

New electoral arrangements for Bracknell Forest Council Final Recommendations

December 2020

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament¹. 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, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Bracknell Forest?

7 We are conducting a review of Bracknell Forest Council ('the Council') as the value of each vote in borough elections varies depending on where you live in Bracknell. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

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

- The wards in Bracknell Forest are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

Our proposals for Bracknell Forest

9 Bracknell Forest should be represented by 41 councillors, one fewer than there are now.

10 Bracknell Forest should have 15 wards, three fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of all wards should change; none will stay the same.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Bracknell Forest.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account 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 Bracknell Forest. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
17 December 2019	Number of councillors decided
7 January 2020	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
16 March 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
30 June 2020	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
7 September 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
8 December 2020	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ 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.

	2019	2025
Electorate of Bracknell Forest	89,891	102,657
Number of councillors	42	41
Average number of electors per councillor	2,140	2,504

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Bracknell Forest will have good electoral equality by 2025.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 14% by 2025.

23 However, at the end of our warding consultation, when the Council submitted its proposed warding arrangements, we noted that the forecast figures used by the Council did not reflect the previously agreed forecast number for the overall electorate. Consequentially, this significantly altered some of its projected electoral

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

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

variances in certain parts of the borough.

24 Following discussions with the authority, we noted that this difference had emerged from incorrect forecasting for a single polling district (WM) in the north of the borough. The Council informed us that it had included the early stages of a development in this polling district in the forecasts originally sent to us; however, it failed to consider the later stages already under construction. This led to an error and miscalculation in its figures for this polling district and the overall electorate, excluding an additional 1,173 electors based on a further 558 planned properties by 2025.

25 The Commission is content that the new figures received more accurately reflect the forecast growth in the borough. We have therefore used these figures as the basis of our final recommendations.

Number of councillors

26 Bracknell Forest Council currently has 42 councillors. At a previous stage of the review, we looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that decreasing this number by two would ensure the Council could carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

27 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 40 councillors – for example, 40 one-councillor wards, 20 two-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

28 We received one submission about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our draft recommendations. This submission argued for a further reduction in the number of councillors to 30 councillors. However, this alternative proposal did not outline how the reduction would be achieved in terms of the decision-making responsibilities of the Council or make reference to our key criteria. We have therefore not adopted this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

29 The Commission, when proposing a council size, reserves the right to alter this number if it discovers that an alternative council size would provide a pattern of wards that better reflects its statutory criteria. When drawing up our draft recommendations, we concluded that a council size of 41 members would allow us to provide a warding pattern that better reflected local communities and ensured good electoral equality.

30 We have therefore based our final recommendations on a 41-member council.

Ward boundaries consultation

31 We received 38 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two borough-wide proposals from the Council and a local resident, and two partial schemes from a local resident and Winkfield Parish Council. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

32 The submissions received from the Council and local residents proposed mixed warding patterns of two- and three-councillor wards for Bracknell Forest. The response from Winkfield Parish Council proposed a mixed warding pattern of two-, three- and four-councillor wards. It is our view that four-councillor wards do not aid effective and convenient local government, potentially diluting the accountability of councillors to the electorate. We therefore did not include any four-councillor wards as part of our draft recommendations, although we took careful account of the community evidence provided by the parish council and the boundaries proposed.

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

34 Given the travel restrictions, and the social distancing, arising from the Covid-19 outbreak, there was a detailed virtual tour of Bracknell Forest. This helped to clarify issues raised in submissions and assisted in the construction of the proposed draft boundary recommendations.

35 Our draft recommendations were for 12 three-councillor wards, two two-councillor wards and one one-councillor ward. 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

36 We received 130 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included two borough-wide proposals from the Council and a local resident.

37 The majority of the other submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals for Quelm Park to be included in Priestwood & Garth ward, as well as our proposals for a single-councillor Central Bracknell ward. The remainder of the

submissions provided localised comments on our draft recommendations in particular areas of the borough.

38 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with modifications to our proposed Bracknell Central, Priestwood & Garth, Bullbrook, and Warfield East wards, based on the submissions received. We also made a minor modification to our proposed boundary between Hanworth and Easthampstead & Wildridings. This does not affect any electors.

Final recommendations

39 Our final recommendations are for 11 three-councillor wards and four two-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.

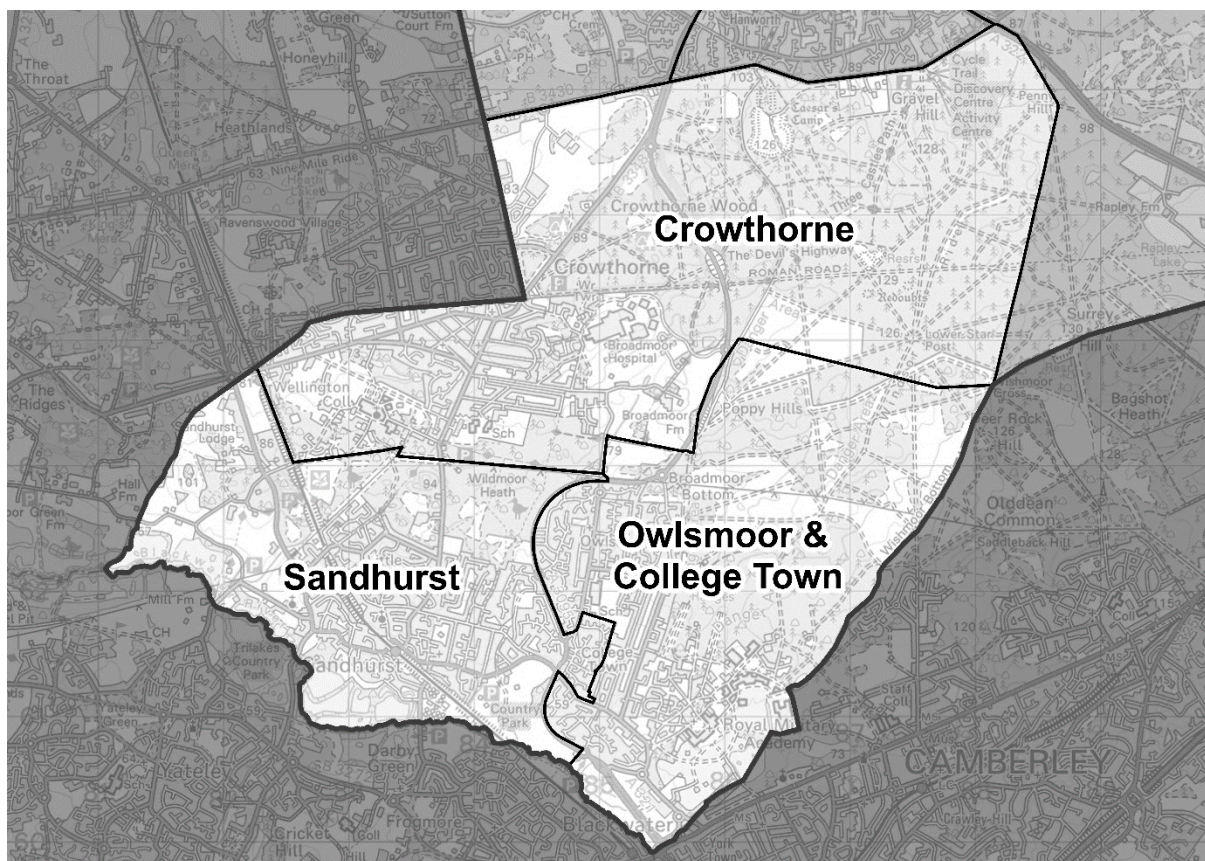
40 The tables and maps on pages 9–24 detail our final recommendations for each area of Bracknell Forest. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

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

41 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.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Crowthorne and Sandhurst



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Crowthorne	3	-10%
Owlsmoor & College Town	3	9%
Sandhurst	3	9%

Crowthorne

42 Our draft recommendations for the Crowthorne area proposed including all of the electors in Crowthorne parish within one three-councillor ward. In response to our draft recommendations, we received six responses to our proposals from the Council, Crowthorne Parish Council and local residents.

43 All representations supported our draft recommendations; however, some argued that other surrounding areas, such as Edgbarrow Cottage and Derby Field, be included in our proposed Crowthorne ward. While we accept that these areas have greater community ties to Crowthorne than Sandhurst, we are unable to adopt

this proposal without creating unviable parish wards of fewer than 100 electors⁵ in Sandhurst parish. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Crowthorne as final.

44 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Crowthorne ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 10% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

Owlsmoor & College Town and Sandhurst

45 Our draft recommendations proposed a small amendment to the existing boundary between Owlsmoor & College Town and Sandhurst wards, to improve electoral equality across both wards and reflect access routes. We proposed extending the current boundary around Avocet Crescent and down to Yorktown Road, including Moray Avenue and Inverness Way in Sandhurst ward. Under this proposal, electors from Wargrove Drive will move to Owlsmoor & College Town ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received two responses to our proposals, from the Council and Sandhurst Town Parish Council.

46 The submissions both objected to our draft recommendations and requested that the Commission revisit the area around Avocet Crescent, Moray Avenue and Inverness Way. While we note these objections, neither provided an alternative proposal which reflected communities in the area whilst also providing for good electoral equality. We are of the view that our proposal provides for the best balance between our statutory criteria and therefore confirm our draft recommendations as final.

47 Our final recommendations for Owlsmoor & College Town and Sandhurst will provide for reasonable electoral equality, with each three-councillor ward having 9% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

⁵ We will not normally recommend the creation of parish wards that contain no or very few electors (fewer than a hundred) unless it can be demonstrated to us that, within a short period of time, there will be sufficient electors as to warrant the election of at least one parish councillor. This is because each parish ward must by statute return at least one parish councillor. To do so, there must be a reasonable number of local government electors in the parish ward to make the election of a councillor viable.

Central Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Easthampstead & Wildridings	3	-6%
Hanworth	3	-5%
Town Centre & The Parks	2	6%

Easthampstead & Wildridings

48 In our draft recommendations for this area, we proposed to combine the majority of the current Old Bracknell and Wildridings & Central wards into a new three-councillor Easthampstead & Wildridings ward, using Downshire Way as its northern boundary. We also proposed that electors in Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood instead be included in Hanworth ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received 13 responses, from the Council, the Council's Labour Group, Bracknell Town Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

49 Three submissions from local residents objected to our proposal for electors in Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood to be included in Hanworth ward. However, in our view we did not receive sufficient evidence for retaining the existing

boundary of Ringmead. Furthermore, doing so would worsen electoral equality to 11% fewer electors than the borough average for Hanworth ward. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

50 Ten submissions also referred to the South Hill Park area, discussed further below in paragraph 55.

51 We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Easthampstead & Wildridings as final, with the exception of a small amendment to the southern boundary of the ward discussed in paragraphs 55–56. This amendment does not affect any electors.

52 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Easthampstead & Wildridings ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

Hanworth

53 Our draft recommendations in this area were based on the Council's proposal, including electors from Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood in the ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received 13 responses to our proposals, from the Council, the Council's Labour Group, Bracknell Town Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

54 Of the submissions received, three were supportive of our proposal to include the electors from Finmere, Gainsborough, and Greenham Wood in Hanworth ward. Residents and councillors agreed that electors in this area look towards the south, citing the access routes and closest local amenities as strong examples of the area's links to Hanworth.

55 Ten submissions also referred to the South Hill Park area, which we included as part of our proposed Easthampstead & Wildridings ward in our draft recommendations. The Council and Hanworth ward councillors submitted compelling evidence that this area be included in Hanworth ward in order to facilitate effective and convenient local government. They argued that placing the entirety of this area within a Hanworth ward would be more efficient due to the volume of casework that is generated by the park, and that residents see this area as a single combined entity. Local residents, Bracknell Town Council, and the Council's Labour Group objected to this proposal on the basis that this would lead to an imbalance in the amount of green space in the concerned wards. While we note these objections, we are persuaded by the Council's argument that effective and convenient local government would be better facilitated by including the entirety of the park within a single ward. The change also affects no electors.

56 We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Hanworth as final, with the exception of a small amendment to the northern boundary of the ward to include South Hill Park.

57 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Hanworth ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

Town Centre & The Parks

58 Our draft recommendations for this area proposed a single-councillor Central Bracknell ward, based on evidence received from residents. We also proposed that The Parks area be paired with Bullbrook in a three-councillor Bullbrook & The Parks ward. We received 10 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Bracknell Town Council, local organisations, and local residents.

59 We received a submission from a local resident which was supportive of our draft proposals for a single-councillor Central Bracknell ward. However, we received several other representations from the Council, Bracknell Town Council, and residents which disagreed with our proposal. These submissions highlighted the concern of a single-councillor ward not being conducive to effective and convenient local government, arguing that this could potentially cause ineffective electoral representation.

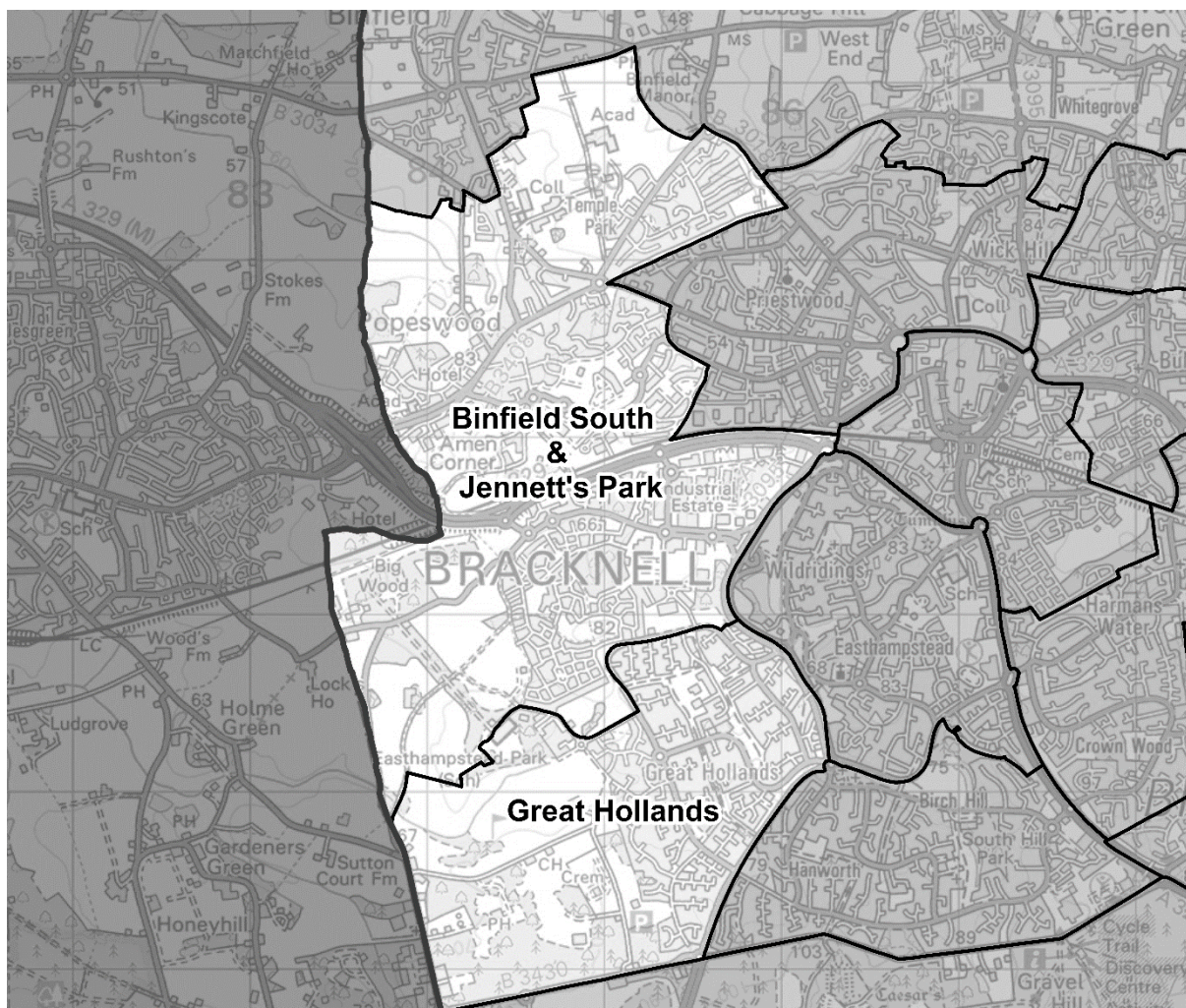
60 All representations were opposed to our draft recommendations for The Parks. Residents argued that the area should be included in a ward with Harmans Water as the areas share amenities and have a closer local identity. However, this proposed warding arrangement would result in poor electoral equality of 24% more electors than the borough average by 2025, which in our view would be unacceptably high. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

61 The Council and Bracknell Town Council both proposed that The Parks be paired with the town centre in a two-councillor ward. They argued that this would better retain distinct communities across the east of the borough whilst reflecting their use of the town centre and its amenities. It would also address concerns around effective and convenient local government for electors in the town centre.

62 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we agree that the Council's proposal for a two-councillor Town Centre & The Parks ward better reflects communities whilst also providing for effective and convenient local government. We are therefore adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

63 Our final recommendations for a two-councillor Town Centre & The Parks ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 6% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

West Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Binfield South & Jennett's Park	3	1%
Great Hollands	3	0%

Great Hollands

64 Our draft recommendations adopted a resident's proposal in this area, proposing that the entirety of the Great Hollands estate should be united in one three-councillor ward. We proposed Ringmead as the boundary between Great Hollands and Binfield South & Jennett's Park. In response to our draft recommendations we received 11 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Binfield Parish Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

65 Of these submissions, 10 were supportive of our proposal regarding Great Hollands. Respondents provided strong evidence for the area to be represented in one ward, citing community identity and the lack of access to the Jennett's Park

area. This was also supported by the Council.

66 We received one submission objecting to our proposals for Great Hollands, which argued that the consequential changes to the Binfield parish area were detrimental to community identity and crossed a strong and identifiable boundary. However, this representation did not provide any alternative proposals for the Great Hollands area which facilitated a better balance of our statutory criteria. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Great Hollands as final.

67 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Great Hollands ward will provide for good electoral equality, with an electoral variance of 0% by 2025.

Binfield South & Jennett's Park

68 Our draft Binfield South With Jennett's Hill ward was based on a resident's submission, proposing an arrangement which included the Amen Corner, Farley Wood, Park Farm, Popeswood, and Temple Park areas of Binfield parish with Jennett's Park, using Ringmead as the southern boundary between this area and Great Hollands estate. In response to our draft recommendations we received 14 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Binfield Parish Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

69 Of these submissions, four were supportive of our proposals. Residents agreed that the Jennett's Park area has little affinity with Great Hollands. Furthermore, as the parish boundary extends into Jennett's Park, residents of the area argued that they are more closely aligned with Binfield despite the barrier of the A329.

70 We received five submissions which objected to our proposal to pair parts of Binfield parish with Jennett's Park. Respondents argued that Binfield parish is a distinct area which should be retained in a single ward, and that the A329 acts as an effective boundary between the areas.

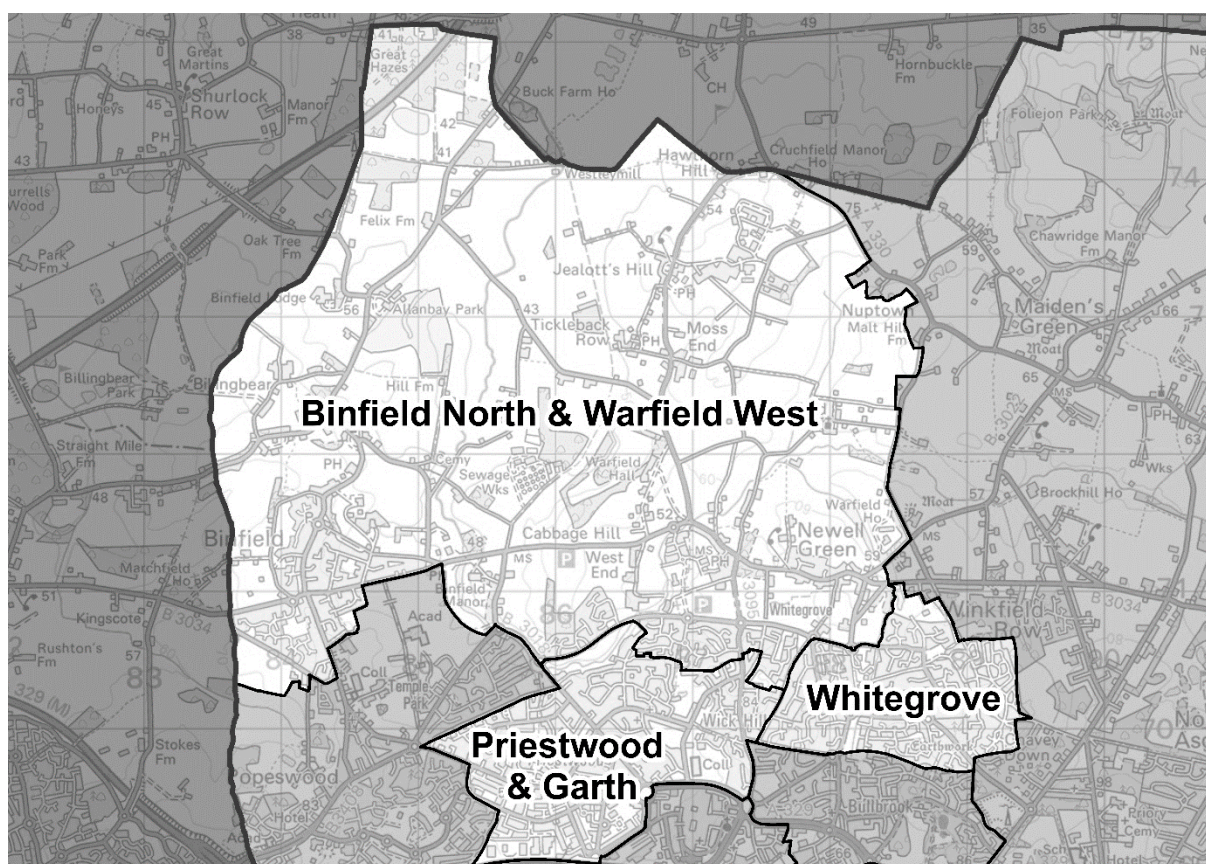
71 Five submissions also noted that the area referred to as 'Jennett's Hill' in our draft recommendations is locally known as Jennett's Park. The Council agreed that our recommendation be amended to 'Binfield South & Jennett's Park' to better reflect the existing communities in the area.

72 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we confirm our draft recommendations as final (with the exception of the suggestion to name the ward Binfield South & Jennett's Park, as discussed above). While we are conscious that the two areas either side of Berkshire Way do not share many access routes, we are of the view that this arrangement ensures no communities are split across the west of the borough and provides for good levels of electoral equality in 2025. This was also supported by the Council, which agreed that there is no easily identifiable way

to use Berkshire Way as a boundary, meet electoral equality, and avoid splitting communities in the Great Hollands area.

73 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Binfield South & Jennett's Park ward will provide for good electoral equality, with an electoral variance of 1% by 2025.

North Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Binfield North & Warfield West	3	-1%
Priestwood & Garth	3	-8%
Whitegrove	2	10%

Binfield North & Warfield West and Whitegrove

74 Our draft recommendations for a two-councillor Binfield North & Warfield West ward and a three-councillor Warfield East ward were based on a combination of the submissions we received, as well as our own proposals for the area. This included splitting Binfield parish across two wards and our proposal for a new Warfield East ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received 45 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Binfield Parish Council, Warfield Parish Council, a borough councillor, and local residents.

75 Of the submissions received, 27 opposed our proposal to include the Quelm Park area in Priestwood & Garth ward. All argued for the area to be included in a Warfield ward, on the basis of community identity and effective and convenient local government. We received several well-evidenced representations which provided a strong argument for retaining this area as part of Warfield. Respondents highlighted the community ties they have to the area, as well as the lack of road access to

Priestwood & Garth.

76 The Council proposed dividing Quelm Park between two wards, including a part of the area in both our proposed Binfield North & Warfield West and Warfield East wards. They also recommended that the Roebuck Estate be included in Binfield North & Warfield West ward, which they argued better reflects community identity and the local amenities used by residents in the area.

77 A local parish councillor proposed a rural–urban split to the Warfield parish area. They suggested that we divide Quelm Park between a rural three-councillor Binfield North & Warfield ward and an urban two-councillor Warfield Whitegrove ward.

78 Five representations objected to our proposal to split Binfield parish. This is discussed further in paragraph 70.

79 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we agree that a warding arrangement in this area, which includes Quelm Park in a Warfield ward, will provide for a better reflection of communities. We therefore propose to include the entirety of Quelm Park within a Binfield North & Warfield West ward. Subsequently, we also recommend that the adjacent properties from Goddard Way, Greystock Road, and Flemish Place are also included in the ward. This will strengthen electoral equality across the wards to the north of the borough, as well as provide for an accurate reflection of communities and access routes on the ground.

80 As a consequence of our proposed changes in Winkfield & Warfield East, described in paragraph 93, we also recommend using the existing ward boundary to the east, as proposed by a parish councillor.

81 As proposed by the Council, the south-western boundary of the Binfield North & Warfield West will include the properties from the Roebuck Estate and Murrell Hill Lane.

82 As a result of our changes to Binfield North & Warfield West, we are also recommending a two-councillor Whitegrove ward. This will comprise most of the existing Warfield Harvest Ride ward, with the exception of electors in Quelm Park, Goddard Way, Priory Lane, Lynwood Chase, and Goughs Lane (discussed below). The ward will also extend east in order to include the Warfield Park area. We believe that this provides for the best balance between our statutory criteria, through maintaining electoral equality in the area and reflecting existing communities.

83 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Binfield North & Warfield West ward and a two-councillor Whitegrove ward will provide for good electoral equality, with -1% and 10% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

Priestwood & Garth

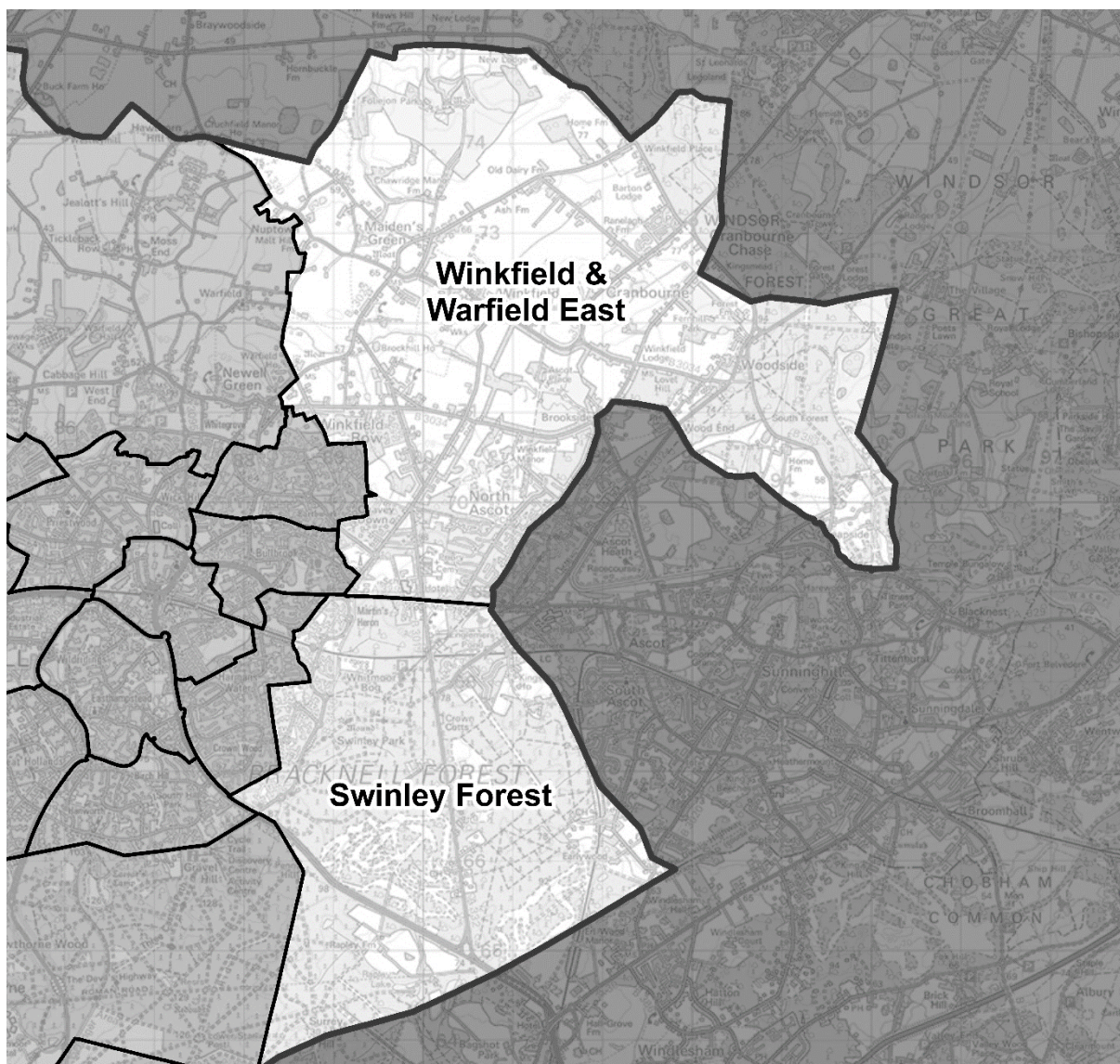
84 Our draft recommendations for a three-councillor Priestwood & Garth ward were based on our own proposals to include Quelm Park in the ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received 27 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Bracknell Town Council, and local residents.

85 All representations objected to our proposal to include Quelm Park in the ward. This is discussed further in paragraph 75.

86 The Council proposed that, in order to improve levels of electoral equality in the ward, electors from Priory Lane, Lynwood Chase, and Goughs Lane should be included in the ward. This would utilise the boundary between Bracknell Town and Warfield parishes, with the exception of the area to the west of Quelm Park where electors from Elen Place and Kennel Lane were included in Priestwood & Garth ward to reflect access routes. We agree that this provides for the best balance of our statutory criteria, and accept that crossing Warfield Road is necessary in order to secure good electoral equality in the area. We therefore propose to base our final recommendations on Bracknell Forest Council's proposals.

87 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Priestwood & Garth ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 8% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

Rural East Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Swinley Forest	2	3%
Winkfield & Warfield East	3	4%

Winkfield & Warfield East

88 Our draft recommendations for this area were based on Winkfield Parish Council's proposal to include the entirety of Winkfield parish within two Winkfield wards. In the north of the parish, electors in the existing Winkfield & Cranbourne ward were paired with those in Chavey Down, with London Road and Winkfield parish acting as a boundary. We named this ward Winkfield North. In response to our draft recommendations we received eight responses to our proposals, from the Council, Warfield Parish Council, and local residents.

89 We received a submission from a local resident which proposed a warding arrangement that split Winkfield parish into 'east' and 'west' wards, joining the areas of Ascot and Winkfield & Cranbourne in a three-member Winkfield East ward. Whilst the proposed ward would have reasonable levels of electoral equality at -5% by 2025, this would result in a two-member Winkfield West ward having 19% more electors than the borough average by 2025. In our view this level of electoral inequality is unacceptably high. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

90 We also received a submission which objected to the use of London Road as a boundary, and instead suggested that our proposed Winkfield North and Winkfield South wards be merged into one three-member ward. This proposed warding pattern would produce very poor electoral equality, with the ward having 74% more electors than the borough average by 2025. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

91 Three well-evidenced representations proposed an amendment to our draft recommendations to include the area of Hayley Green in a Winkfield ward, citing community identity and access to amenities as key examples of their connections to Winkfield. They also highlighted the geographical separation between Hayley Green and other villages in Warfield, suggesting that the existing arrangement provides a clearer, more identifiable boundary.

92 The Council suggested to amend the name of our proposed ward to 'Winkfield'. They argued that this has greater local meaning to the communities in the area.

93 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we agree that the boundary proposed by residents in Hayley Green provides for a better reflection of communities. We therefore propose to incorporate the existing western ward boundary into our final recommendations, utilising London Road to the south. We also propose to name the ward Winkfield & Warfield East, which we believe better reflects the make up of the ward.

94 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Winkfield & Warfield East ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 4% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

Swinley Forest

95 As part of our draft recommendations, we adopted Winkfield Parish Council's proposal to include the entirety of Winkfield parish within two Winkfield wards. In the south of the parish, electors in Forest Park, The Warren, and Martins Heron were paired with the rural south-east of the borough, with the parish boundary utilised as the ward's western boundary and London Road acting as a northern boundary. We named this ward Winkfield South. In response to our draft recommendations we

received 12 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Warfield Parish Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

96 Of these submissions, six objected to our proposal to include Forest Park in a Winkfield ward. They argued that the area shares an identity and amenities with Crown Wood, which is better reflected by the current warding arrangement. While we note these objections, retaining the current boundaries of Crown Wood would lead to poor electoral equality of 13% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025. We were not persuaded that the evidence provided in the submissions justified this level of electoral inequality. Furthermore, including Forest Park in our proposed Harmans Water & Crown Wood ward would lead to an even higher level of electoral inequality at 36%. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

97 We also received a submission from borough councillors in the existing Crown Wood ward, which reiterated the views of residents. They proposed that Crown Wood, Forest Park, Martins Heron, and The Warren be grouped in a three-councillor ward called Swinley Park. Whilst the proposed ward would have reasonable levels of electoral equality at 6% by 2025, this would result in a two-member Harmans Water ward having 24% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025. It would also have a significant impact on our proposals for the remainder of the east of the borough. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

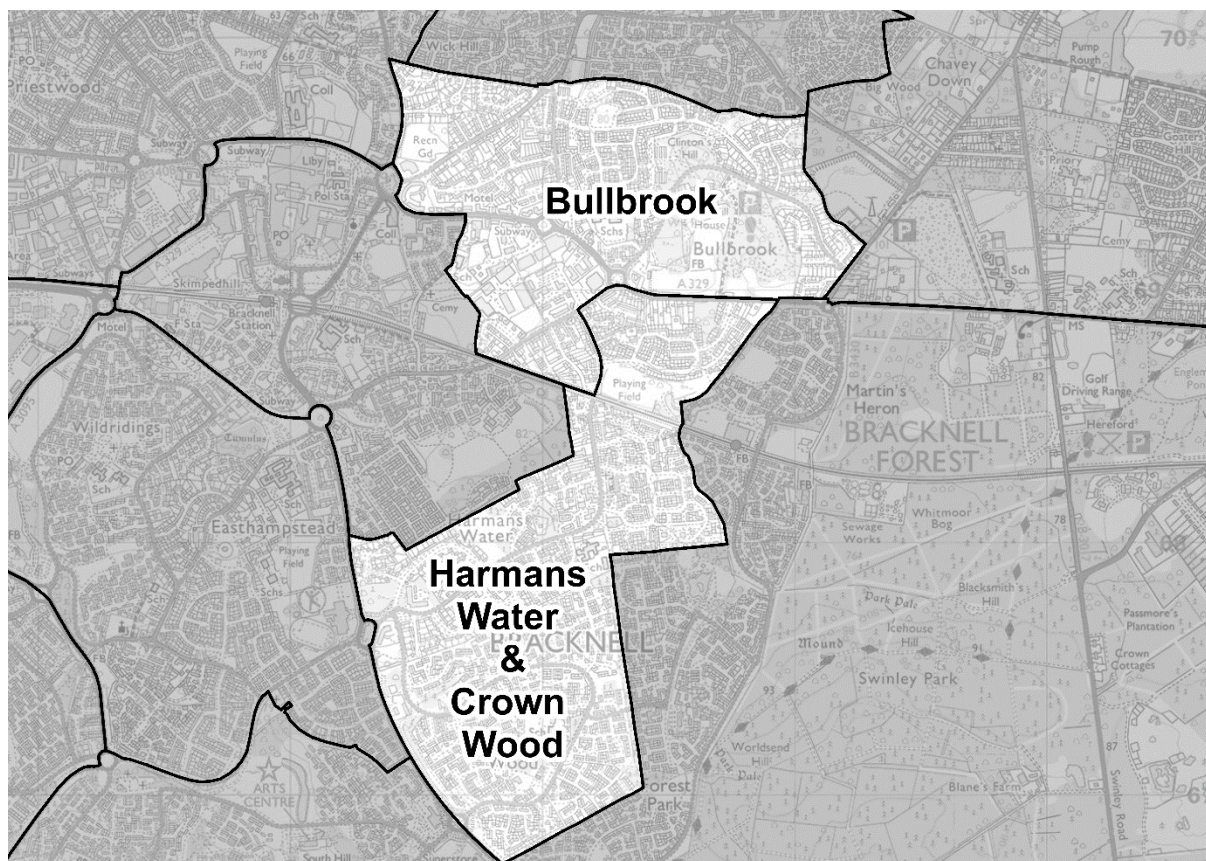
98 Seven submissions supported our draft recommendation proposals. They emphasised the community's use of Winkfield parish facilities, as well as the strong links between Forest Park, Martins Heron, and The Warren, which share local amenities. They also highlighted that using the Winkfield parish boundary in this area provided for effective and convenient local government.

99 The Council suggested amending the name of our proposed ward to 'Swinley Forest'. The Council argued that this name has greater local meaning to the communities in the area, and we agree that it better reflects the make up of the ward.

100 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we confirm our draft recommendations for the area as final, with the exception of a change to the ward name to Swinley Forest, as discussed above. We consider that this arrangement provides for the best balance of our statutory criteria.

101 Our final recommendations for a two-councillor Swinley Forest ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 3% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

East Bracknell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Bullbrook	2	1%
Harmans Water & Crown Wood	3	-7%

Harmans Water & Crown Wood

102 Our draft recommendations for this area were based on our own proposals to join Harmans Water & Crown Wood in a two-member ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received 12 responses to our proposals, from the Council, Bracknell Town Council, borough councillors, and local residents.

103 Three submissions noted that the area of Scott's Hill should be included in a ward with Harmans Water, on the basis of community identity and effective and convenient local government. Representations emphasised that the parish warding arrangement included in the draft recommendations would lead to an anomalous single-councillor parish ward, and that the area has few links to Bullbrook. We agree that this area is more closely aligned to Harmans Water, and that this amendment will provide for more effective and convenient local government.

104 Of the submissions received, nine objected to our proposal to split the existing Crown Wood ward. This is discussed further in paragraphs 96 and 97.

105 We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final, with the exception of the proposed amendment to include the Scott's Hill area as mentioned above.

106 Our final recommendations for a three-councillor Harmans Water & Crown Wood ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 7% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

Bullbrook

107 In our draft recommendations for Bullbrook, we adopted a combination of the submissions we received and our own proposals to pair the area with The Parks in a three-member ward. In response to our draft recommendations we received seven responses to our proposals, from the Council, Bracknell Town Council, Bullbrook Conservative Association, and local residents.

108 The Council and Bracknell Town Council objected to our proposal to utilise Park Road as the western boundary of Bullbrook ward. This proposal removed electors in Holly Spring Lane, Park Road, and Deepfield Road from the ward, placing them instead in a Winkfield ward. They argued that this area should be kept in a Bullbrook ward, as it looks towards Bullbrook and the town centre rather than north towards Warfield, and that their proposed amendment would ensure effective and convenient local government by keeping electors within the Bracknell Town parish in a recognised Bracknell Town ward. Two submissions supported our recommendations; however, these representations did not provide any examples of the area's links to Warfield.

109 Five representations objected to our proposal to pair Bullbrook and The Parks. This is discussed further in paragraph 60.

110 Having carefully considered the evidence provided, we agree that the warding arrangement suggested by the Council provides for the best balance of our statutory criteria. We therefore propose to base our final recommendations on the current ward boundary, with the exception of removing properties on Larges Lane from the ward. This provides for good electoral equality whilst also retaining communities.

111 Our final recommendations for a two-councillor Bullbrook ward will provide for good electoral equality, with 1% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

Conclusions

112 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Bracknell Forest, referencing the 2019 and 2025 electorate figures. 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	
	2019	2025
Number of councillors	41	41
Number of electoral wards	18	15
Average number of electors per councillor	2,192	2,504
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Final recommendations

Bracknell Forest Council should be made up of 41 councillors serving 15 wards representing four two-councillor wards and 11 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 Bracknell Forest Council. You can also view our final recommendations for Bracknell Forest on our interactive maps at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/berkshire/bracknell-forest>

Parish electoral arrangements

113 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.

114 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, Bracknell Forest 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.

115 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 Binfield, Bracknell Town, Sandhurst Town, Warfield, and Winkfield.

116 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Binfield North parish.

Final recommendations

Binfield Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Binfield North	4
Binfield South	7

117 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bracknell Town Council.

Final recommendations

Bracknell Town Council should comprise 27 councillors, as at present, representing 13 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Birch Hill	2
Bullbrook	3
Crown Wood	2
Garth	2
Great Hollands North	2
Great Hollands South	2
Hanworth	2
Harmans Water	2
Jennett's Park	2
Old Bracknell	2
Priestwood	2
Town Centre	2

118 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Sandhurst Town Council.

Final recommendations

Sandhurst Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Central Sandhurst	6
College Town	6
Little Sandhurst	5
Owlsmoor	7

119 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Warfield Parish Council.

Final recommendations

Warfield Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Garth North	1
Warfield East	1
St Michaels	2
Warfield Park	1
Whitegrove	6
Quelm	2

120 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Winkfield Parish Council.

Final recommendations

Winkfield Parish Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Ascot Priory	1
Forest Park	5
Martins Heron & Warren	2
North Ascot	5
Winkfield & Cranbourne	5

What happens next?

44 We have now completed our review of Bracknell Forest. 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 2023.

Equalities

45 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 Bracknell Forest Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Binfield North & Warfield West	3	5,439	1,813	-15%	7,548	2,483	-1%
2	Binfield South & Jennett's Park	3	6,493	2,164	1%	7,594	2,531	1%
3	Bullbrook	2	4,083	2,042	-5%	5,054	2,527	1%
4	Crowthorne	3	5,137	1,712	-20%	6,787	2,262	-10%
5	Easthampstead & Wildridings	3	6,661	2,220	4%	7,082	2,361	-6%
6	Great Hollands	3	6,954	2,318	8%	7,483	2,494	0%
7	Hanworth	3	6,604	2,201	3%	7,104	2,368	-5%
8	Harmans Water & Crown Wood	3	6,502	2,167	1%	7,009	2,336	-7%
9	Owlsmoor & College Town	3	7,678	2,559	20%	8,222	2,741	9%
10	Priestwood & Garth	3	6,238	2,079	-3%	6,883	2,294	-8%

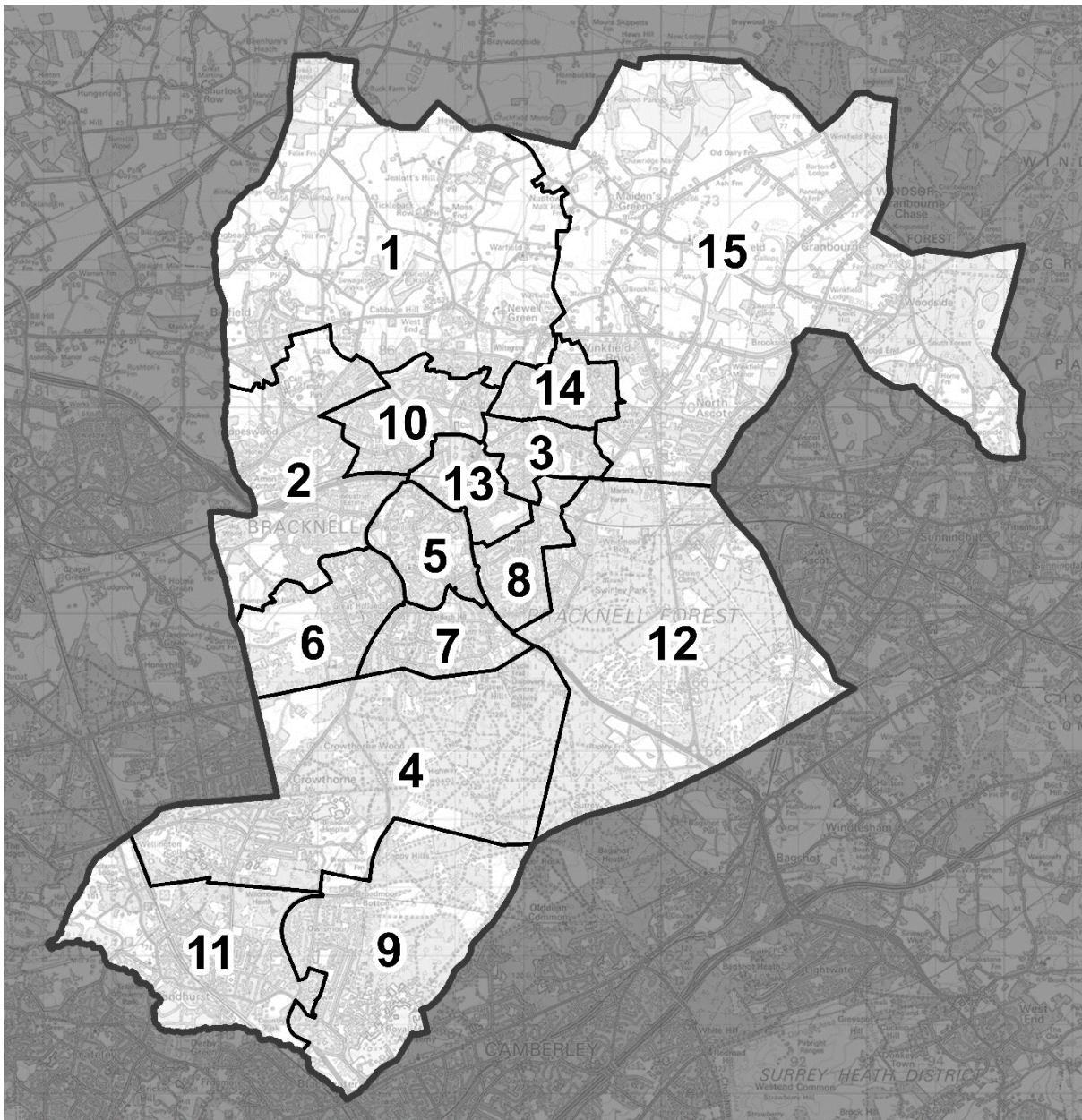
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11 Sandhurst	3	7,405	2,468	15%	8,161	2,720	9%
12 Swinley Forest	2	4,769	2,385	11%	5,178	2,589	4%
13 Town Centre & The Parks	2	3,528	1,764	-18%	5,297	2,649	6%
14 Whitegrove	2	5,186	2,593	21%	5,506	2,753	10%
15 Winkfield & Warfield East	3	7,214	2,405	12%	7,849	2,616	4%
Totals	41	89,891	–	–	102,657	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,192	–	–	2,504	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Bracknell Forest Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Number	Ward name
1	Binfield North & Warfield West
2	Binfield South & Jennett's Park
3	Bullbrook
4	Crowthorne
5	Easthampstead & Wildridings
6	Great Hollands
7	Hanworth
8	Harmans Water & Crown Wood
9	Owlsmoor & College Town

10	Priestwood & Garth
11	Sandhurst
12	Swinley Forest
13	Town Centre & The Parks
14	Whitegrove
15	Winkfield & Warfield East

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/south-east/berkshire/bracknell-forest

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:
www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/berkshire/bracknell-forest

Local Authority

- Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Political Groups

- Bracknell Forest Council Labour Group
- Bracknell Conservative Association

Councillors

- Councillor T. Brown (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor M. Brunel-Walker (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor G. Birch (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor C. Dudley (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor L. Gibson (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor M. Gibson (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor S. Hayes (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor P. Heydon (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor A. Kempster (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor A. Merry (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor M. Skinner (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor G. Strudley (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor M. Temperton (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)
- Councillor M. Tullett (Bracknell Forest Borough Council)

Local Organisations

- Bullbrook Community Centre
- Crowthorne Village Action Group
- Easthampstead & Wildridings Community Association

Parish and Town Councils

- Binfield Parish Council
- Bracknell Town Parish Council
- Crowthorne Parish Council
- Sandhurst Town Council
- Warfield Parish Council
- Winkfield Parish Council

Local Residents

- 109 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 fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
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. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
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 vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

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

Local Government Boundary Commission for
England
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Blyth
NE24 9FE

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Online: www.lgbce.org.uk
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