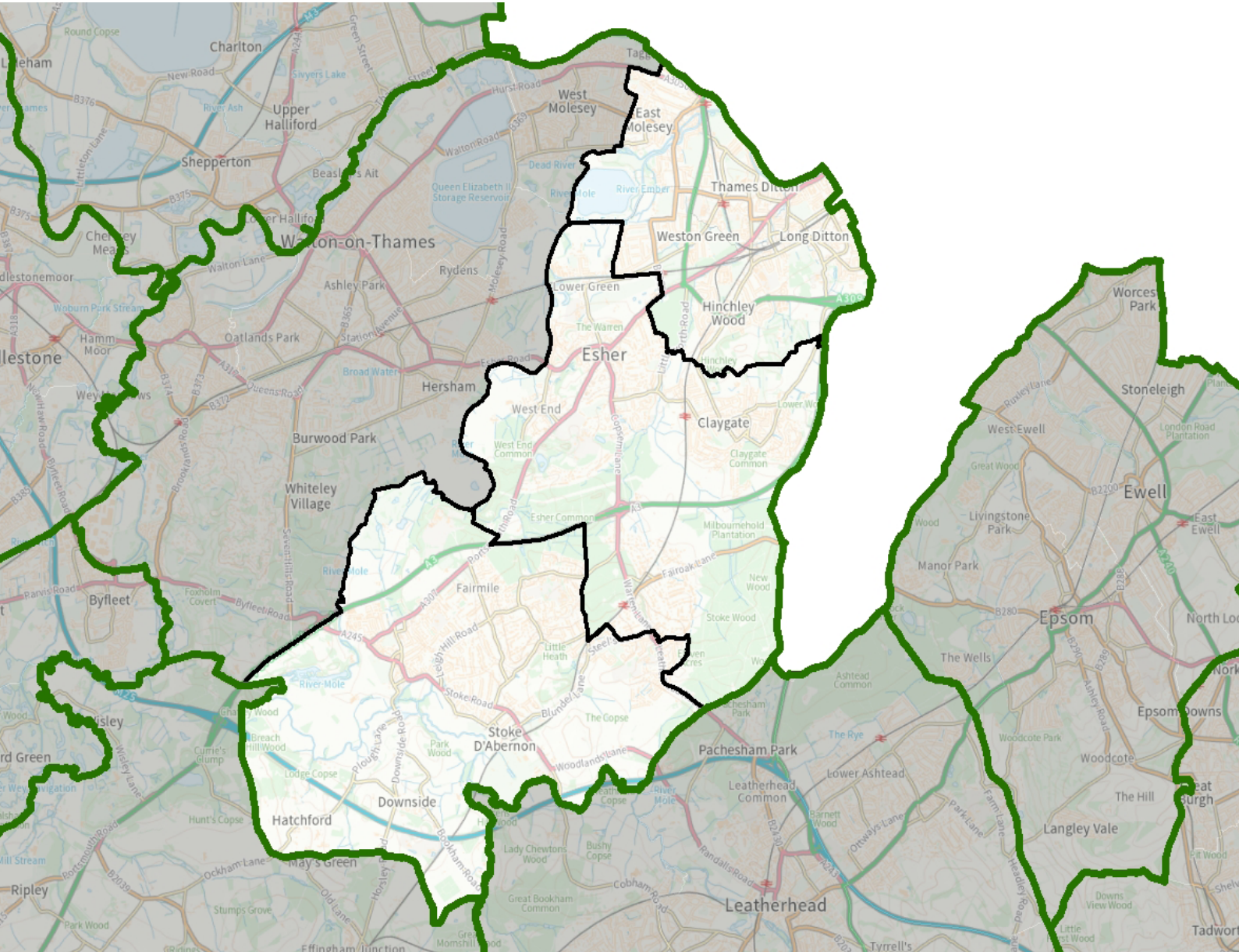


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



**New electoral arrangements for
Surrey - Elmbridge
Further Draft Recommendations
January 2024**

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 2024

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

Analysis and further draft recommendations in the Elmbridge area	2
South-Eastern Elmbridge	3
North-Eastern Elmbridge	6
Have your say	9
Equalities	13
Appendices	15
Appendix A	15
Further draft recommendations for Surrey Council	15
Appendix B	16
Submissions received	16

Analysis and further draft recommendations in Elmbridge

1 Following our consultation on the draft recommendations for Surrey, the Commission has decided to hold a period of consultation on further draft recommendations for Elmbridge, prior to publication of its final recommendations for the whole of the county. The Commission believes it has received sufficient evidence relating to the rest of the county to finalise its recommendations so this consultation is focused on this part of Elmbridge only.

2 During consultation on the draft recommendations, which were published on 8 August 2023, we received 820 representations. Many submissions focused on the borough of Elmbridge, and particularly the proposals in the east of the borough.

3 Accordingly, we have been persuaded to amend our proposals and publish further draft recommendations for divisions in these areas. We are now inviting further views, in this area only, in order to identify whether these revised division arrangements best reflect our statutory criteria.

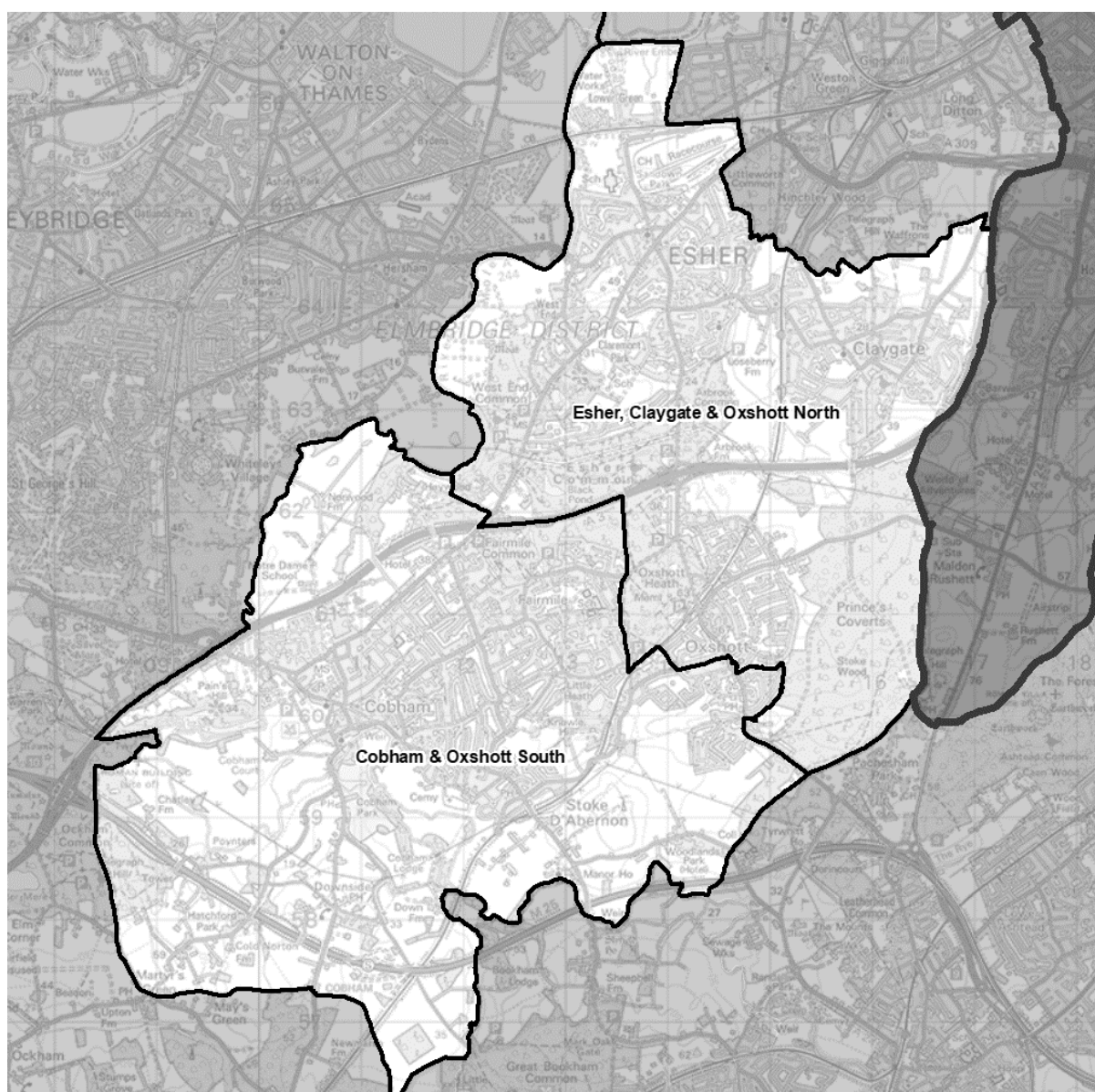
4 We welcome all comments on these proposals, particularly on the location of the division boundaries and the names of our proposed divisions. This stage of consultation begins on 30 January 2024 and closes on 12 March 2024. Please see page 9 for more information on how to send us your response. Once we have considered the views we receive on these further draft recommendations we will publish our final recommendations for the whole of Surrey. We expect to publish our final recommendations in May 2024.

5 The tables and maps on pages 2–7 detail our further draft recommendations for the areas in the east of Elmbridge. They detail how the proposed division arrangements reflect the three statutory criteria of:

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

In addition to these, Surrey County Council made a formal request for a “single-member division review”, meaning that we must consider the benefits of proposing a uniform pattern of single-member divisions across the county.

South-Eastern Elmbridge



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Cobham & Oxshott South	1	8%
Esher, Claygate & Oxshott North	1	10%

6 Across the east of Elmbridge, we received significant evidence of the identity of various communities, and how these communities link with one another. We are grateful to everyone who provided this evidence. The geography and links between the communities in this area make constructing a pattern of divisions that reflect our statutory criteria particularly challenging. We are proposing these further draft recommendations in order to assess whether they represent an improvement on our initial draft recommendations, or whether further changes can help provide for the best available pattern of divisions.

Cobham & Oxshott South, and Esher, Claygate & Oxshott North

7 Our initial draft recommendations proposed two divisions in this area, with the boundary between them following the railway line through Oxshott railway station, and then the A244 Warren Lane / Leatherhead Road southwards to the boundary with Mole Valley. This attracted limited support, with many objections focusing on the fact that the village of Oxshott was divided between divisions, rather than being within a single division. Further objections were raised that Oxshott High Street was divided between different divisions, and that the name of Oxshott did not appear in any division name.

8 Some objections mentioned that Oxshott as a settlement would be divided between divisions under our initial draft recommendations, and questioned whether there would be a councillor focused on representing the needs of the village. We note that, under the existing arrangements, Oxshott is currently divided along the line of the railway line, with electors on Stokesheath Road, Queens Drive, Kings Warren, and neighbouring streets currently in Cobham division. While we strive to include entire communities within divisions where possible, we note that the majority of councillors across Surrey will have multiple communities within their divisions.

9 A number of submissions, including that of Cllr J. Crawshaw, argued for the retention of the existing division, covering the bulk of Oxshott, as well as Claygate and Hinchley Wood. These accepted that the fact that there is no direct access between Oxshott and the northern sections of this division, but suggested that this did not, in practice, present any particular problems. We considered this proposal but note that as well as retaining the existing split of Oxshott, this proposal would have significant knock-on implications for the remainder of Elmbridge, requiring several other divisions to be re-drawn. We also received evidence that there were clear links between Esher and Claygate, and that the pairing of the two was relatively natural and reflected the community identity of these settlements.

10 Cllr D. Lewis noted that the A244, which also acts as Oxshott High Street was a key issue for the village regarding traffic and road safety, and that it was preferable that it not be used as a boundary so that responsibility for the road was clear. We viewed the road and consider that, while recognisable, it does not offer a particularly strong boundary in some areas, and that an alternative would be desirable. Apart from a short section near the external boundary of Elmbridge, our further draft recommendations do not use the A244 as a boundary. The use of the High Street as a boundary was also the focus of the opposition of Oxshott Village Sports Club, and the Birds Hill Oxshott Estate Company, who argued for the retention of the status quo.

11 A submission from “FEDORA – an Oxshott CIC” argued against the initial draft recommendations, and suggested that it would be preferable, if the existing

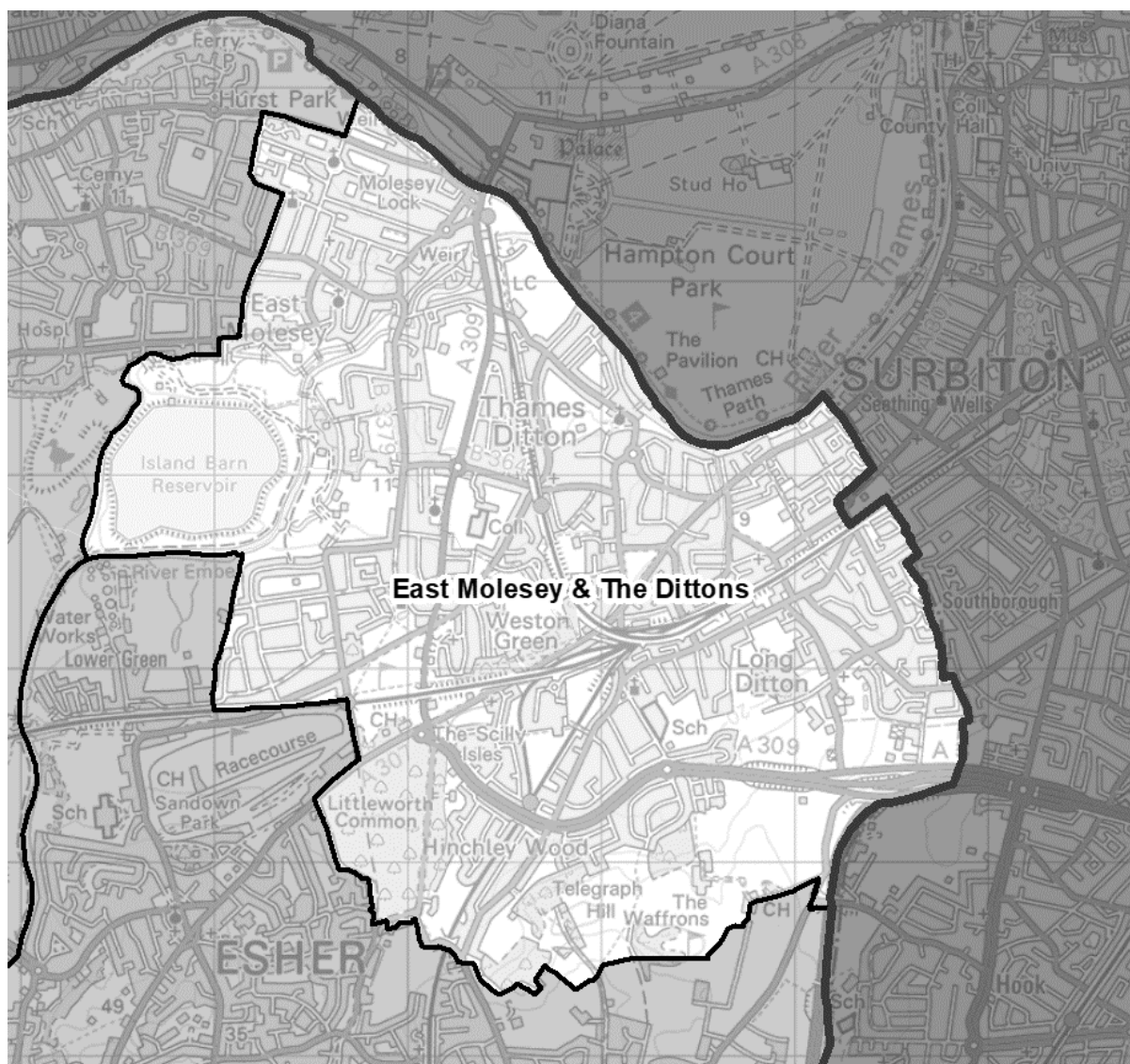
arrangements cannot be maintained, for Oxshott to be placed entirely within a single division, whether joined with Cobham, or with Esher & Claygate. We considered this carefully, but noted that placing all of Oxshott south of the A3 into a division with Cobham would result in this division having a variance of 18%, while placing the entirety of Oxshott in Esher & Claygate division would, without further changes affecting neighbouring divisions, result in this division having a 26% variance. We will only recommend variances of this size in wholly exceptional circumstances.

12 We considered departing from the principle of single-member divisions in order to ensure that the entirety of Oxshott is within one, two-member division. As with all aspects of these further draft recommendations, we retain an open mind on this possibility, and would welcome further evidence as to whether a division covering Cobham, Oxshott, Esher and Claygate, and represented by two councillors, would reflect community identity, or whether such a division might be too geographically large to represent effectively.

13 We are proposing, as part of our further draft recommendations, an alternative boundary through Oxshott, running from the railway line along Sheath Lane and Steel's Lane, before running behind properties on the High Street, ensuring that the High Street itself is within a single division, namely Cobham & Oxshott South. The proposed boundary then runs behind Briars Court, High Drive, Woodsway, Meadway, and Danes Way, before joining the A244 Leatherhead Road to the borough boundary. While we have been unable to identify a solution that retains all of Oxshott within a single one-member division and meets our statutory criteria, we are proposing to test this alternative boundary to gauge whether it offers a better solution than our initial draft recommendation.

14 In addition to the alterations to the initial draft recommendations for the boundary in this area, we are proposing alternative names for the two divisions covering Oxshott. As part of our further draft recommendations, we are proposing division names of "Cobham & Oxshott South" and "Esher, Claygate & Oxshott North". We would welcome evidence as to whether these proposals could be further improved, or whether they adequately address the issues raised with regard to Oxshott not appearing in the names of divisions in our initial draft recommendations.

North-Eastern Elmbridge



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
East Molesey & The Dittons	2	-6%

East Molesey & The Dittons

15 Our draft recommendations were for separate, single-member divisions, one covering Thames Ditton & East Molesey, and one covering Long Ditton & Hinchley Wood. We received differing views over this proposal, with some respondents supporting the new divisions, and others opposing them. We are proposing, as part of these further draft recommendations, to depart from the principle of single-member divisions in this area, and are proposing a two-member division covering the same area as the single member divisions previously proposed.

16 The existing divisions in the north-east of Elmbridge include a division joining East Molesey to Esher. We note that these areas are separated by the area around

Island Barn Reservoir, and that there is no direct road access between the two sections of the existing division. While we received multiple representations arguing for the retention of the existing division of The Dittons, we did not receive significant evidence during consultation on our draft recommendations arguing that there is a shared community identity between East Molesey and Esher, or arguing for the retention of East Molesey & Esher division on its own merits. The retention of The Dittons would require either the retention of East Molesey & Esher, or a fundamental re-drawing of several divisions across Elmbridge. The Molesey Residents Association and Cllr E. Mallett suggested that there was little interaction between the two communities making up the existing East Molesey & Esher division.

17 Several submissions suggested that the natural community of East Molesey lay towards West Molesey, rather than to the south or east. We considered how we could reflect this in a division, but adding the area of East Molesey to our proposed West Molesey division would result in this division having 36% more electors than average – well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality. We have therefore not adopted this proposal.

18 We received varying evidence as to whether the A309 Hampton Court Way represented a strong boundary. Some, including Cllr J. Langham and Cllr N. Darby, argued that the road represented a clear boundary between communities, while others noted that not only does the existing division of The Dittons stretch across this road, but that the Elmbridge borough ward of Thames Ditton does as well. A resident suggested that there were services on either side of the road, such as the Sixth Form College, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, and Glenlyn Medical centre which were used by residents from across the area.

19 We received a large number of submissions, including from Cllr E. Laino, Cllr E Sesemann, Cllr J. Crawshaw, Cllr N. Darby, the St Mary's Road Residents' Association, Long Ditton Residents' Association, Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association, and Dittons Scout Group, who objected to our initial draft recommendations, on the grounds that they divided Weston Green from Thames Ditton. Evidence was provided as to shopping and leisure links between Thames Ditton and Weston Green.

20 Elmbridge Liberal Democrats, on whose proposal the initial Draft Recommendations were based, offered an alternative proposal, of a Dittons division bounded by the A309, with areas to the west and south of this road joining an East Molesey division. While the A309 does offer a clear boundary, it also appears to split the community of Hinchley Wood. The proposed division including East Molesey, and the areas west and south of the A309 would also have poor electoral equality, with roughly 16% fewer electors than average depending on precisely which boundaries were used, as well as not offering good connectivity between the northern and southern sections. We have therefore not adopted this proposal.

21 We have carefully considered all the submissions relating this area. We are proposing, as part of our further draft recommendations, to combine the areas from East Molesey to Hinchley Wood into a single division to be represented by two councillors. While there was a formal request from Surrey County Council for us to propose single-member divisions, we consider that this proposal is worthy of testing through further draft recommendations. Based on the evidence provided in the consultation on our initial draft recommendations, we consider that it will be difficult if not impossible to split the proposed division in such a way as to provide both good electoral equality and to reflect community identity.

22 We note the departure from the principle of single-member divisions, while not unprecedented, is unusual for a two-tier county council. However, given the relatively dense population and modest geographic size of our proposed East Molesey & The Dittons division, we are satisfied that this is not geographically too large and that it is relatively easy to travel throughout the proposed division, arguably more so than some of the single-member divisions in rural areas which attracted support in other areas of Surrey. However we welcome further views on this proposal.

Have your say

23 The Commission has an open mind about its further draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from.

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

25 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

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

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

27 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of divisions for Surrey 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.

28 A good pattern of divisions should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters.
- 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.

29 Electoral equality:

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

30 Community identity:

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

31 Effective and convenient local government:

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

32 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 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.

33 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as 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.

34 In the light of representations received, we will review our further 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 further draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

35 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 Surrey in 2025.

Equalities

36 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

Further draft recommendations for Surrey Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Cobham & Oxshott South	1	12,287	12,287	14%	12,904	12,904	8%
2	East Molesey & The Dittons	2	21,380	10,690	-1%	22,428	11,214	-6%
3	Esher, Claygate, & Oxshott North	1	11,581	11,581	7%	13,132	13,132	10%

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Surrey County 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

Submissions received

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

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/surrey>.

This list includes all submissions received to the consultation on draft recommendations, including those discussing areas not covered by the further draft recommendations.

Local Authority

- Mole Valley District Council
- Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Heath Borough Council

Political Groups

- Esher Residents' Association (2 submissions)
- Elmbridge Liberal Democrats
- Hinchley Wood Residents' Association
- Woking Conservatives

Councillors

- Councillor J. Crawshaw (Elmbridge BC)
- Councillor N. Darby (Surrey CC) (2 submissions)
- Councillor F. Davidson (Surrey CC)
- Councillor Y. de Contades (Guildford BC)
- Councillor M. Furniss (Surrey CC)
- Councillor P. Kennedy (Mole Valley DC)
- Councillor E. Kington (Surrey CC)
- Councillor E. Laino (Elmbridge BC) (2 submissions)
- Councillor J. Langham (Elmbridge BC)
- Councillor D. Lewis (Surrey CC)
- Councillor P. Lewis (Windlesham Parish Council)
- Councillor E. Mallett (Surrey CC)
- Councillor J. Mason (Epsom & Ewell BC & Surrey CC)
- Councillor D. O'Mahoney (Surrey Heath BC)
- Councillor J. O'Reilly (Surrey CC)
- Councillor G. Potter (Guildford BC & Surrey CC)

- Councillor J. Quin (Surrey Heath BC)
- Councillor J. Shaw (Guildford BC)
- Councillor M. Sugden (Surrey CC)
- Councillor E. Sessemann (Elmbridge BC)
- Councillor T. Turner (Horley Town Council)
- Councillor H. Watson (Mole Valley DC & Surrey CC)
- Councillor R. Wilson (Surrey Heath BC)
- Councillor K. Witham (Guildford BC & Surrey CC)
- Councillor P. Wood (Elmbridge BC)

Local Organisations

- Abbotswood Residents' Association – NW Spur and Close
- Birds Hill Oxshott Estate Company
- Cuddington Residents' Association
- Dittons Scout Group
- Egham Residents' Association
- Ewell Village Residents' Association
- Fedora – The Voice for Oxshott CIC
- Hersham Residents' Association
- Jacobs Well Residents' Association
- Long Ditton Residents' Association (2 submissions)
- Molesey Residents' Association
- Ottershaw & West Addlestone Residents' Association
- Oxshott Village Sports Club
- St Mary's Road Residents' Association
- Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association

Parish and Town Councils

- Buckland Parish Council
- Burstow Parish Council
- Elstead Parish Council
- Felbridge Parish Council (2 submissions)
- Frensham Parish Council
- Haslemere Town Council
- Horne Parish Council
- Thursley Parish Council
- Tilford Parish Council
- West Clandon Parish Council
- Witley & Milford Parish Council
- Worplesdon Parish Council

Local Residents

- 756 local residents

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