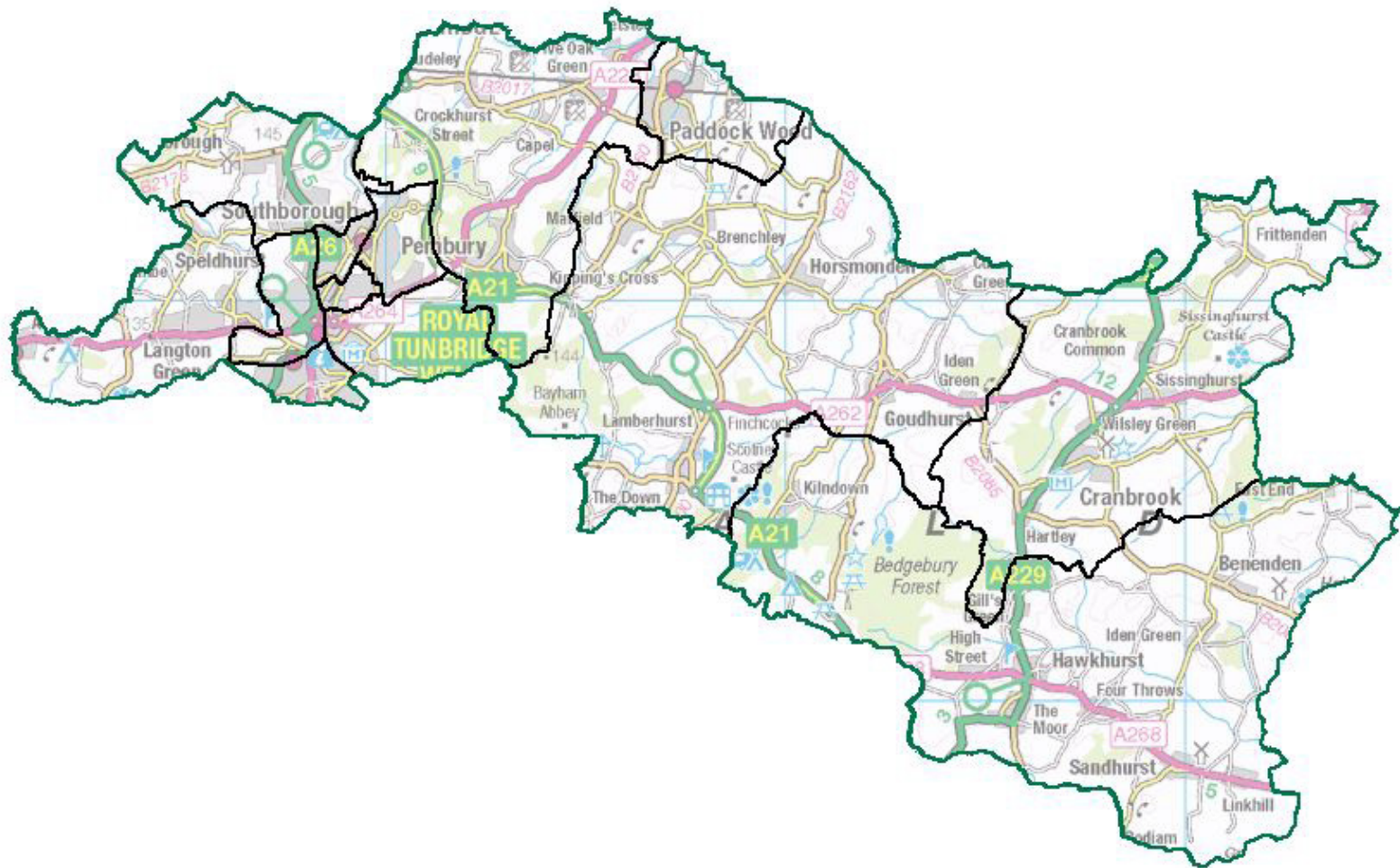


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Draft Recommendations

August 2022

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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 Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

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

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

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

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

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

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, 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 Tunbridge Wells?

7 We are conducting a review of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2001, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.² Additionally, some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

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

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

Our proposals for Tunbridge Wells

9 Tunbridge Wells should be represented by 39 councillors, nine fewer than there are now.

10 Tunbridge Wells should have 13 wards, seven fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of all wards should change.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the 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 consider any representations which are based on these issues.

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

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 2 August 2022 to 10 October 2022. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 10 October 2022 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 31 for how to send us your response.

Review timetable

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

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
14 December 2021	Number of councillors decided
11 January 2022	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
21 March 2022	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
2 August 2022	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
10 October 2022	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
10 January 2023	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

20 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

21 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2022	2028
Electorate of Tunbridge Wells	85,271	91,034
Number of councillors	39	39
Average number of electors per councillor	2,186	2,334

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. Eleven of our 13 proposed wards for Tunbridge Wells are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

23 As Tunbridge Wells Borough Council elects by thirds (meaning it has elections in three out of every four years), there is a presumption in legislation⁵ that the Council has a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. We will only move away from recommending this pattern of wards should we receive compelling evidence during consultation that an alternative pattern of wards will better reflect our statutory criteria. We are proposing a uniform pattern of three-member wards as part of our draft recommendations.

Submissions received

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

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

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

⁵ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 2(3)(d) and paragraph 2(5)(c).

Electorate figures

25 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2027. This is because we must consider electoral equality not only now but for a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2022, in line with legislation.

26 These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 7% by 2027.

27 The Council's original forecast included 680 more electors in polling district CC than there should have been. This was an administrative error caused by an accidental double counting of electors. This has now been corrected and the revised forecast has the correct number of electors.

28 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. Due to us publishing draft recommendations a month later than anticipated, the publication year of our final recommendations has changed from 2022 to 2023. However, we are content that the original 2027 forecast is a reasonable estimate of the forecast number of electors likely to be present in the authority in 2028 and we do not intend to update the figures.

Number of councillors

29 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council currently has 48 councillors.

30 At the beginning of this review, we asked the Council (and groups on the Council) to submit proposals to us on how many councillors there should be on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in the future.

31 We received five submissions regarding the future council size for Tunbridge Wells. These were from the Council, a group of councillors, Goudhurst Parish Council and two individuals. The Council and one individual advocated for the retention of the existing council size of 48 for various reasons including workload, potential increase in population and to avoid making the role less attractive to prospective candidates.

32 The group of councillors argued that councillor numbers and democratic arrangements needed to reflect the previous efficiencies made and future efficiencies that will need to be made. Its submission included a detailed breakdown and quantification of the efficiencies and changes that had been made by the Council since the last electoral review. It proposed a council size of 39.

33 Goudhurst Parish Council's submission covered issues beyond the size of the Council and was focused on the electoral cycle. It objected to the presumption of a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. The second individual wanted an increase in councillors due to a projected increase in population.

34 We have looked at the evidence provided to us by all these respondents. In light of the scale of the reduction in service provision and time spent on meetings as detailed by the Council and group of councillors, we concluded that decreasing the total number of councillors by nine will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

35 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 39 councillors.

36 We received two borough-wide schemes from the Cabinet (the Cabinet as formed at the time it made a submission to the Commission, referred to in the rest of this report as 'the Cabinet'). One of the Cabinet's schemes was based on a council size of 39 and the other was based on 36 members. We also received a borough-wide scheme from the Liberal Democrats based on a council size of 41.

37 Both of the Cabinet's schemes provided a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. The main difference between them was the number of councillors and wards allocated to Royal Tunbridge Wells. The 39-councillor scheme allocated six three-councillor wards to the unparished Royal Tunbridge Wells, while the 36-councillor scheme allocated five three-member wards to the area. So, while the proposed boundaries in the parished areas of the borough were broadly the same, those within the unparished Royal Tunbridge Wells were different.

38 The Liberal Democrats' proposals were based on a council size of 41 and comprised of 13 three-councillor wards and two single-councillor wards.

39 In total, we received 18 submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. Eleven respondents objected to a reduction in council size because of the potential increase in workload. Seven respondents expressed support for the reduction.

40 We considered the general objections to the proposed council size but in the absence of strong evidence to support a different council size, we did not make any changes to our initial decision based on these objections.

41 We also considered the Cabinet's proposal based on a council size of 36, three fewer than our initial decision. In its submission, the Cabinet stated that 36 councillors 'would enable a fairer distribution of councillors in the unparished area of the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells' and that this reduction should 'lead to improved

councillor efficiency and reduce call on officers'. We were not persuaded that this submission was supported by evidence that justified a change in council size on the basis of the criterion that helped us determine there should be 39 councillors – such as strategic leadership, scrutiny and partnerships and the representational role of members.

42 We did, however, look at what the pattern of wards would look like under their proposed council size of 36. We noted that it would still result in a warding pattern with some poor levels of electoral equality including a ward with 19% fewer electors than the average in the town of Tunbridge Wells.

43 We also considered the Liberal Democrats' proposals and noted that their proposal split Southborough parish across three borough wards. We did not consider that this would facilitate effective and convenient local government and we were also not persuaded to exclude the estate around Green Lane from Paddock Wood ward. For these and other specific reasons detailed in the body of the report, we have not adopted these proposals, including for a council size of 41.

44 In light of all the information that we have received in relation to how many councillors there should be for Tunbridge Wells in the future, we remain satisfied that there should be 39 members.

Ward boundaries consultation

45 We received 108 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These include the three borough-wide proposals from the Council's Cabinet and its Liberal Democrat Group ('the Liberal Democrats').

46 The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for wards' arrangements in particular areas of the borough. In particular, we note that the parish councils that responded expressed the view that they did not want to their parishes to be split across district wards.

47 The Tunbridge Wells Constituency Labour Party also expressed similar views regarding parishes. While it supported the reduced council size, it did not believe that a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards would be best for the local authority area.

48 Councillor Pethurst was also of the view that the rural communities in the east of the borough should comprise smaller wards because the geographical spread of three-councillor wards could make it difficult for councillors to represent their communities.

49 All the borough-wide schemes were carefully thought through and had a great deal of merit. We considered that respondents had considered our statutory criteria

and the pattern of wards resulted in good electoral equality in many areas of the authority under each of the schemes. All the proposals split some parishes across district wards but, given the distribution of parishes and settlements, we consider this was difficult to avoid and we have also divided parishes between district wards as part of our draft recommendations.

50 The boundaries of the wards proposed were very different across the majority of the borough and it was not possible to adopt wards proposed by one respondent in one area and the wards proposed by another in the immediate neighbouring area, given the significant difference in their respective boundaries. Accordingly, we have based our draft recommendations on a locally proposed borough-wide scheme that we considered provided the best balance between the statutory criteria as a basis for much of the borough's wards.

51 After careful consideration of the borough-wide proposals submitted to us and the views of other groups and individuals, we have based our proposals on the 39-councillor scheme proposed by the Cabinet. We considered that with some modifications, this scheme best reflects communities while providing an acceptable level of electoral equality and returning a uniform pattern of three-member wards. Although we used these proposals as the basis for our draft recommendations, we have considered each of the proposals received to see how they can improve our draft recommendations on the basis of our statutory criteria.

52 In certain areas, we considered creating wards with one or two councillors, but we were not persuaded that this would result in wards that better reflected our statutory criteria than the three-member wards we have identified and we did not adopt them.

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

54 The draft recommendations split some parishes across district wards, as proposed in the schemes we received. However, we have only done so when we considered it ensured the best balance of our statutory criteria.

55 For our draft recommendations, we have amended the names of some of the wards proposed to us to better reflect the communities within them. We welcome comments on the names of the wards as well as the boundaries.

56 We visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Tunbridge Wells helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

Draft recommendations

57 Our draft recommendations are for 13 three-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

58 The tables and maps on pages 11–27 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Tunbridge Wells. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁶ criteria of:

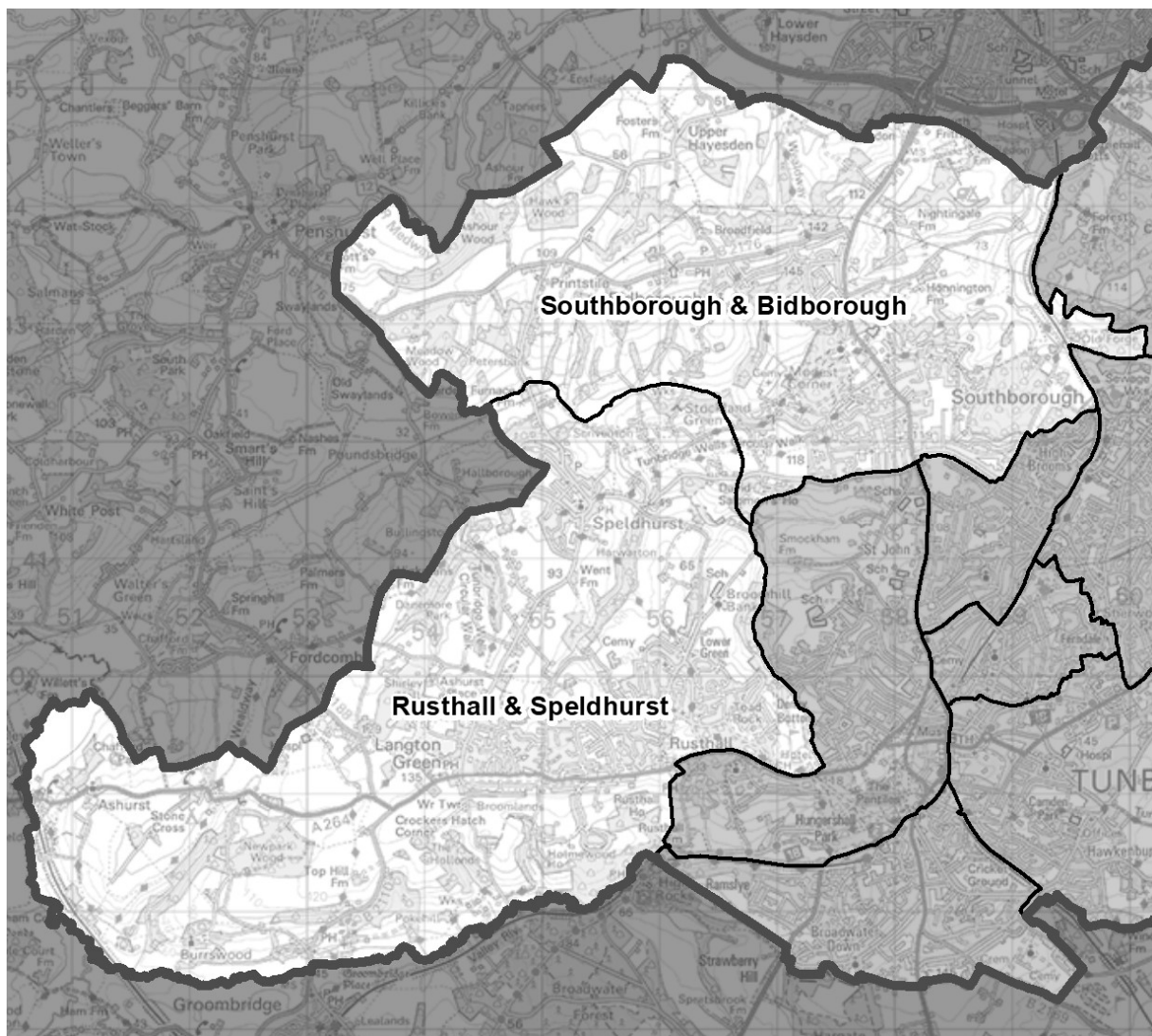
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

59 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 37 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

⁶ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Rusthall & Speldhurst and Southborough & Bidborough



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Rusthall & Speldhurst	3	12%
Southborough & Bidborough	3	8%

Rusthall & Speldhurst

61 In addition to the borough-wide proposals, we received over 20 submissions about Rusthall and Speldhurst parishes, including from Councillor Britcher, Councillor Edwards, Councillor Gripper, Councillor Woodward, Rusthall Parish Council, Speldhurst Parish Council and residents.

62 The Cabinet's proposals included Rusthall and Speldhurst parishes in a single ward. The Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, placed Rusthall parish, the southern part of Speldhurst parish (including the Langton Green area) and Nevill Park (in Royal Tunbridge Wells) in a single ward.

63 Rusthall Parish Council and residents of Rusthall wanted Rusthall parish to remain a two-councillor ward. In support of this, they described the strong community links within Rusthall parish. Some respondents, including Councillor Gripper, stated that Rusthall is self-contained and separated from Royal Tunbridge Wells by green space. We were also told that it had different characteristics to Royal Tunbridge Wells.

64 While some respondents stated that Rusthall and the neighbouring Langton Green are very different communities, Councillor Britcher and a few others expressed the view that if Rusthall parish was too small to form a ward on its own, then part of the neighbouring Langton Green (i.e., the area closest to Rusthall) could be included in a ward with Rusthall parish.

65 Speldhurst Parish Council was of the view that it had more contact and connection with Rusthall than with Bidborough parish and should therefore be included in a ward with Rusthall. It stated that in the past it had worked together with Rusthall Parish Council on various issues affecting both parishes. Councillor Woodward also felt that a ward with Rusthall and Speldhurst made sense and that there were good road connections and a lot of common and shared forest and walking space.

66 Two residents of Speldhurst parish expressed similar views including that the existing Speldhurst & Bidborough ward did not work. Their views were that unlike Bidborough parish whose residents looked more towards Southborough, Speldhurst residents accessed Royal Tunbridge Wells via Rusthall or Speldhurst Road.

67 We note the strong community identity of residents of Rusthall and considered creating a two-councillor ward comprising Rusthall parish alone. However, this ward would be forecast to have 18% fewer electors and we were not persuaded to create a ward with such poor electoral equality. Neither were we persuaded to split the community in Langton Green to make up the numbers for a two-councillor Rusthall ward. In light of the presumption in law to create a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards, this did not represent exceptional evidence to warrant departing from the uniform pattern.

68 We also considered the Liberal Democrats' proposals but considering the evidence pointing to Rusthall parish being separate from the unparished Royal Tunbridge Wells and the absence of strong evidence to split Speldhurst parish, we did not adopt this proposal.

69 After careful consideration, as part of our draft recommendations, we have created a Rusthall and Speldhurst ward made up of Rusthall and Speldhurst parishes, as proposed by the Cabinet and Speldhurst Parish Council. Rusthall & Speldhurst ward is forecast to have 12% more electors than the average for

Tunbridge Wells. Though this is outside our usual tolerance range for electoral equality, we consider that this is the best balance of our statutory criteria and we do not consider that dividing parishes in this area to create a better variance would provide the best balance of the statutory criteria.

70 We note that the Cabinet also proposed an alternative name for this ward – Western Tunbridge Wells. We welcome comments on the ward name.

Southborough & Bidborough

71 In addition to the borough-wide proposals, we received submissions from the Southborough & High Brooms Branch Labour Party ('Southborough & High Brooms Labour'), Councillor Woodward and some residents.

72 The Cabinet proposed a Southborough ward which was made up of Bidborough parish and most of Southborough parish in its proposed Southborough ward. A small area east of Powder Mill Lane was included in its proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells North ward. Nevertheless, this ward is forecast to have 14% more electors than the average for Tunbridge Wells.

73 The Liberal Democrats' Speldhurst & Bidborough ward comprised the northern part of Speldhurst parish (Speldhurst and Bullingstone) and all of Bidborough parish. Under these proposals Southborough parish is split across its Southborough, Sherwood and St John's wards.

74 Southborough & High Brooms Labour proposed the expansion of the existing Southborough & High Brooms and Southborough North wards for electoral equality reasons. It suggested that one of the Southborough wards should include Speldhurst and Langton Green.

75 Councillor Woodward was of the view that Bidborough was better placed in a ward with Southborough and, as mentioned in paragraph 66, some residents also felt that Bidborough residents looked towards Southborough and were better placed in a ward with that parish and not with Speldhurst as is the current arrangement. We note, however, that one resident expressed support for the existing Southborough & High Brooms ward.

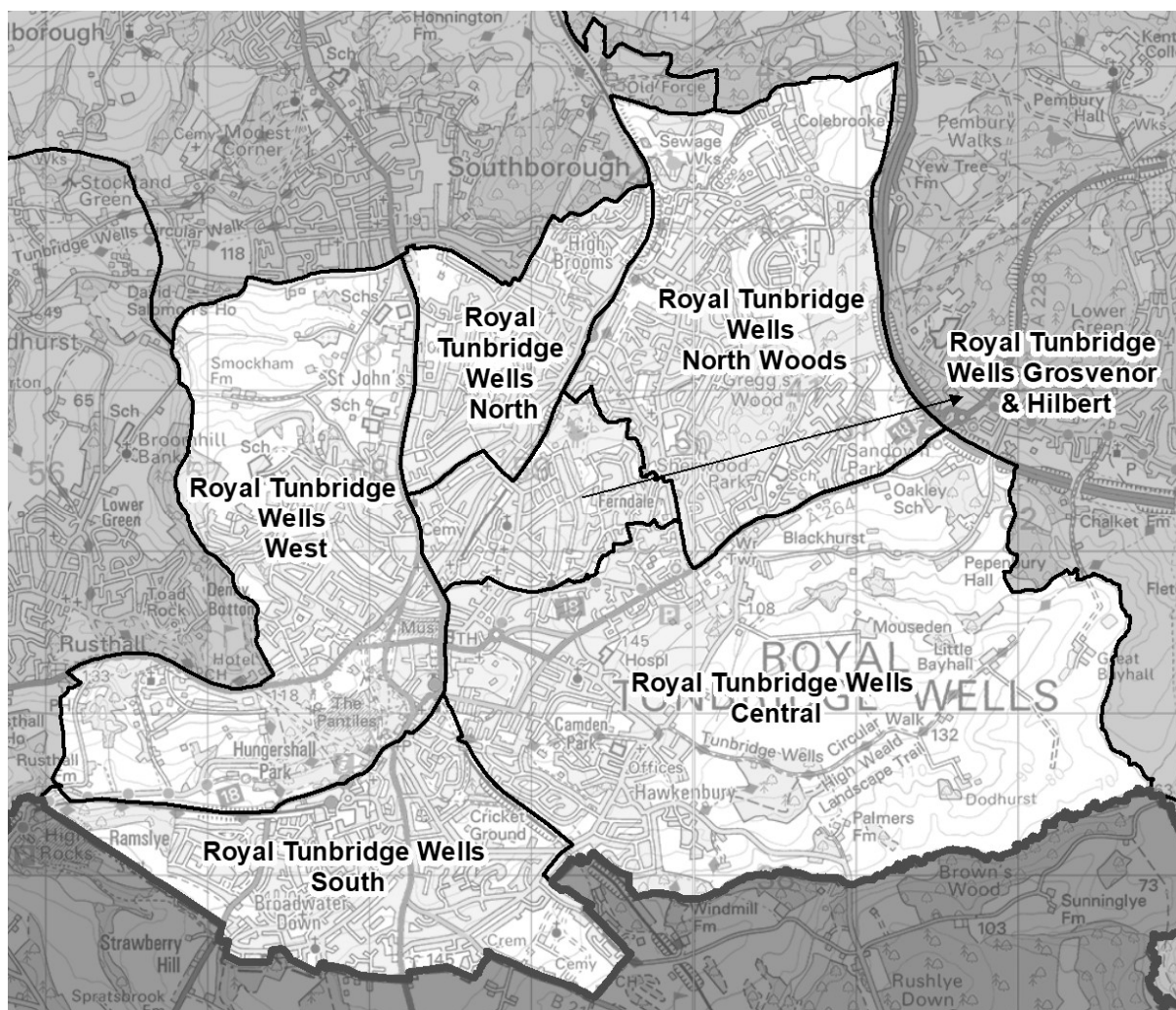
76 After careful consideration, we have been persuaded to include Bidborough and Southborough in a single ward. We consider that Bidborough is closely connected to Southborough and that residents to the north, south and west of Darnley Drive are likely to share community regardless of the parish boundary between them. We also note the strong road connection between the two parishes.

77 Therefore, we have based our draft recommendations for this area on the Cabinet's proposals, with modifications to improve the electoral equality. We have moved a section of the proposed boundary further north and excluded electors south of Yew Tree Road from this ward. We have included them in our Royal Tunbridge Wells North ward to the south and east instead. Residents on either side of Yew Tree Road are included in this ward but we welcome comments on whether Yew Tree Road should be used as a boundary instead. We have also renamed it to reflect the constituent communities.

78 We note that our draft recommendations avoid splitting Southborough parish across three wards as proposed by the Liberal Democrats.

79 Southborough & Bidborough ward is forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

Royal Tunbridge Wells



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Royal Tunbridge Wells Central	3	1%
Royal Tunbridge Wells Grosvenor & Hilbert	3	-10%
Royal Tunbridge Wells North	3	-3%
Royal Tunbridge Wells North Woods	3	-9%
Royal Tunbridge Wells South	3	2%
Royal Tunbridge Wells West	3	-9%

80 Having decided to adopt a council size of 39 for the borough, we consider that the unparished town of Royal Tunbridge Wells should be represented by six three-member wards. We were not persuaded that the Cabinet's scheme based on five three-member wards would provide a better balance of the statutory criteria and did not consider that it justified changing the council size to facilitate such a pattern.

81 In our six Royal Tunbridge Wells wards, we have also included a part of Southborough parish in one of our Royal Tunbridge Wells wards. We consider that as well as providing improved electoral equality for our Southborough & Bidborough ward (paragraph 77), we consider that this part of Southborough has strong links to Royal Tunbridge Wells and, in this area, it is not clear where Southborough ends, and Royal Tunbridge Wells starts.

Royal Tunbridge Wells Grosvenor & Hilbert, Royal Tunbridge Wells North and Royal Tunbridge Wells North Woods

82 In addition to the borough-wide proposals and those that relate to the High Brooms area of Southborough, we received submissions from Councillor Pound, Beulah Road Residents' Association and residents.

83 The Cabinet proposed three wards for this area under a council size of 39. It used a stretch of the A26 (St John's Road) as the western boundary of its proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells (RTW) Grosvenor & Hilbert and RTW North wards. It was of the view that everything to the east of St John's Road, including 'St John's East, St Luke's and High Brooms west of the railway line', had strong links to each other and formed a cohesive community. This formed the basis of its RTW North ward.

84 According to the Cabinet, its RTW Grosvenor & Hilbert ward was based on some areas that had strong links to Grosvenor & Hilbert Park. It extended across the railway line between Grosvenor Bridge and Meadow Road. Meanwhile, the boundaries of its proposed RTW North Woods ward were identical to the existing Sherwood ward.

85 The Liberal Democrats included Southborough parish in their Sherwood and St John's wards as well as a Southborough ward. They also proposed extending the existing St James' ward to the A264 to bring all of Camden Road and St James' Primary School within the boundaries of the ward. They retained the railway line as the western boundary of their St James' ward. Beulah Road Residents' Association and a resident expressed similar views with regards to St James'. They included The Avenue, Knights Way, Blackhurst Lane and Sandown Park in a ward with Pembury parish to the east. In their view, these residents of Royal Tunbridge Wells do not share a common identity with any other areas and have good road connections with Pembury parish.

86 Councillor Pound advocated for the retention of the existing Sherwood ward but proposed the inclusion of Addison Road in that ward to reflect residents' access. A resident of Parkwood Close wanted to be included in a ward with Grosvenor & Hilbert Park because, in their view, what goes on in the park is 'very important' to them. However, in this area, we considered that the existing boundary along the edge of the park was strong and identifiable and was proposed by the Liberal

Democrats as well as the Cabinet as part of the 39-councillor scheme. We have therefore retained this stretch of the existing boundary.

87 After careful consideration of the submissions, we have not been persuaded that the residents of Sandown Park and Blackhurst Lane have greater local ties with Pembury parish than their neighbours to the west in Sherwood Road.

88 We acknowledge that Southborough parish is too big to include in a single parish. Doing this would result in a ward with a forecast variance of 44% under a council size of 39 or 38% (under the Liberal Democrats' proposed council size of 41) with knock-on effects on the neighbouring wards. We considered that limiting the parish to being split between two wards would better facilitate effective and convenient local government than being split between three wards in the absence of other information related to our statutory criteria.

89 With regards to the retention of the railway line as a boundary south of High Brooms railway station, we acknowledge that it is a strong boundary, but we note that the A26 is also an identifiable boundary. Furthermore, the railway line has adequate crossings at Grosvenor Bridge and Meadow Road.

90 We have based our draft recommendations on the Cabinet's proposals with some modifications. We have included Addison Road in RTW North Woods to the north, in line with Councillor Pound's suggestion. We agree that this better reflects access to the area. However, this resulted in a RTW Grosvenor & Hilbert ward with 11% fewer electors, and we modified the south-eastern boundary around Ferndale to improve this.

91 In addition to these modifications, we considered adopting a section of the boundary proposed by the Liberal Democrats and Beulah Road Residents' Association to include an area east of Lansdowne Road (i.e., Calverley Street and the southern end of Camden Road) in a ward to the north, but we are of the view that Royal Victoria Place and the surrounding commercial area is better placed in a Central ward. We welcome views on this.

92 As mentioned in paragraph 77, we have modified the proposed boundaries between Southborough & Bidborough and RTW North to run behind properties on the south side of Yew Tree Road. We welcome comments on whether the boundary should run along Yew Tree Road.

93 Royal Tunbridge Wells Grosvenor & Hilbert, Royal Tunbridge Wells North and Royal Tunbridge Wells North Woods are all forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

Royal Tunbridge Wells Central, Royal Tunbridge Wells South and Royal Tunbridge Wells West

94 In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received submissions from Culverden Residents' Association, Royal Wells Park Residents' Association and residents.

95 The borough-wide submissions proposed significantly different boundaries for this area. The Cabinet's warding pattern used a stretch of the A26 between Victoria Road and Frant Road as a boundary and, with the exception of Park, proposed wards with significantly different boundaries from the existing ones. It noted that its proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells (RTW) South ward included 'Ramslye and Showfields' which 'share common properties, facilities and outlook with both being south of the historic railway line which 'creates a natural barrier'. It was also of the view that 'Broadwater, St Marks and Banner Farm all have similarity with residents forming strong links to the 'Village' area around Grove Park with the 2 pubs, fish & Chips and Kabab [sic] shops, and the sports fields of Warrick [sic] Park.'

96 It also stated that RTW Central ward 'links closely together' around Calverley Grounds, Dunorlan Park and most of Camden Park.

97 The Liberal Democrats proposed retaining the existing Culverden ward that stretches across both sides of the A26. To the south, they proposed a Pantiles & Broadwater ward which covered most of the existing Broadwater and Pantiles & St Mark's wards. In the south-east, they proposed a Park ward which took in the High Street and a significant part of the existing Park ward. This ward also included Forest Road and an area south of Birling Road and the southern end of Frant Road.

98 Culverden Residents' Association advocated that the existing Culverden and St John's wards retain the same number of councillors as at present (i.e., six because in their view a lot more people than residents used the wards' facilities e.g., the 'large number of' schools in the wards). However, in drawing up wards and determining electoral equality, we must take into consideration the number of electors forecast to reside in the area rather than the population.

99 Royal Wells Park Residents' Association wanted the Royal Wells Park housing development included in a single ward so that their community links will not be negatively impacted.

100 A resident appeared to suggest combining the existing Broadwater and Pantiles & St Mark's wards into a single ward. This would produce a poor electoral variance (28%) and we did not adopt the proposal. Another resident proposed splitting Pantiles & St Mark's in two but did not propose any specific boundaries.

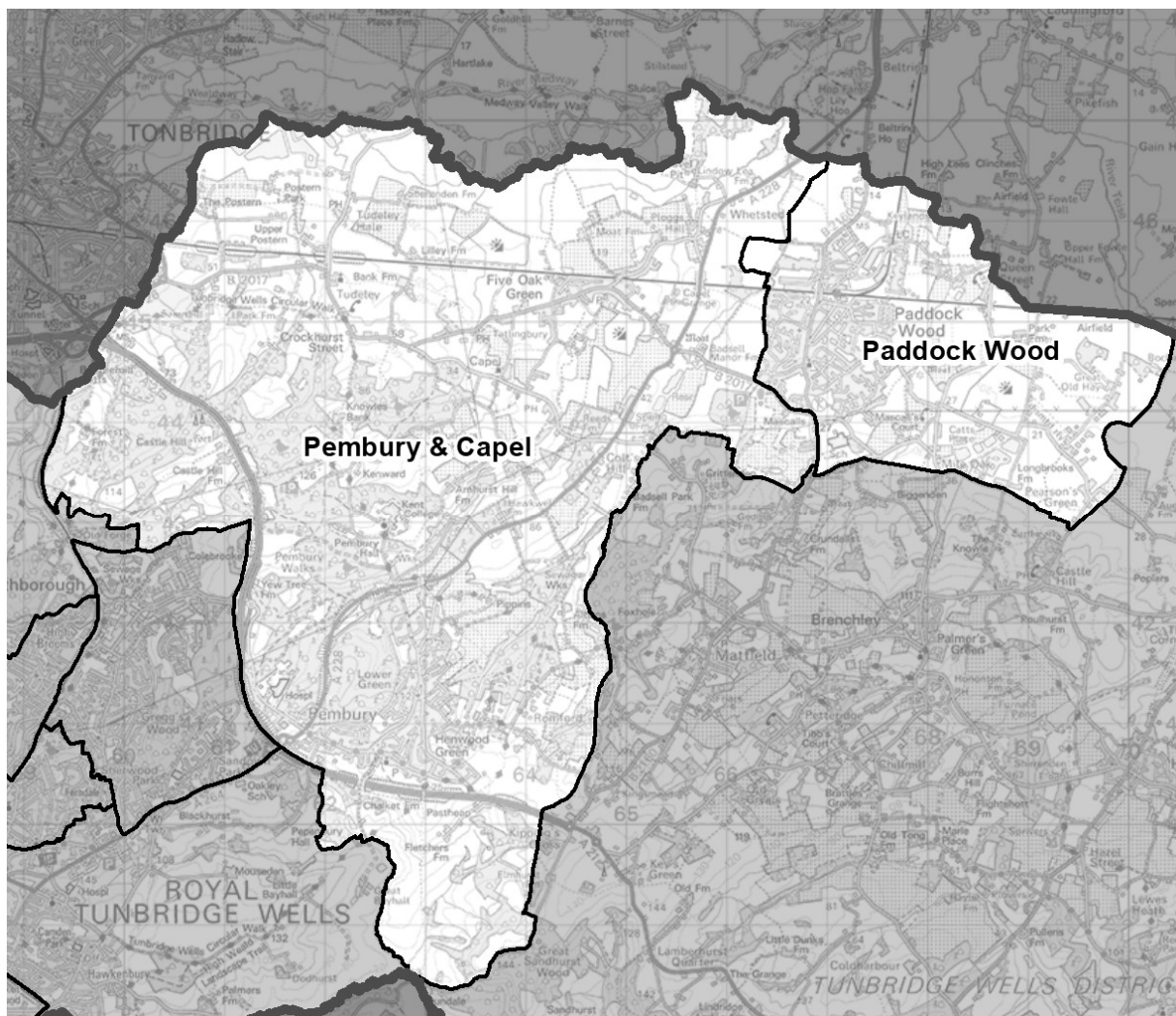
101 After careful consideration of the submissions we received, and in light of decisions made earlier (e.g., to exclude Nevill Park from Rusthall), we have based our draft recommendations on the Cabinet's proposals with modifications to better balance our statutory criteria. For example, we have used a stretch of the A26 Eridge Road as part of the northern boundary of Royal Tunbridge Wells South ward. We were not persuaded that the railway line, which can be crossed via Broadwater Lane, is a barrier in this area.

102 We have also united Camden Park in a single ward by moving the boundary between Royal Tunbridge Wells Central and South to run along the railway line to the south-west of Farmcombe Road. This also brings the electoral equality of Royal Tunbridge Wells Central to within our tolerance range.

103 Royal Tunbridge Wells Central, Royal Tunbridge Wells South and Royal Tunbridge Wells West are all forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

104 With regards to the comments made by Culverden Residents' Association, we note that our draft recommendation wards in this area are all forecast to have fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. And each ward has three councillors.

Paddock Wood and Pembury & Capel



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Paddock Wood	3	5%
Pembury & Capel	3	6%

Paddock Wood and Pembury & Capel

105 We found this area particularly challenging to identify good warding patterns for. We note that the size of Paddock Wood means that it is too large to form a three-member ward as it would have 16% more electors than the average, which we consider is too many. We also note that there is significant development planned in Paddock Wood and Capel both within the five-year forecast period, but also outside of this time period.

106 We received more than 20 submissions about Capel, Paddock Wood and Pembury parishes, in addition to the borough-wide proposals, including from Councillor Woodward, Capel Parish Council, Capel United Church (CUC), Paddock Wood Labour Party and residents.

107 The Cabinet's proposed Paddock Wood ward was made up entirely of Paddock Wood parish. Its Pembury ward consisted of Capel and Pembury parishes. Its Paddock Wood ward was forecast to have 16% more electors than the average for the borough. We recognise that a Paddock Wood ward comprising just the parish would create a ward which would provide a good reflection of the existing community in the area. However, given the very poor electoral variance we were not persuaded to adopt a Paddock Wood ward comprising just the parish.

108 The Liberal Democrats proposed three wards in this area – a single-councillor Capel ward and three-councillor Paddock Wood and Pembury wards. Under these proposals, Capel ward would consist entirely of Capel parish and would be forecast to have 15% fewer electors than the borough average. Paddock Wood parish would be divided across two wards with electors on Green Lane, and the roads running off it, included in a ward with Brenchley & Matfield, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst parishes and excluded from a Paddock Wood ward. The Liberal Democrats described this area as an 'out of town estate'.

109 Their proposed Pembury ward included Pembury parish and an area of Royal Tunbridge Wells north of Cornford Lane, east of Gregg's Wood and around The Avenue/Knights Way.

110 Councillor Woodward noted that Paddock Wood has too many electors for a three-councillor ward and suggested that an area to the south and west of Paddock Wood could be moved to a neighbouring ward to improve its electoral equality.

111 Both Capel Parish Council and CUC argued for Capel to retain its status as a single-councillor borough ward instead of being included in a larger three-councillor ward. CUC stated that if this was not possible, Capel parish could be included in a ward with Paddock Wood West in light of future housing around East Capel. CUC was of the view that residents of Five Oak Green look to Paddock Wood for transport and shops.

112 Most of the submissions we received were from residents of Paddock Wood who were opposed to being included in a ward with Capel parish. They wanted more councillors to represent them and pointed to the new and future developments going on in the area which would significantly increase the population.

113 A number of Pembury residents wanted Pembury parish to form the whole of the borough ward.

114 We noted all the comments and considered creating wards that were coterminous with each parish. As mentioned above, a Paddock Wood ward comprising only Paddock Wood parish would have 16% more electors by 2028. Under a 41-councillor scheme, such a ward would have 23% more electors.

We note that it would have good electoral equality if the Council had 33 or 36 councillors. However, we were not persuaded that council size should be reduced from 39 to 33 or 36 especially in light of the views that the council size should not be made significantly smaller. In any case, we note that under a 36-councillor scheme, a single-councillor Capel ward would have 25% fewer electors.

115 A single councillor Capel ward under a 39-councillor scheme would have 19% fewer electors than the average for the borough. Even under the Liberal Democrats' 41-councillor proposal this ward would have 15% fewer electors.

116 We looked at what would be the best area of Paddock Wood parish to separate from the rest of the parish in order to provide good electoral equality in the area. We were not persuaded that we had received enough evidence to exclude Green Lane and the adjacent roads from a Paddock Wood ward as the Liberal Democrats proposed. On our tour of Tunbridge Wells, we concluded that residents of the Green Lane area would share more community with the rest of Paddock Wood than with the parishes to the south and east and we were not persuaded to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

117 The Cabinet also proposed an alternative warding pattern which would see the eastern boundary of Paddock Wood ward move to run along the river immediately west of Mile Oak Road all the way north to the borough boundary to improve the electoral equality of this ward. This still produced a Paddock Wood ward forecast to have 12% more electors than the borough average despite the split to the parish. We also did not have any information about the community identity of the more than 300 existing residents affected who would be transferred to a rural ward to the south. We also note that this would not facilitate wards with good electoral equality to the rural east. Therefore, we did not adopt this.

118 Taking all of the views submitted into account, we have based our draft recommendations on the Cabinet's 39-councillor proposal with a significant modification in the south-west of Paddock Wood parish. We have included the area of new development forecast to have 768 new electors, south of Badsell Road and east of Foal Hurst Wood, in the Cabinet's proposed Pembury ward to improve the electoral equality of Paddock Wood ward so that it has 5% more electors than the average. We are naming the ward Pembury & Capel to reflect its constituent parishes.

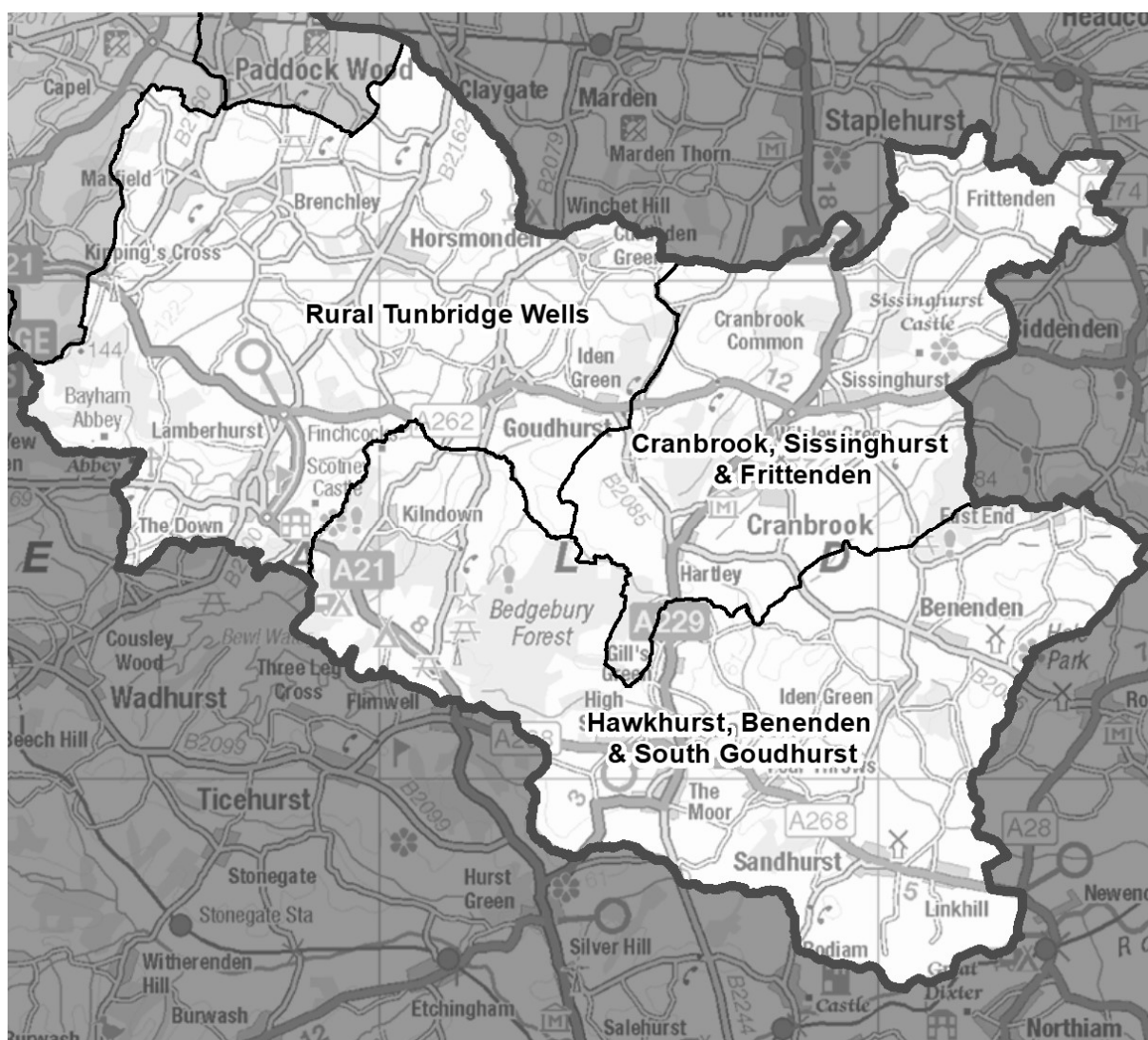
119 Our Pembury & Capel ward comprises Pembury parish and Capel parish. We acknowledge that Capel and Pembury parishes each have their own different characteristics and we recognise the strong views made that these communities should each be in wards of their own. We have looked at a variety of permutations for how we can create wards in this area that reflect communities, and which have an acceptable level of electoral equality. We recognise that Pembury and Capel

parish may not have strong community links together. However, we consider that linking these two parishes provides the best balance that we can identify across the area. We undertook a tour to Tunbridge Wells before agreeing our draft recommendations and this helped us confirm what we should do in this area. We recognise that while it is better to link communities with strong local ties, we do not want to divide communities and we consider that the other proposals we have received would divide communities in a way that our draft recommendations do not.

120 Our proposed Paddock Wood and Pembury & Capel wards are both forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

121 A number of residents queried whether the forecast for this area included planned new housing, for instance in Capel. When considering the forecast variances, we must by law consider the forecast electorate figures five years from the publication of our final recommendations. Therefore, housing developments that are planned for completion and occupancy after this time period are excluded from this review.

Eastern Parishes



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Cranbrook, Sissinghurst & Frittenden	3	-14%
Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst	3	4%
Rural Tunbridge Wells	3	6%

Cranbrook, Sissinghurst & Frittenden, Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst and Rural Tunbridge Wells

122 In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received submissions from Brenchley & Matfield, Frittenden, Goudhurst, Hawkhurst and Horsmonden parish councils, Christ Church Kilndown with St Mary's (Christ Church) and residents with regards to the three wards in this area.

123 The borough-wide proposals had some similarities. They included Cranbrook & Sissinghurst and Frittenden parishes in a single ward. They also placed Brenchley & Matfield, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst parishes in one ward.

124 There were also differences between the wards proposed. While the Liberal Democrats included Benenden parish in their proposed Sissinghurst & Cranbrook ward, the former Cabinet councillors were of the view that Benenden parish could be included either here or in a ward to the south. In the end, as part of their proposals, they split Benenden parish across two wards with the north of the parish in a single ward with Cranbrook & Sissinghurst and Frittenden parishes and the south included in a ward with Hawkhurst and Sandhurst parishes as well as Kilndown parish ward in Goudhurst parish. This latter ward was forecast to have 12% fewer electors than the average for the borough by 2028.

125 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, Sissinghurst & Cranbrook ward would be forecast to have 14% more electors than the borough average by 2028. Their proposed Goudhurst & Hawkhurst ward, which is coterminous with Goudhurst, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst parishes, would be forecast to have 13% more electors than the average for Tunbridge Wells. The Cabinet, on the other hand, included the north of Goudhurst parish in a ward with other rural parishes to the west.

126 Frittenden and Goudhurst parish councils expressed their objection to the creation of large three-councillor wards in rural areas of the borough. They advocated for the creation of smaller wards which took into consideration distinct parishes and communities. A resident proposed the creation of a ward comprising Cranbrook & Sissinghurst and Frittenden parishes. They were of the view that Benenden was not 'particularly associated with Cranbrook' being much more residential.

127 Hawkhurst Parish Council advocated for a ward made up of Benenden, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst parishes – for electoral equality reasons. They explained that there were some links between them. For example, GPs in Hawkhurst served residents in the two other parishes.

128 Brenchley & Matfield and Horsmonden parish councils each detailed their links with and shared characteristics with each other and other rural parishes around them. They indicated that they had no links with Capel and Pembury and limited connection and different characteristics and identity from Paddock Wood. Some residents confirmed the links between Brenchley & Matfield and Horsmonden parishes while others argued for Horsmonden to have its own councillor.

129 Christ Church and a resident of Goudhurst argued for the retention of the status quo in part because the current councillors were well known and served the community well. However, because the number of councillors across the borough is

changing, the ward boundaries and number of councillors representing each wards has to change.

130 We considered the comments we received and noted that Frittenden parish is too small to form a ward on its own. With one councillor such a ward would have a forecast variance of -69%. Retaining the boundaries of the existing Frittenden & Sissinghurst ward also produced a ward forecast to have 21% fewer electors than the borough average for a single-councillor ward while at the same time splitting a parish across district wards. We were not persuaded to create wards with such poor variances. For this reason, and because of the presumption under law to create three-councillor wards, we were not persuaded to adopt either of these proposals.

131 We also considered the Liberal Democrats' boundaries in light of a 39-councillor council. Although they produce wards with good electoral equality for two of the wards, its proposed Horsmonden & Lamberhurst ward would have very poor electoral equality (-20%) in light of decisions we have made for Paddock Wood.

132 We noted that the Cabinet's wards in this area split both Benenden and Goudhurst parishes with one of the wards outside our 10% tolerance. We sought to unite each of the parishes in a single ward. However, as mentioned above, including all of Goudhurst in a ward with the parishes to the south and east leaves a residual rural ward to the west with 20% fewer electors. Similarly, including Goudhurst parish with the rural wards to its west produces a ward with 15% more forecast electors than the average for the borough. We were therefore not persuaded to unite this parish in a single ward.

133 After careful consideration, we based our draft recommendations on the Cabinet's proposed boundaries for three wards in the area with one modification. In line with comments from Hawkhurst Parish Council and a resident, we have included all of Benenden parish in a single ward to the south. With a forecast variance of -14% it is outside our usual 10% tolerance range, but we consider that this is the best balance of our statutory criteria in this area.

134 We have included the north of Goudhurst parish (Curtisden Green and Goudhurst parish wards) in a Rural Tunbridge Wells ward together with Brenchley & Matfield, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst parishes. Bedgebury Cross and Kilndown areas in the south of Goudhurst parish are included in a ward with Benenden, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst parishes.

135 We consider these wards the best balance of our statutory criteria in light of the evidence we have received. On our tour we noted the good road/transport links between the various parts of each of these wards.

136 Cranbrook, Sissinghurst & Frittenden ward is forecast to have 14% fewer electors while Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst and Rural Tunbridge Wells wards are forecast to have 4% and 6% more electors respectively, than the average for the borough by 2028.

137 We welcome comments on the names of these wards including alternatives that don't list all the constituent parishes. In particular, we welcome comments and an alternative name for our Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst ward.

Conclusions

138 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Tunbridge Wells, referencing the 2022 and 2028 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2022	2028
Number of councillors	39	39
Number of electoral wards	13	13
Average number of electors per councillor	2,186	2,334
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Draft recommendations

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council should be made up of 39 councillors serving 13 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 Tunbridge Wells. You can also view our draft recommendations for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

139 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.

140 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, Tunbridge Wells 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.

141 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 Paddock Wood and Southborough.

142 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Paddock Wood parish.

Draft recommendations

Paddock Wood Town Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Paddock Wood East	7
Paddock Wood West	5
Paddock Wood South	1

143 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Southborough parish.

Draft recommendations

Southborough Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
East	1
High Brooms	5
North	7
West	5

Have your say

144 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole borough or just a part of it.

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

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

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

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

148 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 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.

149 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of electors.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

150 Electoral equality:

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

151 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?

152 Effective local government:

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

153 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at www.lqbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

154 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

155 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

156 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 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in 2024.

Equalities

157 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Cranbrook, Sissinghurst & Frittenden	3	5,579	1,860	-15%	6,041	2,014	-14%
2	Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst	3	7,010	2,337	7%	7,312	2,437	4%
3	Paddock Wood	3	6,176	2,059	-6%	7,337	2,446	5%
4	Pembury & Capel	3	6,281	2,094	-4%	7,450	2,483	6%
5	Royal Tunbridge Wells Central	3	6,615	2,205	1%	7,044	2,348	1%
6	Royal Tunbridge Wells Grosvenor & Hilbert	3	6,073	2,024	-7%	6,336	2,112	-10%
7	Royal Tunbridge Wells North	3	6,577	2,192	0%	6,791	2,264	-3%
8	Royal Tunbridge Wells North Woods	3	5,988	1,996	-9%	6,348	2,116	-9%

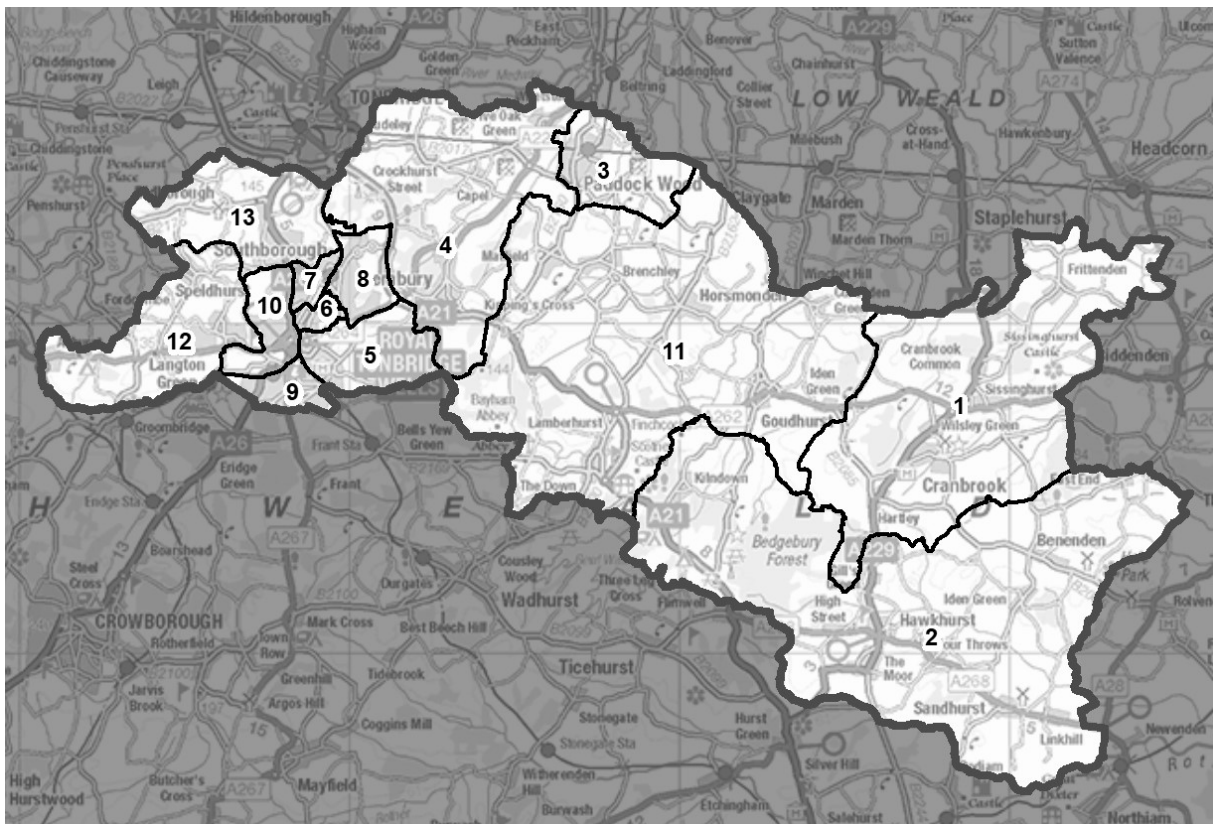
	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
9	Royal Tunbridge Wells South	3	6,819	2,273	4%	7,133	2,378	2%
10	Royal Tunbridge Wells West	3	6,192	2,064	-6%	6,391	2,130	-9%
11	Rural Tunbridge Wells	3	7,145	2,382	9%	7,410	2,470	6%
12	Rusthall & Speldhurst	3	7,505	2,502	14%	7,844	2,615	12%
13	Southborough & Bidborough	3	7,311	2,437	11%	7,597	2,532	8%
	Totals	39	85,271	-	-	91,034	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,186	-	-	2,334	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Tunbridge Wells 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



Number	Ward name
1	Cranbrook, Sissinghurst & Frittenden
2	Hawkhurst, Benenden & South Goudhurst
3	Paddock Wood
4	Pembury & Capel
5	Royal Tunbridge Wells Central
6	Royal Tunbridge Wells Grosvenor & Hilbert
7	Royal Tunbridge Wells North
8	Royal Tunbridge Wells North Woods
9	Royal Tunbridge Wells South
10	Royal Tunbridge Wells West
11	Rural Tunbridge Wells
12	Rusthall & Speldhurst
13	Southborough & Bidborough

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/kent/tunbridge-wells

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:
www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/tunbridge-wells

Political Groups

- Paddock Wood Labour Party
- Southborough & High Brooms Labour Party Branch
- Tunbridge Wells Constituency Labour Party
- Tunbridge Wells Liberal Democrat Councillor Group

Councillors

- Councillor A. Britcher (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Rusthall Parish Council)
- Councillor A. Bullion (Southborough Town Council)
- Councillor B. Edwards (Rusthall Parish Council)
- Councillor P. Gripper (Rusthall Parish Council)
- Councillor G. Pethurst (Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council)
- Councillor H. Pound (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council)
- Councillor C. Woodward (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council)⁷
- Tunbridge Wells Council Cabinet⁸ councillors

Local Organisations

- Beulah Road Residents' Association
- Capel United Church
- Christ Church Kilndown with St Mary's – Goudhurst
- Culverden Residents' Association
- Royal Wells Park Residents' Association

Parish and Town Councils

- Brenchley & Matfield Parish Council
- Capel Parish Council
- Frittenden Parish Council
- Goudhurst Parish Council
- Hawkhurst Parish Council

⁷ Pre-May 2022 elections.

⁸ Pre-May 2022 elections.

- Horsmonden Parish Council
- Rusthall Parish Council
- Speldhurst Parish Council

Local Residents

- 83 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

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

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

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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

Local Government Boundary Commission for
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50 Victoria Street, London
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www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

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