast to have 11% more electors than average.

68 On balance, we are persuaded to alter our draft recommendations in this area. The KCCA provided evidence of community groups and facilities, particularly schools and sport clubs, which were separate for the two areas. Evidence pointed to the Headlands and Highfield community associations in St Michael ward, and the Harrier Athletic Club and Kettering Sports Club in St Peter. We have not adopted the entirety of the KCCA proposal, as moving the boundary to Pytchley Road itself would leave St Michael with 11% more electors than average. Instead, we prefer to retain the draft recommendations boundary between St Michael and Ise wards, placing electors on Pytchley Road itself in Ise ward, leaving St Michael as a single-councillor ward with a 5% variance, and Ise as a two-councillor ward with a 1% variance.

## South-Eastern North Northamptonshire



Ward name

Number of  
councillors

Variance 2028

Finedon	1	-7%
Higham Ferrers	2	0%
Irthlingborough	2	-5%
Pemberton	2	5%
Raunds	3	-8%
Rushden Lakes	2	-7%
Rushden South	2	2%

*Finedon, Irthlingborough and Raunds*

69 Other than the proposal to add Woodford parish to Irthlingborough ward (discussed above at para 58), we received few other comments on these wards. They were supported by the Wellingborough Conservative Association, who provided additional evidence that Irthlingborough and Finedon are served by separate facilities, with separate sports clubs, and allotments allocated exclusively for residents of the relevant areas. The submission argued that this demonstrated a separation of community identity, and that the two villages should not be placed together in the same ward. We confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

*Higham Ferrers, Pemberton, Rushden Lakes and Rushden South*

70 Comments on these wards focussed primarily on the boundary between Higham Ferrers and Rushden Lakes wards. The remaining boundaries within the town of Rushden attracted broad support.

71 Based on our observations on our tour of North Northamptonshire, we placed Prospect Avenue, Firdale Avenue, St James' Close, Tollbar and the southern section of The Hedges in Higham Ferrers ward. We considered that this area formed a single community with other streets to the north, and that the parish boundary in this area was not clear or obvious, running through the open space between Tenter Close and Handcross Way.

72 The draft recommendations were supported by Higham Ferrers Town Council and Cllr H. Pentland, but opposed by Rushden Town Council and the Wellingborough Conservative Association. These latter respondents suggested that the community links of the area in question were to Rushden, but provided little specific evidence. The impact on the electoral equality of Rushden Town Council was also mentioned, noting that the parish ward created by this change would have significantly fewer electors per councillor than other parish wards used for elections to Rushden Town Council. A potential Community Governance Review can, if desired, alter the parish warding arrangements which we are obliged to put in place as a consequence of our decisions on warding arrangements.

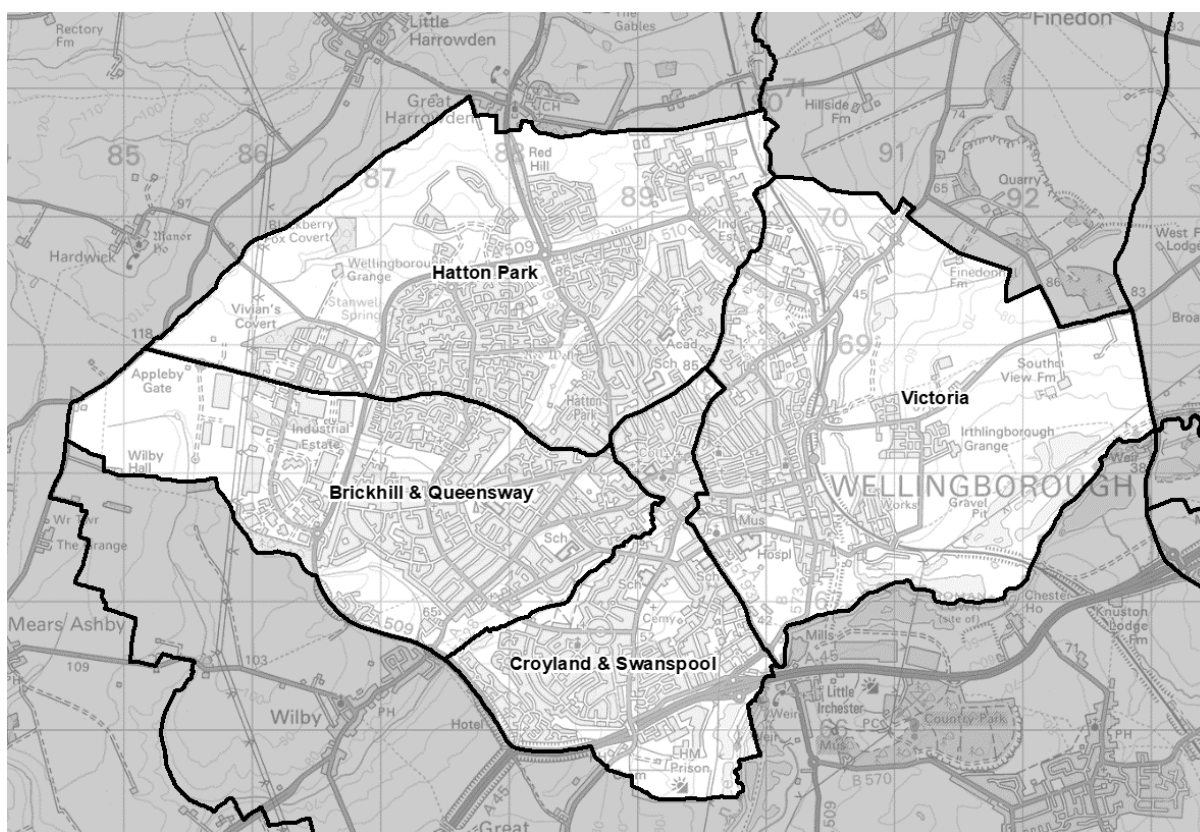
73 We considered this area carefully. On balance, we are not persuaded to amend our draft recommendations. We consider that following the parish boundary, and splitting streets such as The Hedges and Tenter Way along a parish boundary which

is not clear or recognisable, would not reflect the community identity of this area. We confirm our draft recommendations in this area as final.

74 Higham Ferrers Town Council, and a resident, noted that the parish boundary north of Northampton Road, which we adopted as a ward boundary, was not clear or logical as it split Eliot Way, Owen Way and Larkin Gardens, as well as going through the middle of an industrial building. We have adopted the proposal of the Town Council, and propose to amend our draft recommendations, with a boundary running to the south of Donne Close so that all electors on this street, as well as Eliot Way, Owen Way and Larkin Gardens, are in Higham Ferrers ward.

75 Wellingborough Conservative Association suggested that Newton Bromswold parish should be placed in Higham Ferrers, rather than Rushden South ward, while noting that the natural community identity of this small settlement is probably towards the neighbouring authority of Bedford. We visited this area on our tour of North Northamptonshire, and considered that, although finely balanced, this area had closer links to Rushden, particularly along Rushden Road, than to Higham Ferrers.

## Wellingborough



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Brickhill & Queensway	3	-3%
Croyland & Swanspool	2	10%
Hatton Park	3	4%
Victoria	2	-5%

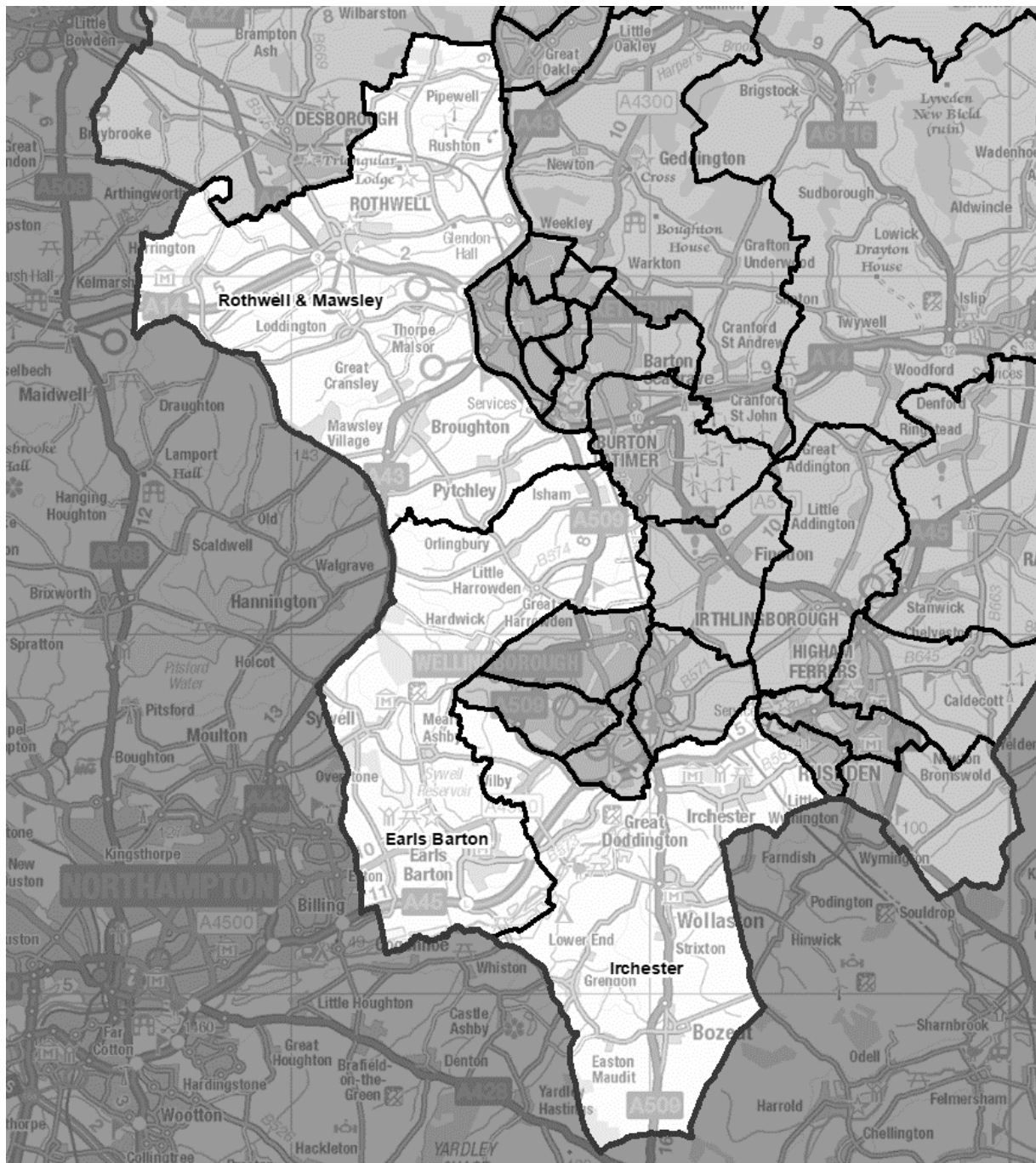
### *Brickhill & Queensway, Croyland & Swanspool, Hatton Park and Victoria*

76 We received few comments on our proposed boundaries for these wards, which were supported by the Wellingborough Conservative Association. One resident suggested amendments to the names of wards, to include reference to the developing areas of Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park within the ward names of Victoria and Hatton Park, respectively. We do not consider that sufficient evidence was provided to justify a departure from our draft recommendations, but note that ward names can be changed through a process led by North Northamptonshire Council if it is felt that the evolving nature of communities makes a change desirable.

77 We confirm our draft recommendations for these four wards as final.



## Rural Western North Northamptonshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Earls Barton	2	7%
Irchester	3	-11%
Rothwell & Mawsley	3	2%

### *Earls Barton and Irchester*

78 We received few comments on these wards, which were supported by the Wellingborough Conservative Association. One resident also supported our proposal

to place Earls Barton in a two-member ward, rather than split the village as would be required for good electoral equality as a single-councillor ward.

79 As outlined in our draft recommendations report, Irchester has slightly too few electors for good electoral equality, but there are no plausible options for improving this without significantly disrupting neighbouring wards which attracted support. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Earls Barton and Irchester wards as final.

#### *Rothwell & Mawsley*

80 We received varying views on our draft recommendations for this three-councillor ward. Our proposals were broadly supported by the Kettering Constituency Conservative Association, and by Cllr J. Hakewill. Cllr Hakewill's submission, in particular, provided detailed community evidence regarding links through a shared Church of England Benefice, shared school links to Montsaye school in Rothwell, and shared shopping facilities.

81 In contrast, Broughton Parish Council suggested that it would be a better reflection of community identity for there to be a separate single-councillor ward. Links between the villages within the smaller ward were suggested, but there was also a focus on historical evidence, with mention of certain villages appearing in the Domesday Book. While historical links of this type are interesting, we do not necessarily consider them strong evidence of community identity now.

82 Harrington Parish Council expressed a desire for Rothwell and Mawsley to be separated, but provided no specific evidence.

83 The Kettering Constituency Conservative Association made a suggestion for a minor change to the boundary with Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer ward in order to avoid splitting an industrial development. While logical of itself, on current parish boundaries, this would require the creation of a parish ward with no electors. If a future Community Governance Review alters parish boundaries in this (or any other) area, we can adjust ward boundaries to match.

84 We are not persuaded to alter our draft recommendations for Rothwell & Mawsley ward, and confirm them as final.





## Conclusions

85 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in North Northamptonshire, 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	68	68
Number of electoral wards	31	31
Average number of electors per councillor	3,853	4,211
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	2	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

#### Final recommendations

North Northamptonshire Council should be made up of 68 councillors serving 31 wards representing six single-councillor wards, 13 two-councillor wards and 12 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 North Northamptonshire. You can also view our final recommendations for North Northamptonshire on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

## Parish electoral arrangements

86 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.

87 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, North Northamptonshire 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.

88 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 Barton Seagrave, Corby, Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough.

89 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Barton Seagrave parish.

#### Final recommendations

Barton Seagrave Parish Council should comprise eight councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Barton Town	7
Constable Drive	1

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

#### Final recommendations

Corby Town Council should comprise 17 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Corby West	5
Kingswood	4
Lloyds	3
Oakley	5

91 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Kettering Town parish.

**Final recommendations**

Kettering Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing nine wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Avondale Grange	2
Hanwood Park	1
Ise Lodge	3
Kettering Central	4
Kettering North	3
Pipers Hill	2
St Michael	2
St Peter	2
Wicksteed	1

92 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Rushden parish.

**Final recommendations**

Rushden Town Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Donne Close	1
Pemberton	7
Prospect Avenue	1
Rushden Lakes	6
Rushden South	6

93 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Wellingborough parish.

**Final recommendations**

Wellingborough Town Council should comprise 23 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Brickhill & Queensway	7
Croyland & Swanspool	5
Hatton Park	7
Victoria	4



## What happens next?

94 We have now completed our review of North Northamptonshire. 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 2025.



## Equalities

95 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 North Northamptonshire

	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	Avondale Grange	1	3,925	3,925	2%	4,256	4,256	1%
2	Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer	3	12,104	4,035	5%	12,865	4,288	2%
3	Brickhill & Queensway	3	11,107	3,702	-4%	12,193	4,064	-3%
4	Corby West	3	10,923	3,641	-5%	11,942	3,981	-5%
5	Croyland & Swanspool	2	8,413	4,207	9%	9,241	4,620	10%
6	Desborough	3	11,920	3,973	3%	12,905	4,302	2%
7	Earls Barton	2	8,429	4,215	9%	9,017	4,508	7%
8	Finedon	1	3,594	3,594	-7%	3,931	3,931	-7%
9	Geddington & Stanion	1	4,160	4,160	8%	4,487	4,487	7%
10	Gretton & Weldon	2	5,944	2,972	-23%	9,068	4,534	8%



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 %
11 Hatton Park	3	11,708	3,903	1%	13,115	4,372	4%
12 Higham Ferrers	2	7,737	3,869	0%	8,396	4,198	0%
13 Irchester	3	10,274	3,425	-11%	11,218	3,739	-11%
14 Irthlingborough	2	7,459	3,730	-3%	8,030	4,015	-5%
15 Ise	2	8,018	4,009	4%	8,533	4,266	1%
16 Kettering Central	2	8,153	4,077	6%	8,869	4,435	5%
17 Kettering North	2	7,800	3,900	1%	8,378	4,189	-1%
18 Kingswood	3	11,020	3,673	-5%	12,081	4,027	-4%
19 Lloyds & Corby Village	2	8,285	4,143	8%	9,052	4,526	7%
20 Oakley	3	12,580	4,152	9%	13,593	4,513	7%
21 Oundle	3	11,288	3,763	-2%	12,138	4,046	-4%
22 Pemberton	2	8,156	4,078	6%	8,853	4,426	5%
23 Pipers Hill	1	4,082	4,082	6%	4,428	4,428	5%
24 Raunds	3	10,914	3,638	-6%	11,621	3,874	-8%
25 Rothwell & Mawsley	3	11,900	3,967	3%	12,850	4,283	2%

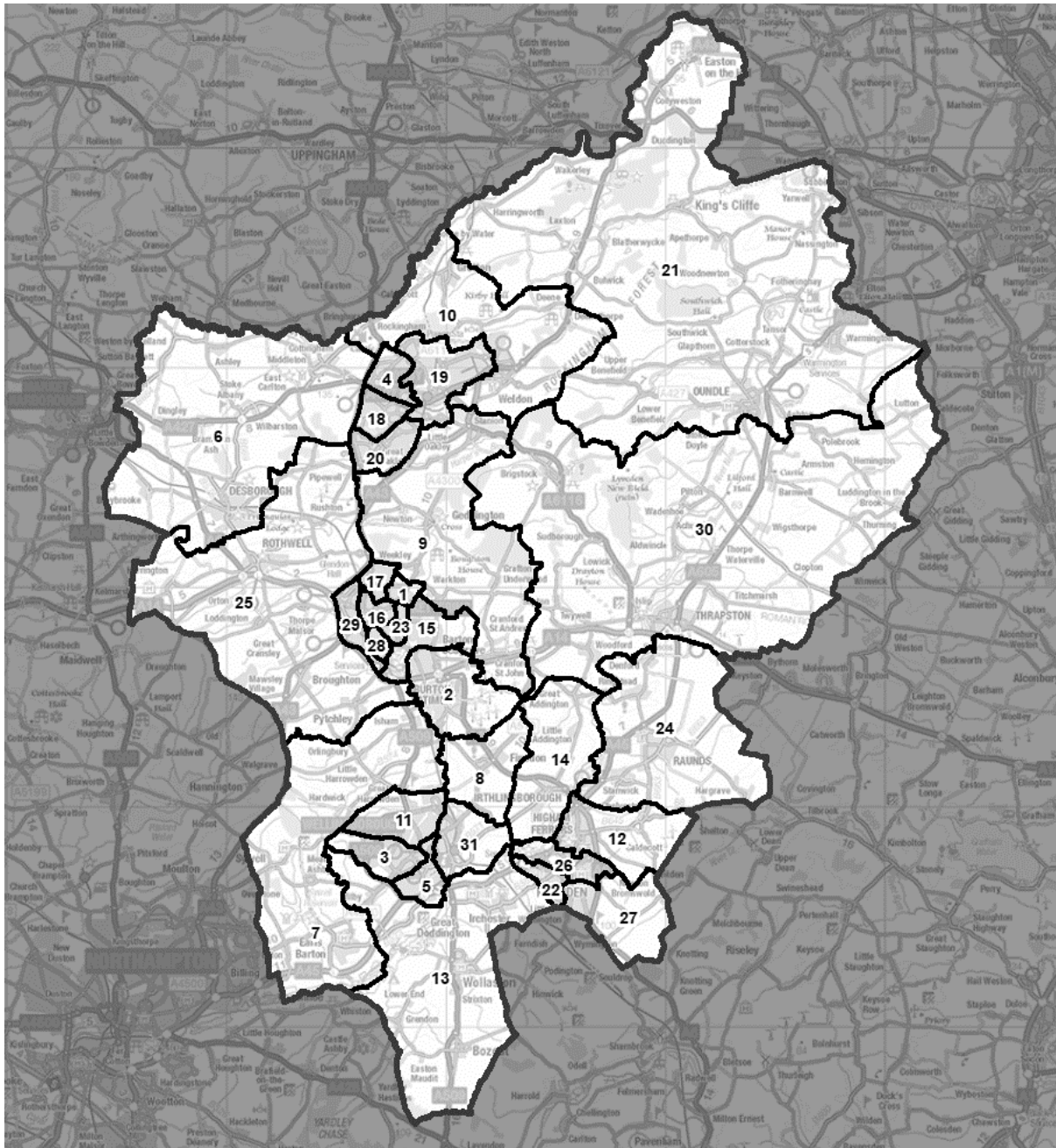
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
26 Rushden Lakes	2	7,214	3,607	-6%	7,865	3,932	-7%
27 Rushden South	2	7,890	3,945	2%	8,592	4,296	2%
28 St Michael	1	4,099	4,099	6%	4,420	4,420	5%
29 St Peter	1	4,230	4,230	10%	4,528	4,528	8%
30 Thrapston	3	11,196	3,732	-3%	11,950	3,983	-5%
31 Victoria	2	7,429	3,715	-4%	7,997	3,998	-5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>261,970</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>286,376</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,853</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,211</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by North Northamptonshire 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 unitary authority. 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	Avondale Grange
2	Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer
3	Brickhill & Queensway
4	Corby West
5	Croyland & Swanspool
6	Desborough
7	Earls Barton
8	Finedon

9	Geddington & Stanion
10	Gretton & Weldon
11	Hatton Park
12	Higham Ferrers
13	Irchester
14	Irthlingborough
15	Ise
16	Kettering Central
17	Kettering North
18	Kingswood
19	Lloyds & Corby Village
20	Oakley
21	Oundle
22	Pemberton
23	Pipers Hill
24	Raunds
25	Rothwell & Mawsley
26	Rushden Lakes
27	Rushden South
28	St Michael
29	St Peter
30	Thrapston
31	Victoria

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/north-northamptonshire](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/north-northamptonshire)

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

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

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

#### *Political Groups*

- Corby & East Northamptonshire Conservative Association
- Kettering Constituency Conservative Association
- Kettering Constituency Labour Party
- Kettering Green Party
- Wellingborough Conservative Association

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor D. Brackenbury (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor D. Dell (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor S. Edwards (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor E. Fedorowycz (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor J. Hakewill (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor M. Pengelly (Corby Town Council)
- Councillor H. Pentland (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor C. Skinner (Kettering Town Council)
- Councillor J. Smithers (North Northamptonshire Council)
- Councillor J. Towns (Kettering Town Council)

#### *Members of Parliament*

- Tom Pursglove MP (Corby)

#### *Local Organisations*

- East Lloyds Community Association

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Broughton Parish Council
- Corby Town Council
- Desborough Town Council
- Geddington, Newton & Little Oakley Parish Council
- Harrington Parish Council

- Higham Ferrers Town Council
- Kettering Town Council
- Nassington Parish Council
- Pilton, Stoke Doyle & Wadenhoe Parish Council
- Rushden Town Council
- Thrapston Town Council
- Titchmarsh Parish Council
- Warkton Parish Council
- Weekley Parish Council

#### *Local Residents*

- 57 local residents

## Appendix D

### Glossary and abbreviations

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

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



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

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