

New electoral arrangements for East Herts District Council Draft Recommendations

March 2022

Translations and other formats:

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Licensing:

The mapping in this report is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Keeper of Public Records © Crown copyright and database right. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and database right.

Licence Number: GD 100049926 2022

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.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Who we are and what we do | 1 |
| What is an electoral review? | 1 |
| Why East Hertfordshire? | 2 |
| Our proposals for East Hertfordshire | 2 |
| How will the recommendations affect you? | 2 |
| Have your say | 3 |
| Review timetable | 3 |
| Analysis and draft recommendations | 5 |
| Submissions received | 5 |
| Electorate figures | 5 |
| Number of councillors | 6 |
| Ward boundaries consultation | 6 |
| Draft recommendations | 7 |
| Bishop's Stortford | 8 |
| Sawbridgeworth and the surrounding parishes | 13 |
| Ware and the surrounding parishes | 16 |
| Hertford and the surrounding parishes | 20 |
| Watton-at-Stone and the surrounding parishes | 25 |
| Buntingford and the surrounding parishes | 28 |
| Conclusions | 31 |
| Summary of electoral arrangements | 31 |
| Parish electoral arrangements | 31 |
| Have your say | 35 |
| Equalities | 37 |
| Appendices | 39 |
| Appendix A | 39 |
| Draft recommendations for East Hertfordshire District Council | 39 |
| Appendix B | 41 |
| Outline map | 41 |
| Appendix C | 43 |
| Submissions received | 43 |
| Appendix D | 44 |
| Glossary and abbreviations | 44 |

Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the 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 or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

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

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

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

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

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

Why East Hertfordshire?

7 We are conducting a review of East Hertfordshire District Council ('the Council') as the last review was completed in 1998 and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.² Additionally, 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 East Hertfordshire 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 East Hertfordshire

9 East Hertfordshire should be represented by 50 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 East Hertfordshire should have 26 wards, four fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of most wards should change; three 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 affect 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.

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

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for 10 weeks, from 1 March 2022 to 9 May 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 9 May 2022 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 35 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 East Hertfordshire. 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 |
|-------------------|---|
| 21 September 2021 | Number of councillors decided |
| 28 September 2021 | Start of consultation seeking views on new wards |
| 6 December 2021 | End of the consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations |
| 1 March 2022 | Publication of draft recommendations; start of the second consultation |
| 9 May 2022 | End of the consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations |
| 2 August 2022 | Publication of final recommendations |

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ 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 local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown in the table below.

| | 2021 | 2027 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Electorate of East Hertfordshire | 113,627 | 132,002 |
| Number of councillors | 50 | 50 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 2,273 | 2,640 |

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 our proposed wards for East Hertfordshire will 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

Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2027, a period five years 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 16% by 2027. A significant reason for this increase was due to the large-scale Harlow and Gilston Garden Town development, in addition to developments surrounding Bishop's Stortford and Ware.

25 The Amwell Society queried the electoral forecasts in the less densely populated areas of the district, suggesting they did not accurately reflect the

³ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

Council's Local Plan. While we note the concerns raised, as stated in our technical guidance, providing electoral forecasts can be a difficult and somewhat inexact science. While local authorities are best placed to know about any planning permissions and the likely pattern of future development, population and development trends, these are dynamic and the Commission acknowledges that producing a near-perfect electoral forecast can be a difficult task. We consider the methodology used and forecast produced by the Council to be underpinned by reasonable evidence and we have used the figures agreed with the Council before the start of the review to produce our draft recommendations.

Number of councillors

26 East Hertfordshire District Council currently has 50 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same 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 50 councillors: for example, 50 one-councillor wards, 25 two-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

28 We received two submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns. The Hertford & Stortford Labour Party opposed the retention of 50 councillors, arguing that an increase was required because of a growing population and technological advances that have made councillors more contactable, thereby increasing their workload. While we acknowledge that population growth and technological changes pose challenges, as well as opportunities, for local authorities, we do not consider that either automatically requires more elected councillors. A local resident suggested that there were too many councillors but did not suggest an alternative number. We remain satisfied that a council size of 50 will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively in the future.

Ward boundaries consultation

29 We received 33 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two district-wide proposals from the East Hertfordshire Conservative Group ('the Conservatives') and the East Hertfordshire & Broxbourne Liberal Democrats ('the Liberal Democrats'). We also received a near district-wide submission from the East Hertfordshire Green Party, which was also submitted by several Green Party affiliated individuals and a handful of local residents. For clarity, this will be referred to as 'the Green Party' submission throughout this report. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the district.

30 The district-wide schemes provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for East Hertfordshire. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards broadly resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used identifiable boundaries.

31 Our draft recommendations are broadly based upon the district-wide proposals made by the Conservatives. However, in some areas of the district, we have also been persuaded to adopt parts of Liberal Democrat and Green Party proposals, in addition to other more localised submissions, which provided evidence of good community links and locally recognised boundaries. Furthermore, we considered that the proposals did not provide the best balance between our statutory criteria in some areas, so we identified our own alternative boundaries.

32 As a result of the restrictions arising from the Covid-19 outbreak, there was a detailed virtual tour of East Hertfordshire. This helped to clarify issues raised in submissions and assisted in the construction of the draft recommendations.

Draft recommendations

33 Our draft recommendations are for eight single-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and six three-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.

34 The tables and maps on pages 8–30 detail our draft recommendations for each area of East Hertfordshire. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

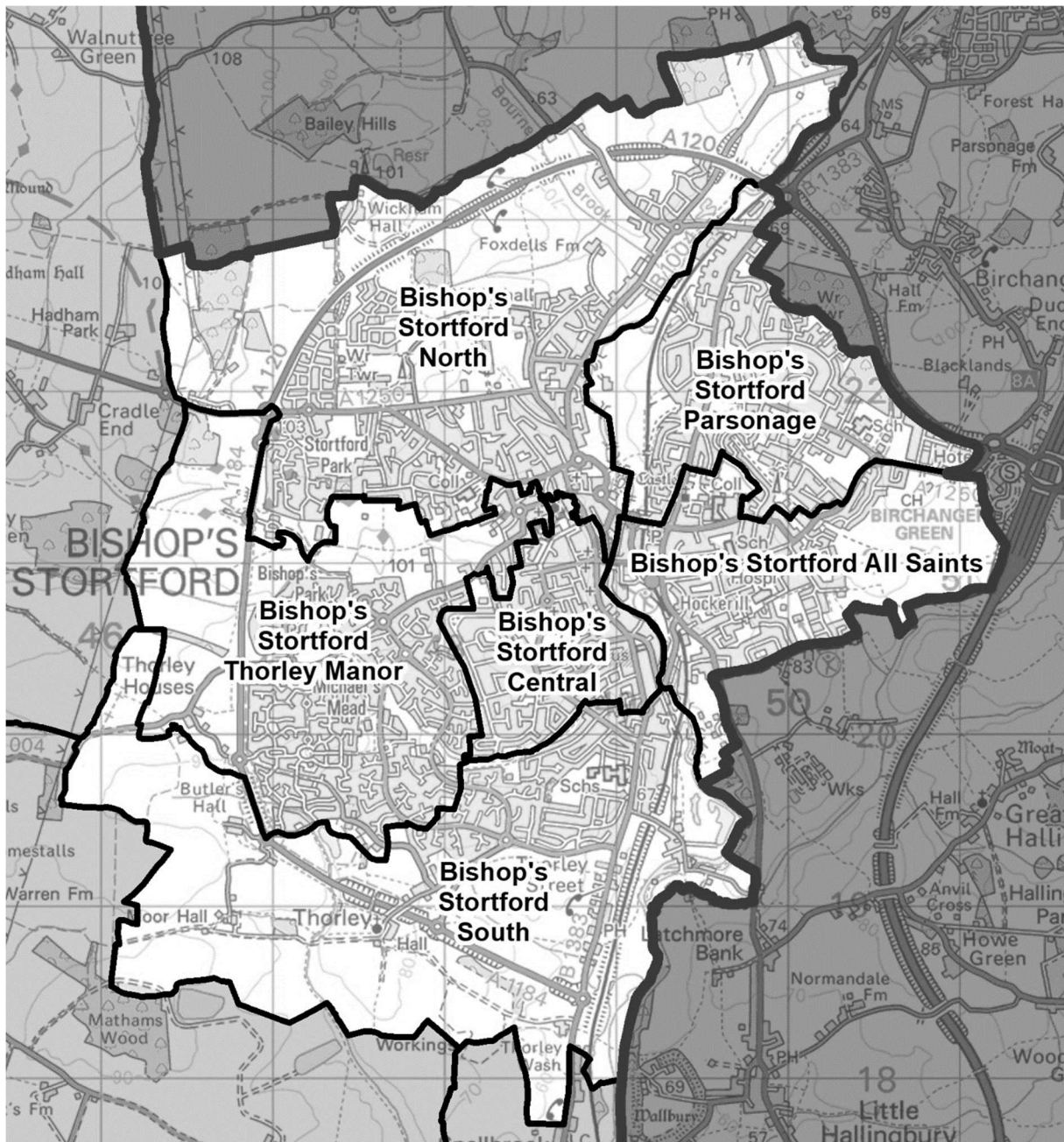
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

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

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

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Bishop's Stortford



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Bishop's Stortford All Saints | 2 | -1% |
| Bishop's Stortford Central | 2 | 2% |
| Bishop's Stortford North | 3 | 9% |
| Bishop's Stortford Parsonage | 2 | -2% |
| Bishop's Stortford South | 2 | 0% |
| Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor | 3 | 6% |

37 A high level of development is expected in the town of Bishop's Stortford, with the current Bishop's Stortford Silverleys ward forecast to be significantly under-represented by 2027. This therefore necessitated a vastly different warding pattern for the town to meet our statutory criteria. This was recognised by the district-wide schemes, the Hertford & Stortford Labour Party and four local residents, who all stated that development in the town required a significant reconfiguration of the current wards to provide good electoral equality.

38 We received differing proposals as to how the wards in Bishop's Stortford should be configured. The Conservatives suggested a warding arrangement composed of six wards that used the River Stort as the boundary between the eastern and western parts of the town. They proposed a new two-councillor Bishop's Stortford Parsonage ward and a revised two-councillor Bishop's Stortford All Saints ward in the east. Their wards to the west of the River Stort broadly reconfigured the existing wards to achieve good electoral equality while taking into consideration the residential development in both the north and south of the town.

39 The Liberal Democrats also proposed a warding arrangement composed of six wards but suggested a significantly different warding pattern for the western part of the town, proposing a two-councillor Bishop's Stortford Central ward that was bounded to the west by the edge of the Havers area. They also proposed a new three-councillor Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor ward that would comprise the St Michael's Mead, Thorley Park and Bishop's Gate areas. Their two-councillor Bishop's Stortford South ward would comprise much of the existing ward, minus St Michael's Mead and Thorley Park areas, which would be transferred into their Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor ward.

40 The Green Party did not propose specific boundaries for wards in Bishop's Stortford. However, it suggested we increase the number of councillors for the existing Bishop's Stortford Silverleys ward from two to three, and to rearrange the boundaries between the current Bishop's Stortford All Saints, Bishop's Stortford Meads and Bishop's Stortford Central wards to improve electoral equality and reflect changes in the interests and identities of local communities since the last review.

41 A local resident suggested a pattern of wards for Bishop's Stortford represented by seven wards, with two councillors per ward. They argued that this warding arrangement would strengthen the link between councillors and specific geographic areas of the town. They also stated it would be preferable for each residential development to be contained wholly within a single ward wherever possible, and that existing physical features, such as the River Stort, should be considered as boundaries, where appropriate.

42 The Hertford & Stortford Labour Party argued that the names and boundaries of the existing wards in Bishop's Stortford do not reflect communities. However, it did not propose a new warding pattern for the town.

43 We carefully considered the different proposals we received for the town, and we determined that each had strong evidence and largely reflected our statutory criteria. Therefore, our draft recommendations for the town are based on a combination of the proposals made within each submission. We welcome comments during the current consultation on the names and boundaries of our proposed wards, which are detailed below.

Bishop's Stortford All Saints and Bishop's Stortford Parsonage

44 In the east of Bishop's Stortford, we have fully adopted the proposals made by the Conservatives. We were persuaded by the evidence received from the Conservatives, the Bishop's Stortford Conservatives, Councillor Snowdon, Councillor Wyllie and a local resident that the River Stort will represent a strong and identifiable boundary and that the Conservatives' Bishop's Stortford All Saints and Bishop's Stortford Parsonage wards will effectively reflect the communities that lie east of the river.

45 As a result of following the River Stort in its entirety, our proposed Bishop's Stortford All Saints ward will also include the Goods Yard development along Dane Street. We note the evidence provided by the Conservatives that this development has good transport links with the rest of the ward via several bus routes.

46 Our draft Bishop's Stortford All Saints and Bishop's Stortford Parsonage wards are expected to have good electoral equality by 2027, with electoral variances of -1% and -2%, respectively.

Bishop's Stortford Central

47 Our two-councillor Bishop's Stortford Central ward is based upon the proposals made by the Liberal Democrats. We were persuaded by the evidence received that transferring the section of Thorley Park that sits within the current ward into their proposed Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor ward would better reflect community identities. We agree that the Thorley Park and Havers areas are distinct and that there are poor access routes between the two areas, with no direct vehicular connection apart from a bus-only road between Piggotts Way and Villiers-sur-Marne Avenue. A similar proposal was made by the local resident, who suggested the current Bishop's Stortford Central ward be 'reduced in size on its south-western edge, with these areas subsumed into new West and/or South West wards'.

48 However, the southern boundary of our Bishop's Stortford Central ward will follow the county division boundary, to ensure effective and convenient local government. This contrasts with the Liberal Democrat suggestion, which placed the

boundary along the rear of properties on Lower Park Crescent, Chinnery Hill and Thorley Hill, and the footpath behind Marlborough Close. It also differs from the Conservatives' proposal, which extended Bishop's Stortford Central ward to include electors on Proctors Way and Burley Road.

49 We note the Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, the local resident and Councillor Snowdon preferred to place the commercial town centre within a single ward. However, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, we have decided to follow the county division boundary to avoid the creation of a small parish ward that would comprise part of the town centre.

Bishop's Stortford North

50 We are proposing a three-councillor Bishop's Stortford North ward, comprising part of the existing Meads ward west of the River Stort and the existing Silverleys ward, minus the Bishop's Gate area.

51 We consider a three-councillor Bishop's Stortford North ward the best reflection of our statutory criteria, combining the northern part of the town into a single ward. We also note that our proposed ward will incorporate the entirety of the large-scale residential development taking place south of the A120, as suggested by the local resident. Our proposed ward is also forecast to have good electoral equality, with a forecast electoral variance of 9% by 2027.

52 We decided not to adopt the Conservatives' two-councillor Bishop's Stortford Silverleys ward as we consider that the Bishop's Gate area shares closer community links with the St Michael's Mead and Thorley Park areas to the south. In addition, we did not adopt the Liberal Democrats' two-councillor Bishop's Stortford Silverleys ward as it required the retention of a Bishop's Stortford Meads ward that crossed the River Stort. As outlined in paragraph 44, we consider the River Stort represents a strong and identifiable boundary, and we are not persuaded to adopt a ward that straddles it as part of our draft recommendations.

Bishop's Stortford South and Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor

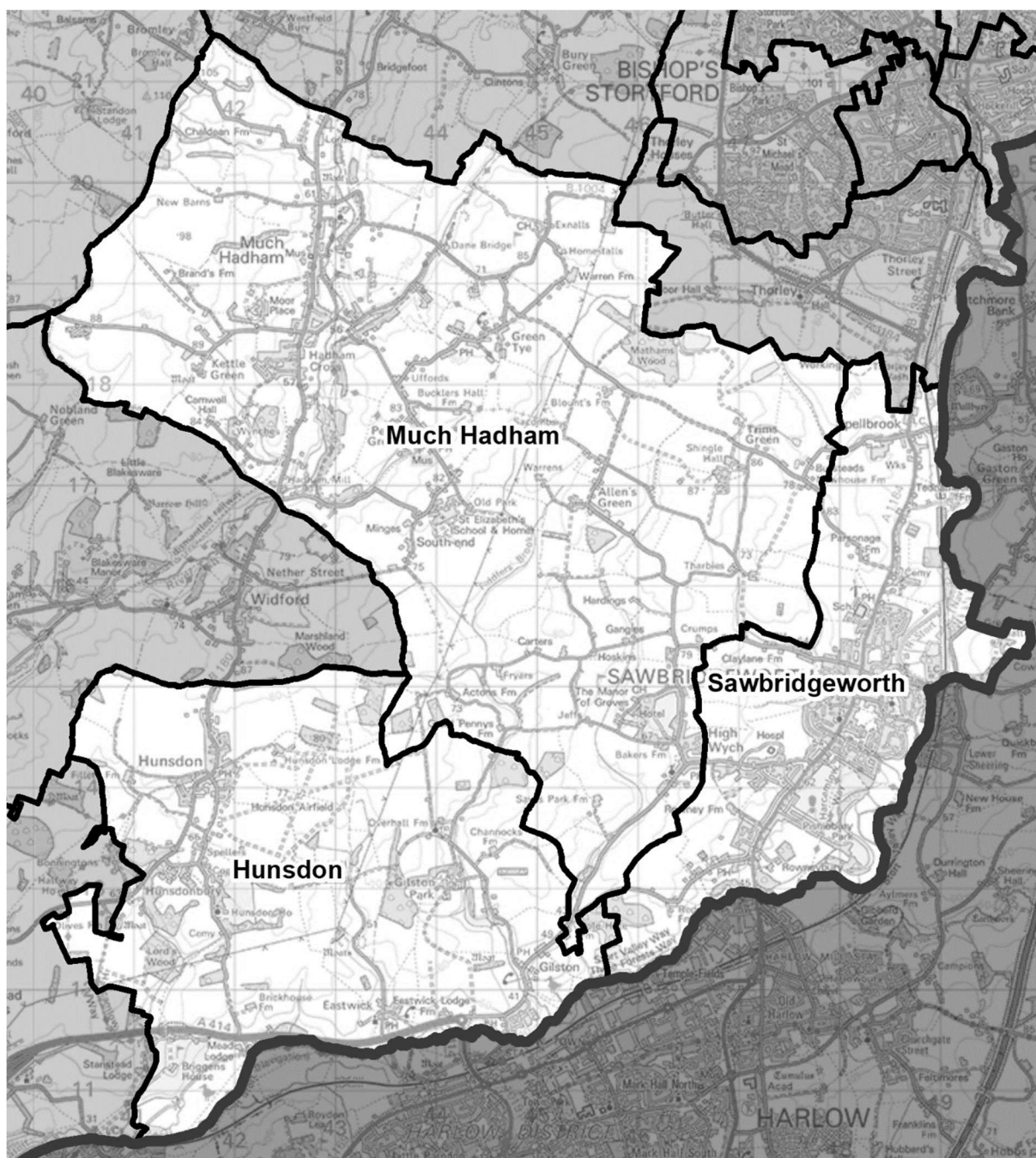
53 We have decided to broadly adopt the Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor ward suggested by the Liberal Democrats as part of our draft recommendations. We consider their proposal to link the Bishop's Gate area with the St Michael's Mead and Thorley Park areas better reflects the pattern of local communities and road access routes in the area. This warding pattern is broadly similar to the pattern suggested by the local resident who had proposed Bishop's Stortford South and Bishop's Stortford South West wards.

54 Our proposed Bishop's Stortford South ward also closely resembles the Liberal Democrats' suggested ward. However, we have moved the western boundary from the footpath east of Appleton Fields to run along the footpath between Barley Hills

and Hipkins, to improve electoral equality between wards. We have also followed the division boundary as the northern boundary, as detailed in paragraph 48.

55 Additionally, we have included the entirety of Thorley parish, which includes the residential development between Whittington Way and St James Way, within our Bishop's Stortford South ward. We agree with the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and Councillor Wyllie that including the entirety of the parish in a single ward will contribute to effective and convenient local government and better reflect community identities.

Sawbridgeworth and the surrounding parishes



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Hunsdon | 1 | 4% |
| Much Hadham | 1 | -9% |
| Sawbridgeworth | 3 | 5% |

Hunsdon

56 The existing Hunsdon ward is forecast to be significantly under-represented by 2027, due to an anticipated increase of the electorate arising from the Harlow and

Gilston Garden Town development, in addition to the development on the edge of Ware. This therefore necessitated a reconfiguration of the ward boundaries in this area to meet our statutory criteria.

57 The Conservatives proposed a single-councillor Hunsdon ward, containing the parishes of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon. They transferred the parishes of Wareside and Widford from the existing ward to neighbouring wards to achieve good electoral equality. Alternatively, the Liberal Democrats suggested a single-councillor High Wych & Gilston ward, comprising the parishes of Eastwick and Gilston, and parts of High Wych, Hunsdon and Sawbridgeworth parishes. The Green Party suggested a single-councillor Hunsdon ward incorporating Eastwick, Gilston, Hunsdon and Widford parishes.

58 We have adopted the Conservatives' Hunsdon ward as part of our draft recommendations. We consider this ward provides the best reflection of our statutory criteria, with the ward forecast to have good electoral equality by 2027. We also note that their Hunsdon ward comprises whole parishes, which we consider will reflect community identities and interests.

59 This contrasts with the Liberal Democrats' High Wych & Gilston ward which, despite being forecast to have good electoral equality, splits three parishes to achieve an acceptable electoral variance. We consider the division of these rural parishes between district wards would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government. Furthermore, we were also not persuaded to adopt the Green Party's Hunsdon ward, which is forecast to have an electoral variance of 23%. We consider that this variance is too high to accept.

Much Hadham

60 We propose to broadly retain the existing single-councillor Much Hadham ward, as proposed by the Conservatives. We are content that this ward will effectively represent the community identities and interests of the two rural parishes of Much Hadham and High Wych that will comprise the ward.

61 Furthermore, as explained in paragraph 55, we have transferred the rural part of Thorley parish from the existing Much Hadham ward into our proposed Bishop's Stortford South ward.

62 We were not persuaded to adopt the Much Hadham ward proposed by the Liberal Democrats, which divided High Wych parish and Sawbridgeworth parish between wards and included Allen's Green village and Spellbrook hamlet in Much Hadham ward. Good electoral equality can be achieved by keeping these parishes within a single ward, and we consider that the division of both parishes between district wards would not reflect community identities nor promote effective and convenient local government.

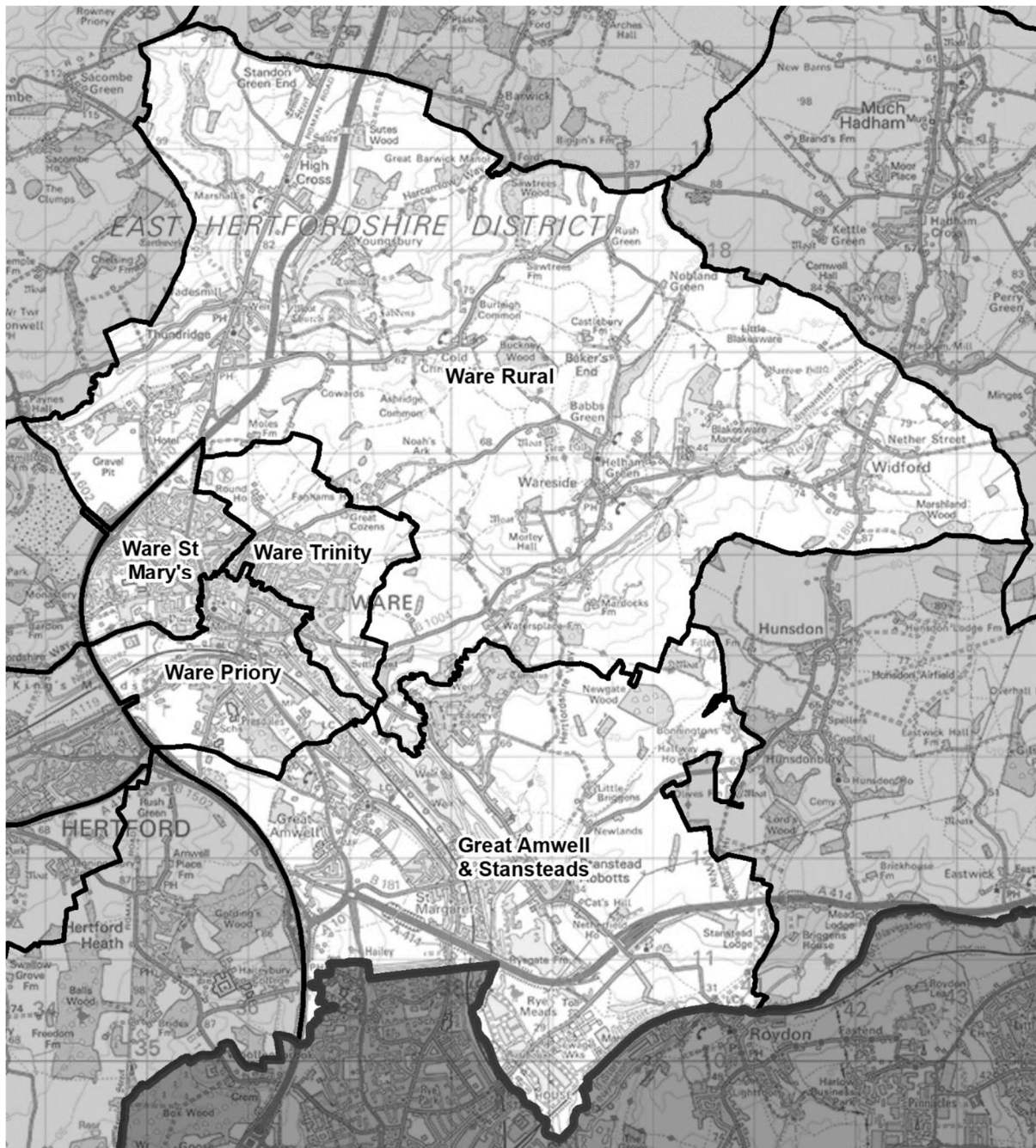
Sawbridgeworth

63 We are retaining the existing three-councillor Sawbridgeworth ward as part of our draft recommendations, as suggested by the Conservatives. The current ward is forecast to have good electoral equality in 2027 and will reflect community identities, based on the evidence received.

64 We decided not to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposed ward, which split Sawbridgeworth parish into three separate district wards. We determined that this would not contribute to effective and convenient local government or reflect local community identities.

65 A local resident requested that Lower Sheering be incorporated in a Sawbridgeworth ward, given its proximity to the town, while another local resident expressed concern at the possibility of Sawbridgeworth being transferred from Hertfordshire to Essex, with the town 'being so close to the border'. However, changing the external boundaries between East Hertfordshire and neighbouring local authorities falls outside the scope of the current electoral review, so no changes of this nature are being made.

Ware and the surrounding parishes



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Great Amwell & Stansteads | 2 | -8% |
| Ware Priors | 2 | 7% |
| Ware Rural | 1 | -10% |
| Ware St Mary's | 2 | 1% |
| Ware Trinity | 2 | 9% |

Great Amwell & Stansteads

66 We received differing proposals that related to the parishes south of Ware. The Conservatives proposed a three-councillor Ware Priory & Amwell ward, which linked Great Amwell parish with the southern part of Ware. They also suggested a single-councillor Stanstead ward which placed Stanstead St Margarets parish in a ward with a substantial part of Stanstead Abbots parish. This was strongly supported by Councillor Curtis, the existing Great Amwell ward councillor, who provided good evidence of community links between the south of Ware and Great Amwell parish, and two local residents.

67 The Liberal Democrats also combined the southern part of Ware town with Great Amwell parish, including several roads within the parish that sit adjacent to Stanstead St Margarets parish, in a two-councillor Stanstead ward. The latter ward would be composed of Stanstead Abbots and Stanstead St Margarets parishes and part of Hunsdon parish.

68 The Amwell Society proposed a Great Amwell & Stansteads (or Stansteads & Great Amwell) ward that combined Great Amwell parish in a two-councillor ward with the entirety of both Stanstead St Margarets and Stanstead Abbots parishes.

69 We very carefully considered the evidence received given the distinct warding proposals for this area. As part of our draft recommendations, we have decided to adopt the warding arrangement proposed by the Amwell Society. While we note the evidence provided by the Conservative Group and Councillor Curtis for Ware Priory & Amwell and Stanstead wards, we were concerned that this would split Stanstead Abbots parish between their proposed Stanstead and Ware Rural wards. We consider that this approach would not reflect community identities, nor be conducive to effective and convenient local government. Similarly, we were not persuaded to adopt the Liberal Democrat proposal, which split Great Amwell and Hunsdon parishes between wards.

70 We consider the Amwell Society's proposed Great Amwell & Stansteads ward provides the best reflection of statutory criteria. It will align district wards with parish boundaries, which will contribute to effective and convenient local government. The ward is also anticipated to have good electoral equality, with a forecast electoral variance of -8% by 2027. We would nonetheless particularly welcome comments on the boundaries and names of this ward during the consultation on these draft recommendations.

Ware Priory

71 We are proposing a two-councillor Ware Priory ward as part of our draft recommendations. This ward would be composed of the existing Ware Chadwell ward and the part of the town centre that currently sits within the current Ware Christchurch ward.

72 The ward would be bounded to the north broadly by the division boundary, up to Popis Gardens, which will contribute to effective and convenient local government. This contrasts with the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Green Party proposals which, to differing extents, proposed to diverge from this boundary for their respective Ware Priory & Amwell, Ware South and Ware Christchurch wards.

73 While we have not adopted the Conservatives' Ware Priory & Amwell ward, we were persuaded by their suggestion to name a ward that incorporated a substantial amount of the centre and south of the town as Ware Priory, which is a former medieval friary. As a prominent local heritage feature, recognisable to local electors, we agree that this name will best represent the communities that will reside in the ward.

Ware Rural and Ware Trinity

74 We also received differing proposals concerning the wards in the north and east of Ware, where significant residential development is expected to take place. The Conservatives proposed a two-councillor Ware Trinity ward that would incorporate the entirety of the residential development on the edge of the town. In addition, they proposed a single-councillor Ware Rural ward comprising the entirety of Thundridge and Widford parishes, and parts of Stanstead Abbots and Wareside parishes. A similar proposal was suggested by the Amwell Society, which proposed to remove Wareside parish from Hunsdon ward and divide it into two, with the part comprising the residential development included in either a Ware Trinity or Ware Christchurch ward.

75 The Liberal Democrats also proposed a two-councillor Ware Trinity ward but included the entirety of the development within a single-councillor Ware Rural ward that would contain the eastern area of Ware town and the parish of Wareside.

76 The Green Party split the development across a two-councillor Ware Trinity ward bounded to the south by Homefield Road, Fanhams Road and Queens Road, and a two-councillor Ware Christchurch ward. They suggested that Wareside parish be divided between the existing Much Hadham, Stanstead Abbots and Thundridge & Standon wards to achieve good electoral equality.

77 After careful consideration, we have decided to broadly adopt the Conservatives' two-councillor Ware Trinity and single-councillor Ware Rural wards as part of our draft recommendations. We consider their proposal to place the residential development on the edge of the town within a town-centric ward will better reflect community identities. We agree that future electors are more likely to look towards Ware town, rather than the rural surrounding parishes, for amenities. We also consider that placing the entirety of the residential development in a single ward will be conducive to effective and convenient local government.

78 The boundary between our proposed Ware Trinity and Ware Rural wards will follow the edge of the development's outline plan. This is to ensure good electoral equality across wards in the area and maintain the distinction between the rural communities of Wareside parish, and the more urban community that will grow from the development on the edge of the town.

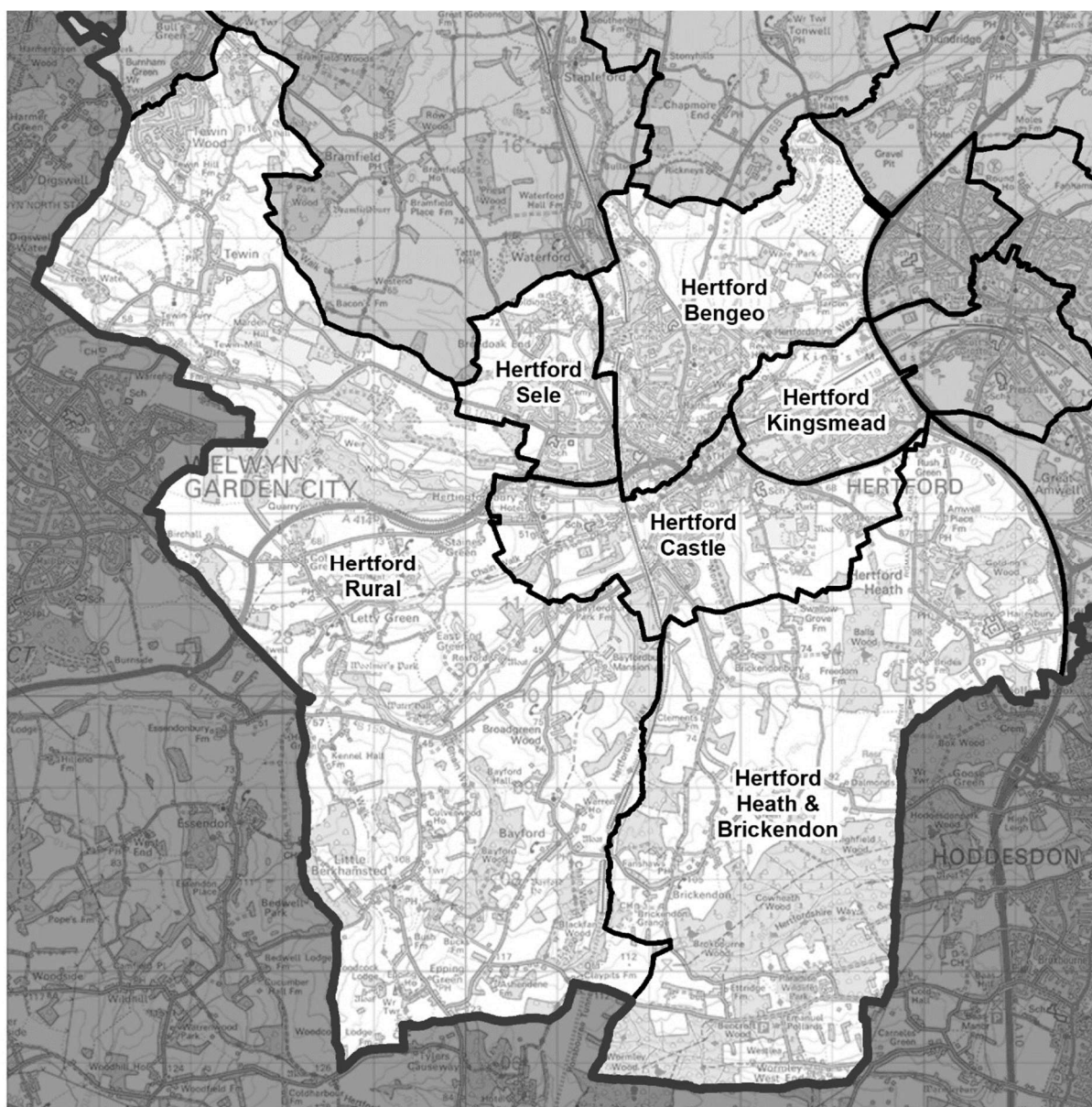
79 We have adopted the boundary proposed by the Liberal Democrats between their Ware Rural, Ware South and Ware Trinity wards as the boundary between our proposed Ware Priory and Ware Trinity wards, from Cromwell Road to Vicarage Road via Winton Road. This adjustment is to ensure good electoral equality between our proposed wards.

80 A local resident suggested that the Ware Town Council boundary be expanded to incorporate the development on the edge of the town. However, changing parish boundaries falls outside the scope of this electoral review and a community governance review, conducted by the district council, would be required for this change.

Ware St Mary's

81 Our draft recommendations for this ward are based on the proposals made within the district-wide schemes, which all proposed a near-identical two-councillor Ware St Mary's ward. The proposals were broadly similar to the existing ward but included the area bounded by the A1170, Kingsway and the town council boundary to improve electoral equality between wards. This change, in our view, will better reflect the community identities and form a ward with stronger and more identifiable boundaries.

Hertford and the surrounding parishes



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Hertford Bengeo | 3 | -9% |
| Hertford Castle | 2 | -5% |
| Hertford Heath & Brickendon | 1 | -5% |
| Hertford Kingsmead | 3 | -3% |
| Hertford Rural | 1 | 7% |
| Hertford Sele | 2 | -3% |

Hertford Bengeo

82 We received varied proposals relating to Hertford Bengeo ward. Both the Conservatives and the Green Party expanded the existing three-councillor Hertford

Bengeo ward to improve electoral equality. The Conservatives moved the southern boundary from North Road to the A414. Conversely, the Green Party moved the boundary further south to follow the River Lea and River Mimran (up to the railway line), while also incorporating part of Waterford village that sits east of the River Beane.

83 As part of our draft recommendations, we have decided to adopt the Green Party proposal to extend the southern boundary towards the River Lea and River Mimran. We consider the rivers to represent a strong boundary that is recognisable to local electors, and we were persuaded by the community evidence received from the Green Party that electors between North Road and the two rivers would fit more appropriately within a Hertford Bengeo ward. However, we were not persuaded to adopt their suggestion to include part of Waterford village in the ward. This proposal would divide both the village and Stapleford parish between wards, which we consider to be detrimental to community identities as well as effective and convenient local government.

84 We decided not to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposal for a two-councillor Hertford Bengeo ward as we determined from our virtual tour of the area that the boundaries proposed in the town centre were not particularly strong. We were also persuaded by the strong evidence provided by the Conservatives that the Folly Island area shares close links with the Bengeo community, and it should thus be placed in a Hertford Bengeo ward.

Hertford Castle and Hertford Kingsmead

85 The Liberal Democrats proposed significantly different boundaries between these two wards, compared to those from the Conservatives and Green Party. The latter two proposals broadly retained the existing wards, but transferred electors residing on Beechwood Close, Copperwood and The Spinney from the existing Hertford Castle ward into their proposed two-councillor Hertford Kingsmead ward, to improve electoral equality and reflect community identities. In contrast, the Liberal Democrats proposed a three-councillor Hertford Kingsmead ward that was bounded in the west by the A414, Mill Road, Railway Street and Bircherley Street.

86 We have decided to broadly adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposal and recommend a three-councillor Hertford Kingsmead ward as part of our draft recommendations. We consider this to provide the best reflection of our statutory criteria, with the ward forecast good electoral equality by 2027 and following strong, identifiable boundaries.

87 We decided not to adopt the Conservative and Green Party proposal to transfer electors residing on Beechwood Close, Copperwood and The Spinney as it would result in a parish ward with few electors, which would not provide effective and convenient local government. The reason for this is due to the county division

boundary, which follows the current district ward boundary. If a parish is to be divided between different district wards, we are legally required to divide the parish into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single district ward. In recommending revised parish warding arrangements, we are also required to reflect existing county division boundaries, so that a parish ward lies wholly within a single district ward and county division.

88 A local resident requested the Rush Green roundabout be incorporated in a single ward so that issues pertaining to the roundabout can be directed to a single ward councillor. At present, the current arrangement splits the roundabout between four district wards and four parishes. While we note the reasoning behind this request, placing the roundabout in a single ward would require the creation of a parish ward with no electors. Therefore, the roundabout will remain divided between four wards as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that a community governance review, carried out by the Council after the completion of this electoral review, would be the most effective way to affect parish boundary changes in this area. A request for related alterations following a community governance review would then provide the Council with an opportunity to modify district wards so that they are coterminous with any revised parish boundaries.

Hertford Heath & Brickendon

89 The Conservatives retained the existing single-councillor ward that is composed of the parishes of Hertford Heath and Brickendon Liberty. The Liberal Democrats also proposed a single-councillor ward that retained the link between Hertford Heath and Brickendon Liberty parishes, but included the south-eastern part of Hertford parish, suggesting the rural nature of this area would fit more appropriately in a predominantly rural ward.

90 Brickendon Liberty Parish Council and a local resident opposed the current warding arrangement, stating a preference to be linked with the parishes of Bayford and Little Berkhamsted. Brickendon Liberty Parish Council stressed that, in relation to Hertford Heath parish, Brickendon Liberty parish has 'no physical direct road connections, nor has there been any inter-action historically or currently between the two parishes'.

91 In consideration of the submission received by Brickendon Liberty Parish Council, we examined potential alternative warding arrangements for this area. We first examined whether Hertford Heath parish could form a single-councillor ward by itself. We could not adopt this proposal as it would result in a single-councillor Hertford Heath ward with a forecast electoral variance of -26%. For the same reason, we decided not to adopt a single-councillor ward comprising Bayford, Brickendon Liberty, Hertingfordbury and Little Berkhamsted parishes, as suggested by a local resident, as this also produced a forecast electorate variance of -26%.

92 We then examined whether Hertford Heath parish could be linked with Great Amwell parish, as supported by three local residents. We decided not to adopt this proposal either, as it would result in a two-councillor ward with an electoral variance of -27%, which, again, is also too high for us to accept.

93 We finally examined whether we could create a larger two-councillor Hertford Rural ward incorporating the parishes of Bayford, Brickendon Liberty, Hertford Heath, Hertingfordbury, Little Berkhamsted and Tewin, which would have good electoral equality by 2027. We decided not to adopt this warding arrangement as we were concerned it would link distant rural communities in a geographically large ward. We consider that such a ward would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government, nor reflect community identities.

94 We are therefore retaining the boundaries of the existing ward as part of our draft recommendations. While we note the concerns regarding this ward, we consider that none of the alternatives provided a better reflection of our three statutory criteria. Additionally, we are further constrained by the distribution of settlements in this area as well as the proximity of the district boundary, which reduced our scope for considering alternative warding patterns.

95 We were not persuaded to incorporate the most south-eastern part of Hertford parish in the ward, as proposed by the Liberal Democrats, as we determined that insufficient community evidence had been received to justify this change. We also note that such a proposal contrasts with the submission made by Hertford Town Council, who requested that the 'perimeter boundary of the 4 (district) wards (for Hertford town) taken together should remain as it is'.

96 We have nonetheless incorporated 'Brickendon' in the ward name to reflect the two distinct communities that will comprise this ward.

Hertford Rural

97 We propose to adopt a Hertford Rural ward composed of Bayford, Hertingfordbury and Little Berkhamsted parishes, in addition to the entirety of Tewin parish, as part of our draft recommendations. This ward was suggested by the Conservatives and Green Party.

98 Tewin parish is currently split between the existing Hertford Rural North and Hertford Rural South wards. Although Tewin Parish Council expressed satisfaction with the current arrangements, we consider it preferable to unite parishes within single district wards, where possible, to promote effective and convenient local government. Furthermore, the inclusion of the northern part of Tewin parish in our proposed Hertford Rural ward ensures good electoral equality for the ward – excluding it would result in a ward with a forecast electoral variance of -15% by 2027.

99 We were not persuaded to adopt the Liberal Democrats' Hertford Rural ward, which combined Bayford, Bramfield, Hertingfordbury and Little Berkhamsted parishes in a ward with the Hertingfordbury area of Hertford. As stated previously in paragraph 95, we were not persuaded to incorporate parts of Hertford parish in wards with the surrounding rural communities, particularly given Hertford Town Council's opposition to such an arrangement.

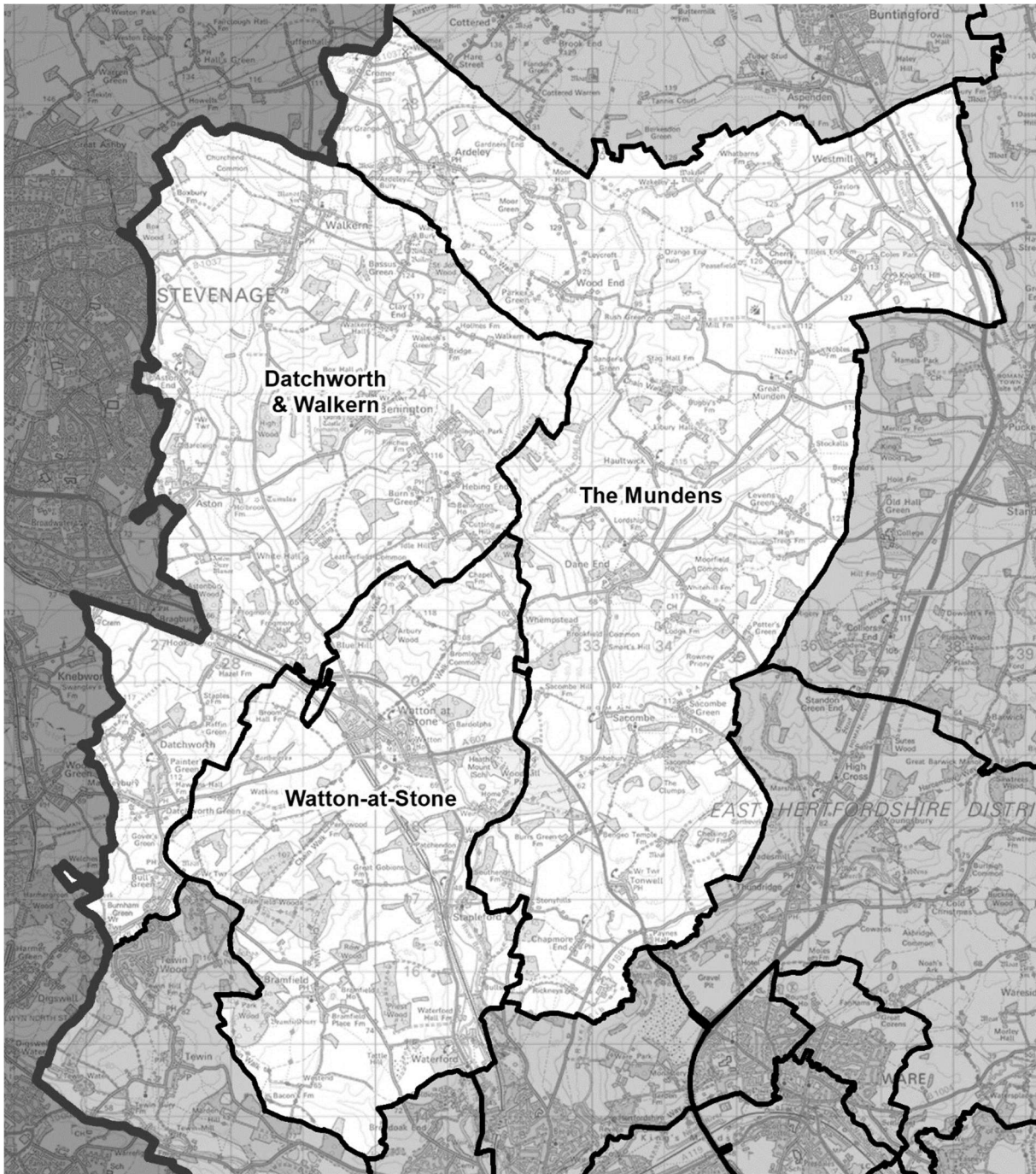
100 We are recommending the ward name of Hertford Rural, as proposed by the Conservatives, as opposed to Hertford Rural South, as suggested by the Green Party. This is because we decided to not adopt a Hertford Rural North ward, as detailed further in paragraph 108.

Hertford Sele

101 We have decided to retain the existing two-councillor Hertford Sele ward as part of our draft recommendations. The current ward is anticipated to have good electoral equality by 2027 and will reflect community identities, based on the evidence received.

102 We were not persuaded to adopt the Conservative proposal to transfer electors residing on Broadoak End and off Goldings Lane from the existing ward to a Hertford Bengoe ward. We consider that adhering to the existing division boundary, which follows North Road and the railway line, would provide for a clearer and more identifiable ward boundary and therefore provide for effective and convenient local government. For the same reason, we did not adopt the Green Party's proposal to follow the River Beane as a ward boundary.

Watton-at-Stone and the surrounding parishes



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Datchworth & Walkern | 2 | -9% |
| The Mundens | 1 | -9% |
| Watton-at-Stone | 1 | 9% |

Datchworth & Walkern

103 We received differing warding proposals relating to this area. The Conservatives proposed a two-councillor Datchworth & Walkern ward comprising

Aston, Benington, Datchworth and Walkern parishes, while the Liberal Democrats proposed a single-councillor Aston & Walkern ward and single-councillor Datchworth & Tewin ward. The Green Party did not refer to the parishes of Datchworth or Aston in their submission but did suggest a single-councillor Walkern ward comprising Ardeley, Great Munden, Walkern and Westmill parishes.

104 Based upon the strength of the evidence received, we have decided to adopt the Datchworth & Walkern ward proposed by the Conservatives. We were persuaded by the evidence provided that this ward would reflect the community identities of the constituent parishes, which all 'look towards Stevenage for most of their local services'. We decided not to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposed pattern of wards here, as we determined that the community evidence provided was not as strong. We did not adopt the Green Party's proposed Walkern ward as this ward would have a forecast electoral variance of -20% by 2027, which is too high for us to accept, based on the evidence received.

105 We consider that our draft recommendations for this area of the district sufficiently balance our three statutory criteria. However, given the lack of localised submissions, we would welcome comments on our proposed warding arrangements during the current consultation.

The Mundens

106 We are adopting the Conservatives' proposed The Mundens ward as part of our draft recommendations. On our virtual tour of the area, we were persuaded by the argument that the highly rural parishes of Ardeley, Bengoe Rural, Great Munden, Little Munden, Sacombe and Westmill have a shared community identity and should thus be warded together. We also believe that this ward will be supported by Little Munden Parish Council, which requested that any future warding arrangements reflect the rural nature of the parish.

107 We decided not to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposed Benington & The Mundens ward, comprising Bengoe Rural, Benington, Great Munden, Little Munden, Sacombe and the hamlet of Whempstead in Watton-at-Stone parish. We were concerned that their suggestion to include the hamlet of Whempstead in their Benington & The Mundens ward would result in the creation of a parish ward of fewer than 100 electors for Watton-at-Stone parish, which would not promote effective and convenient local government.

108 We did not adopt the Green Party's Hertford Rural North ward, as a ward composed of Bengoe Rural, Benington, Little Munden and Sacombe parishes would not provide for good electoral equality, with a forecast electoral variance of -15% by 2027.

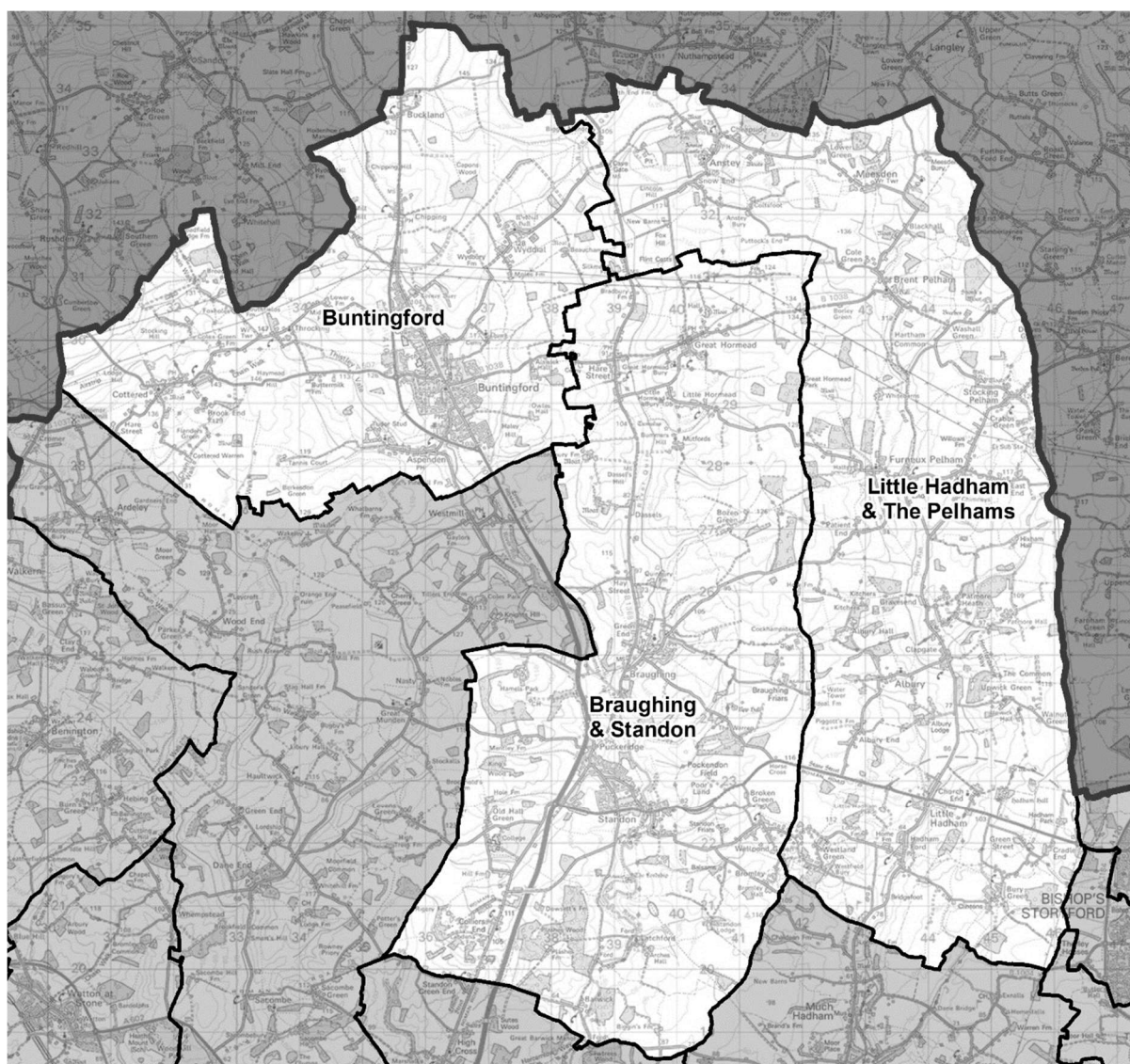
Watton-at-Stone

109 Our draft recommendations for this ward are based on the proposals made by the Conservatives and the Green Party, who proposed an identical ward that linked Watton-at-Stone parish with Bramfield & Stapleford parishes. We were persuaded that the inclusion of the latter two parishes within a larger Watton-at-Stone ward would reflect community identities, with the Conservatives and the Green Party each providing strong evidence of good community and road links between the three parishes.

110 The Liberal Democrats proposed to link Watton-at-Stone parish with Stapleford parish only, placing Bramfield parish in their Hertford Rural ward. We were not persuaded by this proposal, as we consider that Bramfield parish shares closer community and road links with Watton-at-Stone and Stapleford parishes than with the parishes lying south of Hertford.

111 We have also decided to retain the ward name of Watton-at-Stone, as suggested by the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party, given it is the most populated part of the ward. We nonetheless welcome comments on whether the ward name of Watton & Stapleford, as proposed by the Conservatives, would be more appropriate.

Buntingford and the surrounding parishes



| Ward name | Number of councillors | Variance 2027 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Braughing & Standon | 2 | 7% |
| Buntingford | 3 | -3% |
| Little Hadham & The Pelhams | 1 | 2% |

Braughing & Standon

112 We received contrasting warding proposals relating to the rural parishes in the centre of the district. The Liberal Democrats broadly retained the existing wards in this area but expanded the existing Braughing ward to include Aspenden and Westmill parishes. The Green Party suggested a significantly different warding pattern, linking Braughing with Albury and Little Hadham parishes.

113 However, as part of draft recommendations, we propose to adopt the Conservatives' warding arrangement for this area. We consider their two-councillor Braughing & Standon ward, which also included Hormead parish, to provide the best reflection of the three statutory criteria. It is forecast to have good electoral equality by 2027, and the A10 and B1368 roads represent a strong spine for the ward that facilitates adequate road access across the area.

114 Furthermore, we note that the present warding arrangement places Puckeridge village in a single ward and places the remainder of Standon parish in a Thundridge & Standon ward. We agree with the Conservatives that uniting the parish in a single ward will better reflect communities and contribute to effective and convenient local government.

115 This ward also reflects the concerns of a local resident who requested that Hormead parish remain in a predominantly rural ward, separate from any proposed Buntingford ward. This submission strengthened our view that our recommendations for Braughing & Standon ward will effectively reflect community identities and interests in this area.

Buntingford

116 Our draft recommendations for this ward are based on the proposals made by the Conservatives, which expanded the existing two-councillor Buntingford ward into a larger three-councillor ward that incorporated Aspenden and Cottered parishes. We were persuaded by the evidence submitted by the Conservatives that their proposal would reflect community identities best, linking the parishes that form the Buntingford Neighbourhood Plan area (except for Hormead parish) within a single ward.

117 The Liberal Democrats had proposed a similar three-councillor ward, but included Ardeley parish within the ward, as opposed to Aspenden parish. We consider the parish of Aspenden to share closer links with Buntingford, and that Ardeley parish shares stronger community links with the largely rural parishes that will form our proposed The Mundens ward.

118 We decided not to adopt the Green Party's three-councillor Buntingford ward that included Aspenden and Cottered parishes but excluded Buckland and Wyddial parishes. We consider the latter two parishes to share strong community and road links with Buntingford town, and that excluding these two parishes from a Buntingford ward would not reflect community identities.

Little Hadham & The Pelhams

119 The Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats suggested very similar wards in the north-eastern part of the district. Both proposed a ward that linked Little Hadham parish with parishes to the north – the three 'Pelham' parishes of Brent Pelham,

Furneux Pelham and Stocking Pelham – in addition to Albury and Meesden parishes. The only difference between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat submissions was that the Conservatives included Anstey parish within their proposed ward.

120 We decided to adopt the Conservative proposal. We consider Anstey parish has strong links to the similarly rural parishes that will comprise this ward, thereby reflecting community identities. Furthermore, including this parish in Braughing & Standon ward would result in that ward having a forecast electoral variance of 13%, which would not provide for good electoral equality.

121 We were not persuaded to adopt the Green Party's ward comprising Anstey, Brent Pelham, Buckland, Furneux Pelham, Hormead, Meesden, Stocking Pelham and Wyddial parishes, as this ward would have a forecast electoral variance of -16%, thereby not providing good electoral equality.

Conclusions

122 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in East Hertfordshire, referencing the 2021 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 in Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided in Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

| | Draft recommendations | |
|--|-----------------------|-------|
| | 2021 | 2027 |
| Number of councillors | 50 | 50 |
| Number of electoral wards | 26 | 26 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 2,273 | 2,640 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average | 13 | 0 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average | 2 | 0 |

Draft recommendations

East Hertfordshire District Council should be made up of 50 councillors serving 26 wards representing eight single-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and six 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 East Hertfordshire. You can also view our draft recommendations for East Hertfordshire on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

123 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.

124 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, East Hertfordshire 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.

125 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 Bishop’s Stortford, Hertford, Ware and Wareside.

126 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bishop’s Stortford parish.

Draft recommendations

Bishop’s Stortford Town Council should comprise 17 councillors, as at present, representing nine wards:

| Parish ward | Number of parish councillors |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| All Saints | 2 |
| Central | 2 |
| Goods Yard | 1 |
| Parsonage | 2 |
| North East | 2 |
| North West | 2 |
| South | 2 |
| Thorley Manor North | 2 |
| Thorley Manor South | 2 |

127 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hertford parish.

Draft recommendations

Hertford Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

| Parish ward | Number of parish councillors |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Bengeo North | 4 |
| Bengeo South | 1 |
| Castle | 3 |
| Kingsmead East | 3 |
| Kingsmead West | 2 |
| Sele | 3 |

128 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Ware parish.

Draft recommendations

Ware Town Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

| Parish ward | Number of parish councillors |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| Priory | 4 |
| St Mary's | 4 |
| Trinity East | 1 |
| Trinity West | 2 |

129 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Wareside parish.

Draft recommendations

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

| Parish ward | Number of parish councillors |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Rural | 3 |
| Urban | 4 |

Have your say

130 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.

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

132 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps. You can find it at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

133 Submissions can also be made by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to:

Review Officer (East Hertfordshire)
LGBCE
PO Box 133
Blyth
NE14 9FE

134 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for East Hertfordshire 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.

135 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.

136 Electoral equality:

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

137 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other groups that represent 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 that make strong boundaries for your proposals?

138 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?

139 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 our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

140 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.

141 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.

142 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 East Hertfordshire in 2023.

Equalities

143 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 East Hertfordshire District Council

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (2021) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2027) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Bishop's Stortford All Saints | 2 | 3,811 | 1,906 | -16% | 5,210 | 2,605 | -1% |
| 2 | Bishop's Stortford Central | 2 | 5,176 | 2,588 | 14% | 5,401 | 2,701 | 2% |
| 3 | Bishop's Stortford North | 3 | 4,818 | 1,606 | -29% | 8,606 | 2,869 | 9% |
| 4 | Bishop's Stortford Parsonage | 2 | 4,781 | 2,391 | 5% | 5,150 | 2,575 | -2% |
| 5 | Bishop's Stortford South | 2 | 3,641 | 1,821 | -20% | 5,293 | 2,647 | 0% |
| 6 | Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor | 3 | 7,861 | 2,620 | 15% | 8,382 | 2,794 | 6% |
| 7 | Braughing & Standon | 2 | 5,227 | 2,614 | 15% | 5,668 | 2,834 | 7% |
| 8 | Buntingford | 3 | 6,815 | 2,272 | 0% | 7,648 | 2,549 | -3% |
| 9 | Datchworth & Walkern | 2 | 3,840 | 1,920 | -16% | 4,785 | 2,393 | -9% |
| 10 | Great Amwell & Stansteads | 2 | 4,530 | 2,265 | 0% | 4,866 | 2,433 | -8% |
| 11 | Hertford Bengo | 3 | 6,714 | 2,238 | -2% | 7,214 | 2,405 | -9% |
| 12 | Hertford Castle | 2 | 4,691 | 2,346 | 3% | 4,995 | 2,498 | -5% |

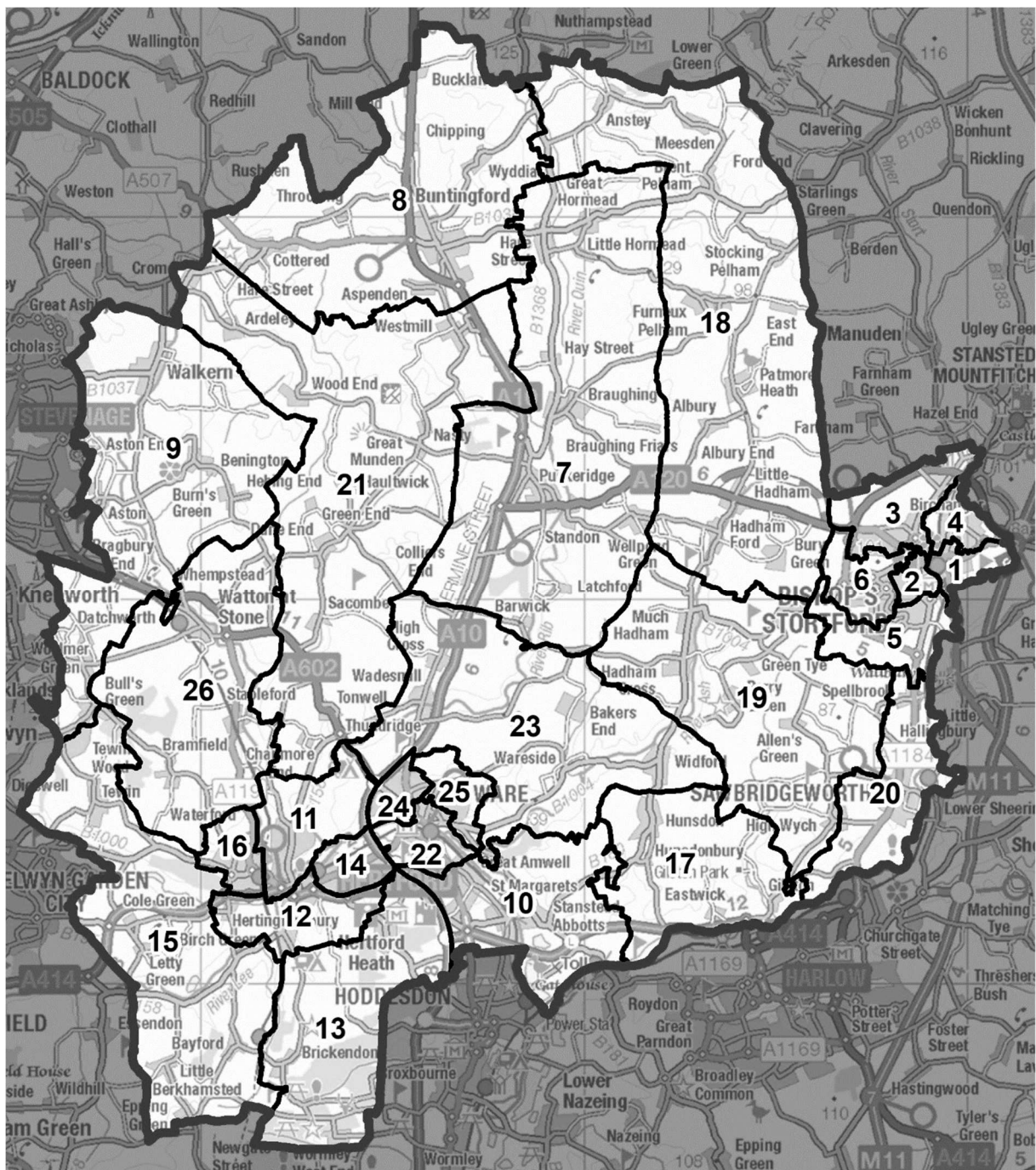
| Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (2021) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2027) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 13 Hertford Heath & Brickendon | 1 | 2,415 | 2,415 | 6% | 2,512 | 2,512 | -5% |
| 14 Hertford Kingsmead | 3 | 6,771 | 2,257 | -1% | 7,717 | 2,572 | -3% |
| 15 Hertford Rural | 1 | 2,638 | 2,638 | 16% | 2,813 | 2,813 | 7% |
| 16 Hertford Sele | 2 | 4,258 | 2,129 | -6% | 5,146 | 2,573 | -3% |
| 17 Hunsdon | 1 | 1,618 | 1,618 | -29% | 2,756 | 2,756 | 4% |
| 18 Little Hadham & The Pelhams | 1 | 2,529 | 2,529 | 11% | 2,704 | 2,704 | 2% |
| 19 Much Hadham | 1 | 2,271 | 2,271 | 0% | 2,400 | 2,400 | -9% |
| 20 Sawbridgeworth | 3 | 6,930 | 2,310 | 2% | 8,323 | 2,774 | 5% |
| 21 The Mundens | 1 | 2,246 | 2,246 | -1% | 2,403 | 2,403 | -9% |
| 22 Ware Priory | 2 | 5,367 | 2,684 | 18% | 5,647 | 2,824 | 7% |
| 23 Ware Rural | 1 | 2,277 | 2,277 | 0% | 2,375 | 2,375 | -10% |
| 24 Ware St Mary's | 2 | 5,027 | 2,514 | 11% | 5,330 | 2,665 | 1% |
| 25 Ware Trinity | 2 | 4,659 | 2,330 | 3% | 5,770 | 2,885 | 9% |
| 26 Watton-at-Stone | 1 | 2,716 | 2,716 | 20% | 2,888 | 2,888 | 9% |
| Totals | 50 | 113,627 | - | - | 132,002 | - | - |
| Averages | - | - | 2,273 | - | - | 2,640 | - |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by East Hertfordshire 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 an average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



| Number | Ward name |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Bishop's Stortford All Saints |
| 2 | Bishop's Stortford Central |
| 3 | Bishop's Stortford North |
| 4 | Bishop's Stortford Parsonage |
| 5 | Bishop's Stortford South |
| 6 | Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor |

| | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 7 | Braughing & Standon |
| 8 | Buntingford |
| 9 | Datchworth & Walkern |
| 10 | Great Amwell & Stansteads |
| 11 | Hertford Bengoe |
| 12 | Hertford Castle |
| 13 | Hertford Heath & Brickendon |
| 14 | Hertford Kingsmead |
| 15 | Hertford Rural |
| 16 | Hertford Sele |
| 17 | Hunsdon |
| 18 | Little Hadham & The Pelhams |
| 19 | Much Hadham |
| 20 | Sawbridgeworth |
| 21 | The Mundens |
| 22 | Ware Priory |
| 23 | Ware Rural |
| 24 | Ware St Mary's |
| 25 | Ware Trinity |
| 26 | Watton-at-Stone |

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/hertfordshire/east-hertfordshire

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/hertfordshire/east-hertfordshire

Political Groups

- Bishop's Stortford Conservatives
- East Hertfordshire & Broxbourne Liberal Democrats
- East Hertfordshire Conservative Group
- East Hertfordshire Green Party
- Hertford & Stortford Labour Party

Councillors

- Councillor M. Butcher (Ware Town Council)
- Councillor B. Crystall (East Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire County Council)
- Councillor A. Curtis (East Hertfordshire District Council and Ware Town Council)
- Councillor D. Snowdon (East Hertfordshire District Council and Bishop's Stortford Town Council)
- Councillor J. Wyllie (East Hertfordshire District Council and Bishop's Stortford Town Council)

Local Organisations

- The Amwell Society

Parish and Town Councils

- Brickendon Liberty Parish Council
- Hertford Town Council
- Little Munden Parish Council
- Tewin Parish Council

Local Residents

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

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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.

Local Government Boundary Commission for
England
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street, London
SW1H 0TL

Telephone: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Online: www.lgbce.org.uk

www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Twitter: @LGBCE