

Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Hertsmere Borough Council

Electoral review

December 2017

Translations and other formats

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Table of Contents

Summary	1
Who we are and what we do	1
Electoral review	1
Why Hertsmere?	1
Our proposals for Hertsmere Borough Council	1
What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?	2
1 Introduction	3
What is an electoral review?	3
Consultation	3
How will the recommendations affect you?	4
2 Analysis and final recommendations	5
Submissions received	5
Electorate figures	5
Number of councillors	6
Ward boundaries consultation	6
Draft recommendations and further limited consultation	7
Final recommendations	8
Aldenham and Bushey	10
Elstree, Borehamwood and Shenley	12
Potters Bar	14
Conclusions	17
Summary of electoral arrangements	17
Parish electoral arrangements	17
3 What happens next?	19
Equalities	19
Appendix A	20
Final recommendations for Hertsmere Borough Council	20
Appendix B	22
Outline map	22
Appendix C	23
Submissions received	23
Appendix D	24
Glossary and abbreviations	24

Summary

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. 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.

2 Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

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

Why Hertsmere?

4 We are conducting a review of Hertsmere Borough Council as the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Hertsmere. 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.

Our proposals for Hertsmere Borough Council

- Hertsmere Borough Council should be represented by 39 councillors; the same number as there are now.
- Hertsmere Borough Council should have 16 wards; one more than there are now.
- The boundaries of 12 wards should change and three will stay the same.

5 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Hertsmere.

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

6 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹

7 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
 - Sir Tony Redmond (Deputy Chair)
 - Alison Lowton
 - Peter Maddison QPM
 - Steve Robinson
 - Andrew Scallan CBE
-
- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

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

1 Introduction

8 This electoral review was carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Hertsmere 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.

What is an electoral review?

9 Our three main considerations are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

10 Our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Consultation

11 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Hertsmere. We then held a period of consultation on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

12 This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
20 December 2016	Number of councillors decided
10 January 2017	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
20 March 2017	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
13 June 2017	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation
14 August 2017	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming recommendations
3 October 2017	Publication of further limited draft recommendations, start of limited consultation

31 October 2017	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
5 December 2017	Publication of final recommendations

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.

2 Analysis and final recommendations

14 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.

15 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.

16 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.

	2016	2022
Electorate of Hertsmere	75,577	83,529
Number of councillors	39	39
Average number of electors per councillor	1,938	2,142

17 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 Hertsmere will have electoral equality by 2022.

18 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.

Submissions received

19 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices by appointment, or on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

20 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2022, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2017. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 10% by 2022. Growth is occurring across most of the borough, but is particularly high in Borehamwood and Bushey.

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.

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

22 In response to our draft recommendations we received no comments on the electoral figures. We remain satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations

Number of councillors

23 Hertsmere Borough Council currently has 39 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

24 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 39 councillors – for example, nine one-councillor wards and 10 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

25 In response to our consultation on ward patterns a local resident put forward proposals for a 41-member council, arguing that this would provide a better allocation of councillors between the distinct areas of the borough. We have examined the proposal and note the argument that it provides a better allocation of councillors. We acknowledged that this allocation is somewhat better than 39 members, but noted that we had received two sets of proposals based on a 39-member council that manage to secure good levels of electoral equality. In light of the evidence provided by the Council and the fact that 39 members facilitates a scheme with good electoral equality, we were not persuaded to increase the number of councillors to 41. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a 39-member council.

26 In response to the draft recommendations, a local resident proposed increasing council size to 40 or 41 members, arguing this provides a better allocation of councillors. However, as outlined in the paragraph above, we rejected such an increase to council size during our consideration of warding patterns and do not consider that this proposal put forward any additional persuasive evidence. We are therefore basing the final recommendations on a council size of 39.

Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received 12 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included a borough-wide proposal from Hertsmere Borough Council and a partial scheme from Hertsmere Labour Party. Both proposals agreed on the allocation of councillors between the different areas of the borough, including the transfer of a councillor from the Potters Bar area to the Elstree and Borehamwood area.

28 The Labour Party put forward identical proposals to the Council for the Aldenham and Shenley areas and almost identical proposals for the Borehamwood

and & Elstree area. It did not put forward proposals for the Bushey area. In the Potters Bar area the Labour Group put forward significantly different proposals from the Council.

29 We have based our proposals for Bushey on the Council's proposals, but subject to a number of amendments, both to reflect the evidence received and to improve electoral equality. In Aldenham, Borehamwood, Elstree and Shenley we based the draft recommendations on the Council and Labour Party proposals, but subject to a number of amendments to reflect the evidence received and to improve electoral equality. Finally, in Potters Bar we based the draft recommendations on our own proposals, which drew on elements of both the Council and Labour Party schemes.

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

Draft recommendations and further limited consultation

31 We received 10 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included a borough-wide response from the Council. The other responses were based on specific areas of the borough or made general comments about the review process.

32 The Council proposed significant amendments to the draft recommendations for Potters Bar. The Council argued that a pattern of three two-councillor wards would better reflect communities than two three-councillor wards. The Council also proposed amendments to Borehamwood to better reflect communities.

33 Following consideration of the evidence received, we noted that the Council's proposals for Todd Close in Borehamwood would require the creation of two small parish wards. We do not consider that these provide effective and convenient local government and are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of the final recommendations. We are, however, adopting a minor amendment between Borehamwood Kenilworth and Borehamwood Hillside wards which will better reflect the communities in this area. In Aldenham, Bushey and Shenley, in light of the evidence received, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final, subject to name changes to two wards in Bushey.

34 In Potters Bar we were persuaded by the Council's alternative proposals. However, given the nature of the change, and the significant number of electors potentially affected, we decided to carry out further limited consultation in this area.

35 In response to the further limited consultation we received three submissions. As a result we are proposing a minor change to the Bentley Heath & The Royds and Potters Bar Oakmere ward boundary to reflect local access within the wards.

Final recommendations

36 Pages 10–16 detail our final recommendations for each area of Hertsmere. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

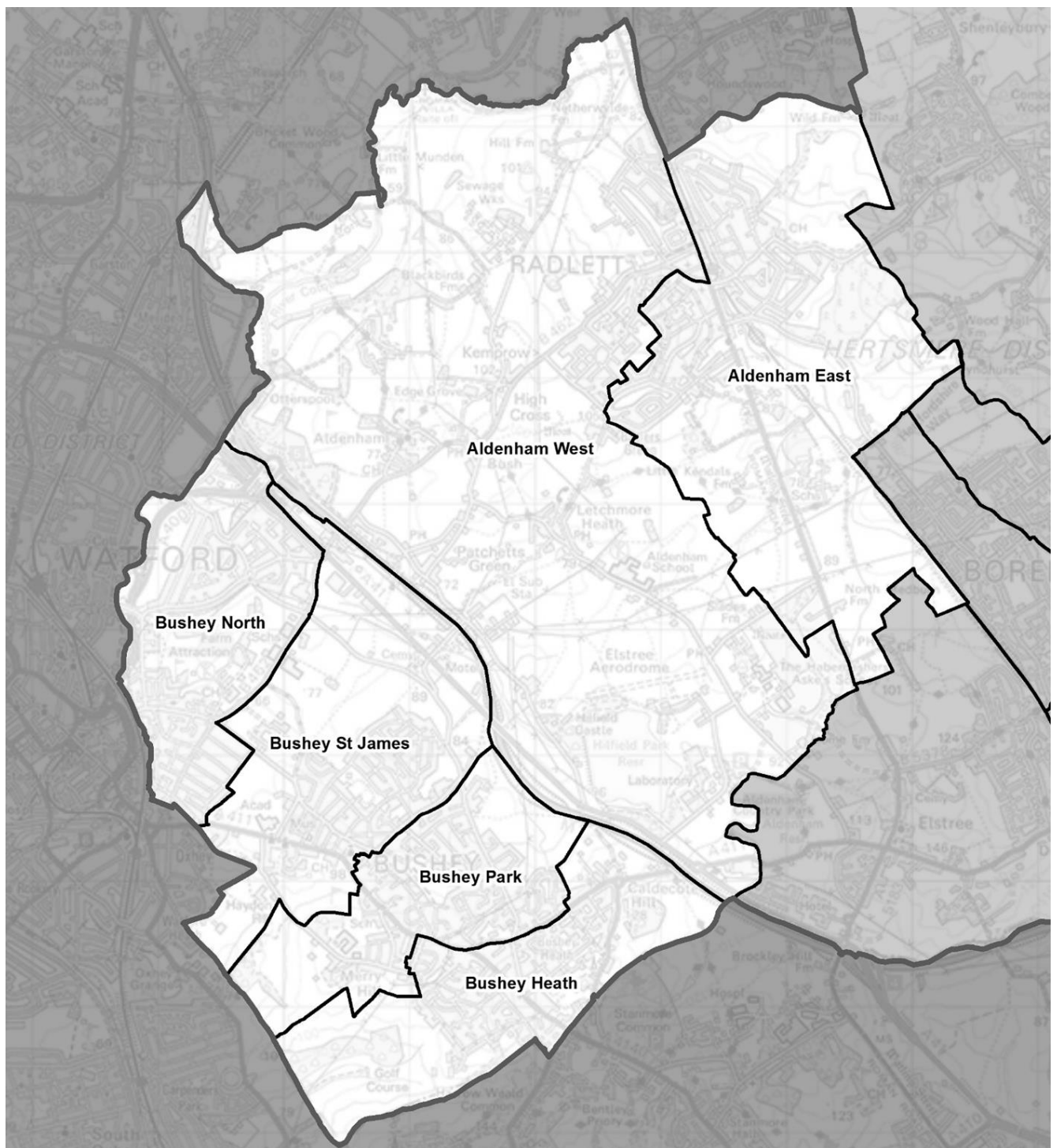
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

37 Our final recommendations are for nine two-councillor wards and seven three-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

38 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on page 17 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Aldenham and Bushey



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Aldenham East	2	-6%
Aldenham West	2	0%
Bushey Heath	2	-8%
Bushey North	3	3%
Bushey Park	3	-9%
Bushey St James	3	-7%

Aldenham East and Aldenham West

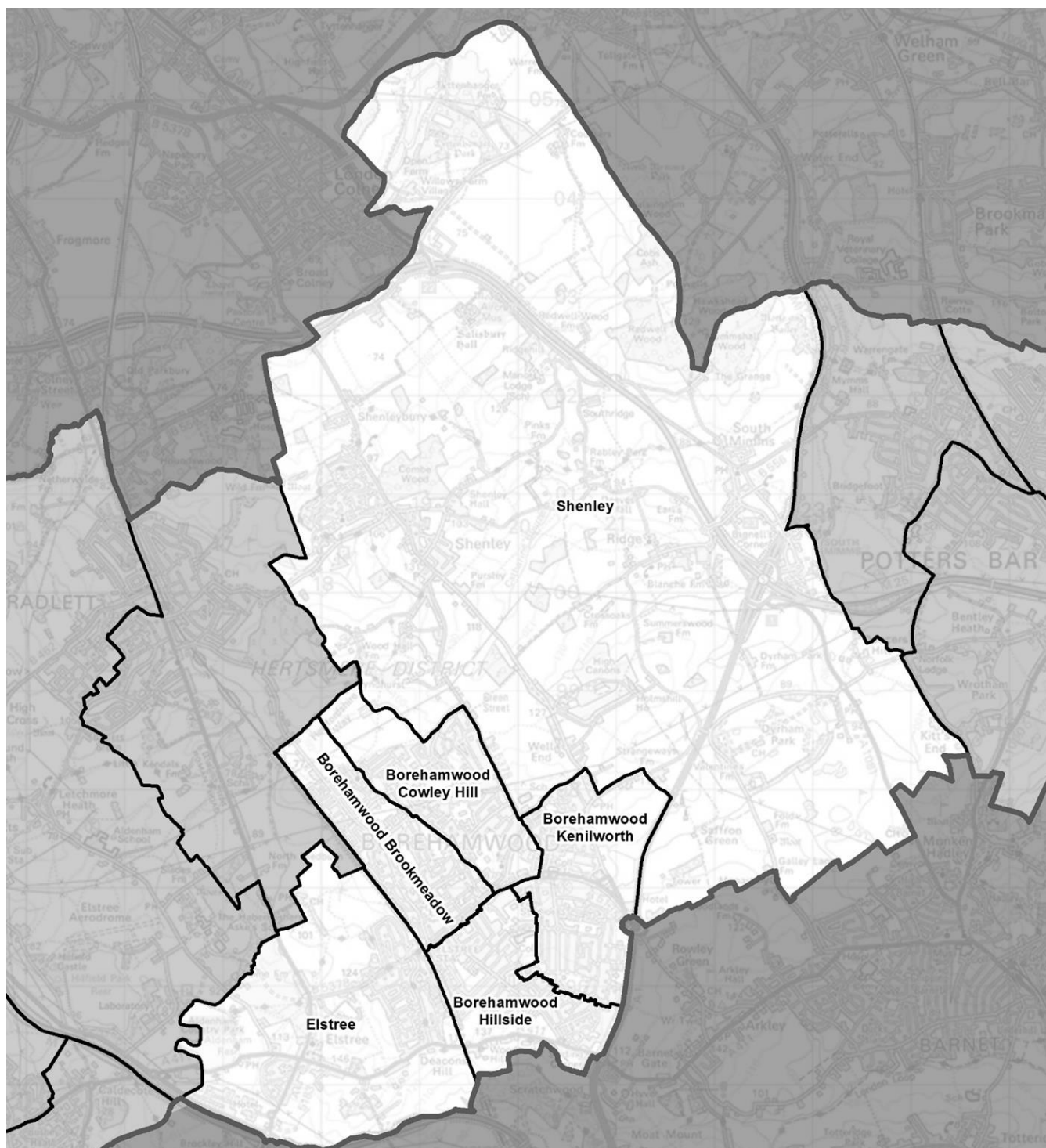
39 We received support for these wards from the Council and Aldenham Parish Council. A local resident expressed concern about the boundary between Aldenham East and Shenley wards. We note the comments about the boundary between Aldenham East and Shenley wards, but this is also a parish boundary, which we are unable to amend as part of the current review. In light of the support for the draft recommendations we are confirming them as final.

Bushey Park, Bushey North, Bushey Heath and Bushey St James

40 The Council expressed support for the draft recommendations for these wards, but requested that Bushey Central ward is renamed as Bushey Park and Bushey South is renamed as Bushey Heath. We did not receive any other comments in relation to these wards.

41 We acknowledge the Council's request for ward name changes, and note the argument that these names have local significance. Therefore we have made these amendments. Subject to these name changes, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

Elstree, Borehamwood and Shenley



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Borehamwood Brookmeadow	3	3%
Borehamwood Cowley Hill	3	6%
Borehamwood Hillside	3	6%
Borehamwood Kenilworth	3	6%
Elstree	2	-7%
Shenley	2	-5%

Borehamwood Brookmeadow, Borehamwood Cowley Hill, Borehamwood Hillside, Borehamwood Kenilworth and Elstree

42 The Council expressed support for the Elstree and Shenley wards, but raised concerns about the amendments we made to its original proposals for the Borehamwood wards. The Council argued that Todd Close should be placed in the Borehamwood Cowley Hill ward, as it originally proposed, arguing that it identifies with the Studio Way estate. It also argued that this area is separated from Borehamwood Brookmeadow, a sports centre, a large secondary school and the Council offices. They acknowledged that this would worsen electoral equality so proposed transferring the flats in Foster House on Maxwell Road from Borehamwood Kenilworth to Borehamwood Cowley Hill. They argued that this residential area is surrounded by businesses and could be transferred to Borehamwood Cowley Hill ward. Finally, it argued that Kimbolton Green should be in the Borehamwood Hillside ward. Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council stated that it had no comments to make on the draft recommendations.

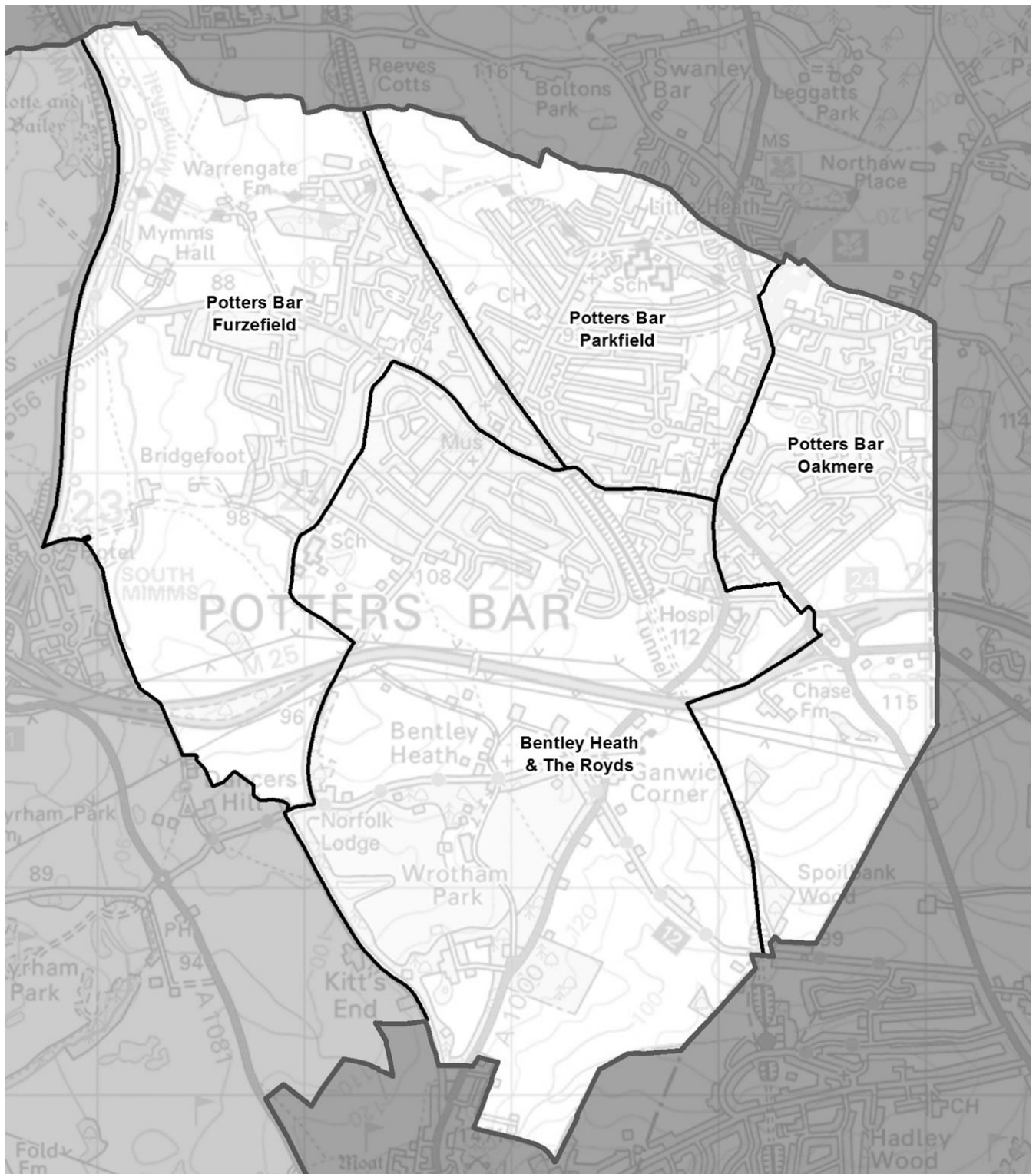
43 We have considered the evidence received and acknowledge the Council's evidence for Todd Close. However, we also note that adopting its amendment to Todd Close and its subsequent amendment to Foster House would require the creation of two small parish wards (with 302 and 246 electors, respectively) in Elstree & Borehamwood parish to reflect the electoral division boundaries in this area. The creation of two additional parish wards for Elstree & Borehamwood parish would bring the total for the parish to eight. We are concerned that the creation of further small parish wards would not provide effective and convenient local government for Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council. On balance, we are not persuaded to adopt these amendments.

44 We do, however, propose adopting the Council's proposal to put Kimbolton Green in Borehamwood Hillside ward. We acknowledge that it would better reflect communities. This would marginally worsen electoral equality in Borehamwood Hillside from 5% to 6% by 2022, while electoral equality in Borehamwood Kenilworth would remain at 6%.

Shenley

45 A local resident expressed concern about the boundary between Aldenham East and Shenley wards. However, as stated above (paragraph 39) this is also a parish boundary and we are unable to amend this as part of the current review. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Shenley as final.

Potters Bar



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Bentley Heath & The Royds	2	6%
Potters Bar Furzefield	2	5%
Potters Bar Oakmere	2	4%
Potters Bar Parkfield	2	-1%

Potters Bar Furzefield, Potters Bar Oakmere and Potters Bar Parkfield

46 In response to the draft recommendations the Potters Bar Society objected to the proposal to transfer a councillor from the Potters Bar area to Bushey, requesting that Potters Bar Oakmere retains three councillors.

47 We noted the comments from the Potters Bar Society, but were unable to reverse the proposal to transfer a councillor from Potters Bar to Bushey, as this would not provide the correct allocation of councillors between these areas. This would result in poor levels of electoral equality. We are therefore retaining the proposed allocation of councillors.

48 The Council expressed a number of concerns about the draft recommendations for Potters Bar. While it broadly supported the Potters Bar Oakmere ward, it did express concerns about the Potters Bar Furzefield and Potters Bar Parkfield wards. It objected to the Potters Bar Furzefield ward, arguing that the area to the south of the M25 ward has better communications links to Potters Bar Parkfield. They also noted that the proposed boundary between these wards would split the caravan park at Brookes Place. Finally, they argued that the Potters Bar Parkfield ward is an 'awkward shape' with a pinch point around the Potters Bar Community Hospital. The Council therefore put forward alternative proposals for these two wards, moving away from two three-member wards, to a pattern of three two-member wards. The Council's proposals effectively removed the southern area of our Potters Bar Furzefield and Potters Bar Parkfield wards to create a two-member Bentley Heath & the Royds ward, arguing that these areas have close links to the rural area.

49 We noted the comments from the Council and acknowledge the issues raised. Our draft recommendations for these wards were based on our own proposals that sought to provide stronger boundaries than the Council's original submission. We therefore welcomed the Council's local knowledge and comments following the further limited conclusion period.

50 We were broadly supportive of the Council's new proposals, noting that they secure good electoral equality. Its proposed Bentley Heath & The Royds, Potters Bar Furzefield and Potters Bar Parkfield wards would have 7% more, 5% more and 1% fewer electors respectively than the borough average by 2022. We did, however, consider that the boundaries could be improved with a minor revision between Potters Bar Parkfield and Bentley Heath & The Royds wards; tying the boundary to Mutton Lane would provide access in the north of the Bentley Heath & The Royds ward as well as the south of the ward.

51 While we considered these proposals provided for stronger boundaries in this area than those proposed during our draft recommendations, a significant number of electors would be affected. In light of this we decided to hold a period of further limited consultation on the warding arrangement for this area. We received three submissions in response to the further consultation.

52 One respondent argued for an additional one or two councillors to improve the allocation between Potters Bar and Bushey. However, we have previously rejected this suggestion in response to both our warding pattern and draft recommendations

consultations (see paragraphs 23–6) and were not persuaded by the evidence received during the further limited consultation, and do not propose to change the recommended council size for Hertsmere as a result.

Bentley Heath & The Royds

53 A local resident questioned whether the urban areas of the Bentley Heath & The Royds ward have community links to the rural area and stated that two single-councillor wards might better reflect communities in this area. However, the respondent did not provide evidence as to how the wards could be arranged to support this proposal and we were not persuaded by the detail given that it is possible to sensibly divide the area into two single-councillor wards. We are not recommending that these changes be made.

54 Councillor Hodgson-Jones proposed a small amendment, affecting 18 electors between Bentley Heath & The Royds and Potters Bar Oakmere wards. Our draft recommendations had inadvertently isolated these electors in a small area to the south of the M25 motorway and east of the railway line in Bentley Heath & The Royds ward. Councillor Hodgson-Jones proposed to move this boundary to the south providing a clear access route into the rest of the ward. We are adopting this change as part of our final recommendations.

Conclusions

55 The table below shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2016 and 2022 electorate figures.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2016	2022
Number of councillors	39	39
Number of electoral wards	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	1,938	2,142
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	1	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

Hertsmere Borough Council should be made up of 39 councillors serving 16 wards, representing nine two-councillor wards and seven 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 ward for Hertsmere Borough Council. **You can also view our draft recommendations for Hertsmere Borough Council on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>**

Parish electoral arrangements

56 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.

57 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, Hertsmere Borough 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.

58 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 Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council.

59 As 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 Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council.

Final recommendation	
Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Borehamwood Brookmeadow	2
Borehamwood Cowley Hill	3
Borehamwood Hillside	3
Borehamwood Kenilworth North	1
Borehamwood Kenilworth South	2
Borehamwood Shenley Road	1
Elstree	1

3 What happens next?

60 We have now completed our review of Hertsmere Borough Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2019.

Equalities

61 This report has been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Hertsmere Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2016)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Aldenham East	2	3,818	1,909	-1%	4,028	2,014	-6%
2	Aldenham West	2	3,916	1,958	1%	4,294	2,147	0%
3	Bentley Heath & The Royds	2	4,470	2,235	15%	4,557	2,278	6%
4	Borehamwood Brookmeadow	3	5,970	1,990	3%	6,637	2,212	3%
5	Borehamwood Cowley Hill	3	5,935	1,978	2%	6,786	2,262	6%
6	Borehamwood Hillside	3	5,444	1,815	-6%	6,823	2,274	6%
7	Borehamwood Kenilworth	3	5,992	1,997	3%	6,787	2,262	6%
8	Bushey Heath	2	3,597	1,799	-7%	3,959	1,980	-8%
9	Bushey North	3	5,721	1,907	-2%	6,593	2,198	3%
10	Bushey Park	3	5,410	1,803	-7%	5,874	1,958	-9%
11	Bushey St James	3	5,216	1,739	-10%	5,984	1,995	-7%
12	Elstree	2	3,823	1,912	-1%	3,985	1,993	-7%

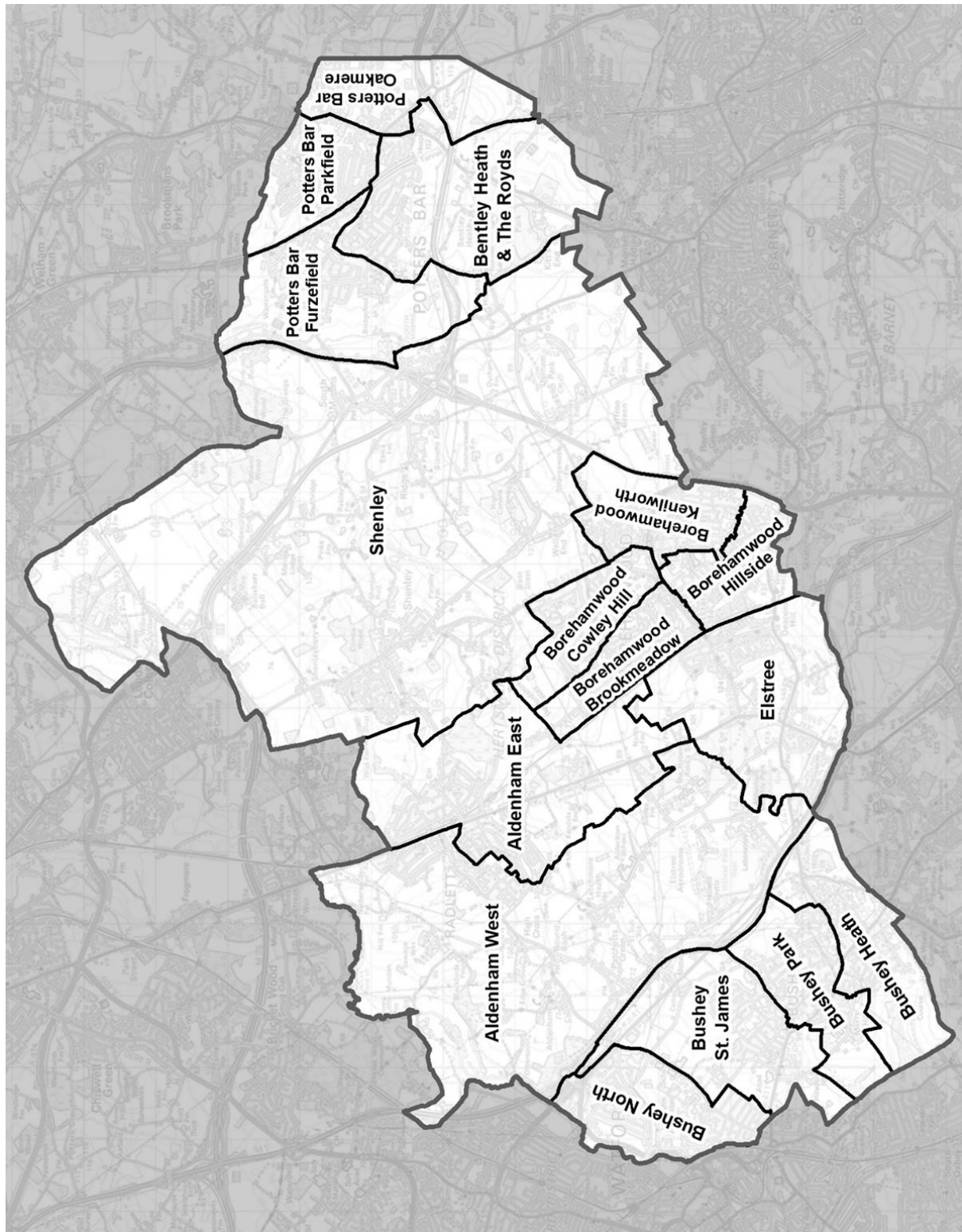
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2016)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Potters Bar Furzefield	2	4,243	2,122	9%	4,479	2,240	5%
14 Potters Bar Oakmere	2	4,275	2,138	10%	4,452	2,226	4%
15 Potters Bar Parkfield	2	3,809	1,905	-2%	4,235	2,118	-1%
16 Shenley	2	3,938	1,969	2%	4,056	2,028	-5%
Totals	39	75,577	-	-	83,529	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,938	-	-	2,142	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Hertsmere Borough Council.

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

Appendix B

Outline map



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

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/hertfordshire/hertsmere>

Draft recommendations

Local Authority

- Hertsmere Borough Council

Local Organisations

- Hertfordshire Gardens Trust
- The Potters Bar Society

Parish and Town Council

- Aldenham Parish Council
- Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council

Local Residents

- Five local residents

Further limited consultation

Councillors

- Councillor P. Hodgson-Jones

Local Residents

- Two 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
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