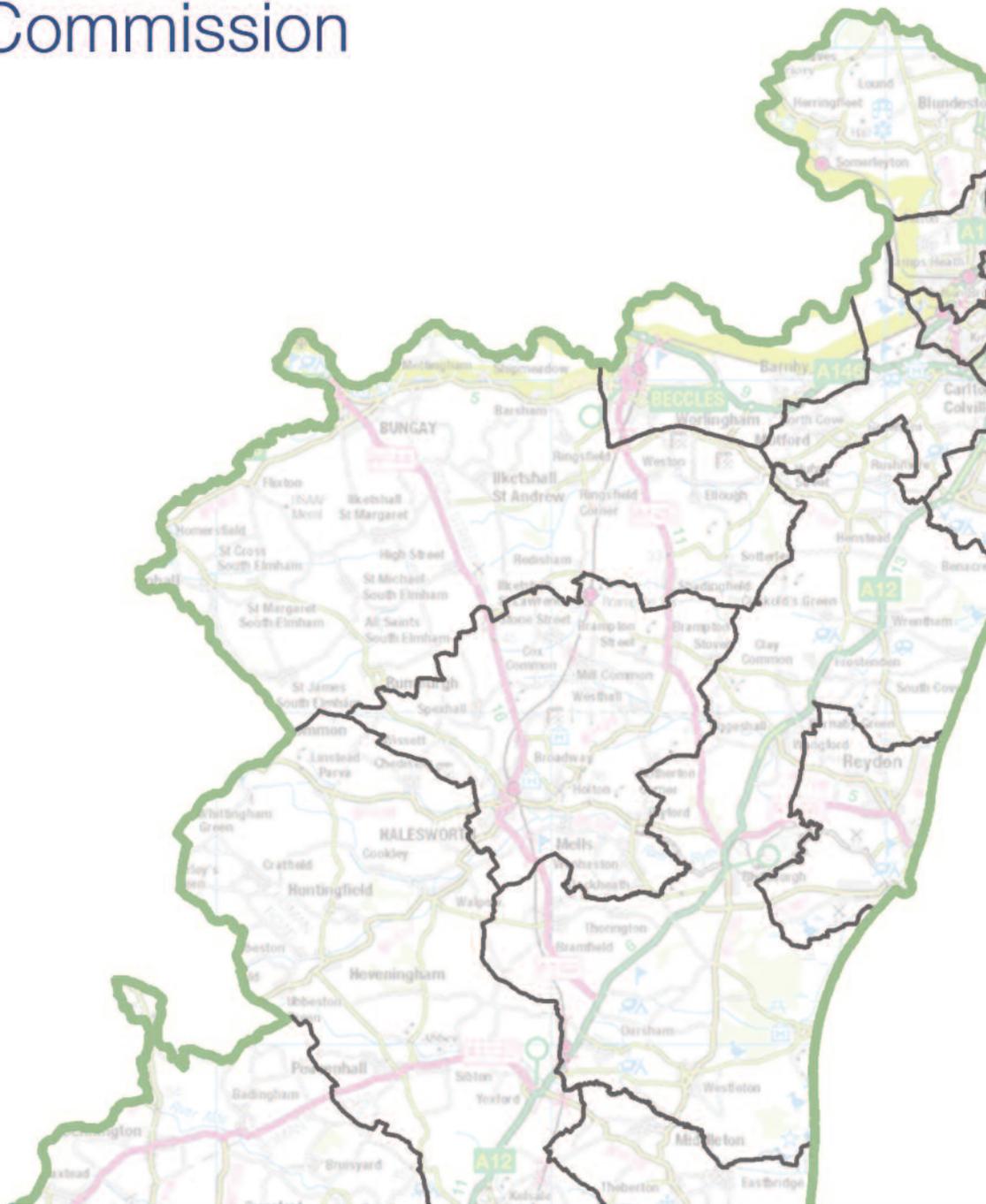


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for East Suffolk

Final recommendations

October 2018

Translations and other formats

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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 East Suffolk?

4 The Secretary of State has decided to create a new authority of East Suffolk. We are conducting a review of East Suffolk to ensure that the new district council has appropriate electoral arrangements. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal. We also seek to ensure that wards reflect local communities and ensure effective and convenient local government.

Our proposals for East Suffolk

- East Suffolk should be represented by 55 councillors.
- East Suffolk should have 29 wards.

5 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for East Suffolk.

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)
 - Susan Johnson OBE
 - Peter Maddison QPM
 - Amanda Nobbs OBE
 - Steve Robinson
 - Andrew Scallan CBE
-
- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

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

1 Introduction

8 In February 2018, the Government approved a bid from Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council to merge. A Local Government Changes Order² was subsequently approved by Parliament on 24 May 2018, establishing a new East Suffolk Council from 1 April 2019. It was the view of the Commission that an electoral review of the area was appropriate at the earliest opportunity. This will ensure the new council has electoral arrangements that reflect its functions in time for its first elections in May 2019.

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

- The wards in East Suffolk 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 district.

What is an electoral review?

10 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

11 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

12 This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
4 May 2018	Existing local authorities submit proposals for warding arrangements and the number of councillors
19 June 2018	Commission agrees its draft recommendations
3 July 2018	Publication of draft recommendations; start of consultation
27 August 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
23 October 2018	Publication of final recommendations

² The East Suffolk (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 (S.I 2018/640).

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 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.

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.

	2017	2023
Electorate of East Suffolk	190,890	201,837
Number of councillors	55	55
Average number of electors per councillor	3,471	3,670

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 but two of our proposed wards for East Suffolk will have good electoral equality by 2023.

18 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the new council – these have been decided by Parliament and we cannot amend them. Our recommendations will not 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 warding 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 2023, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2018. These

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.

forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predict an increase in the electorate of around 6% by 2023.

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 final recommendations.

Number of councillors

22 In January 2018, representatives of the existing councils in the area submitted a proposal to The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government that the new Council have 55 councillors. In developing its proposal, the new authority was encouraged by the Ministry to follow our Guidance in developing its proposals. The Secretary of State subsequently laid a Local Government Changes Order in Parliament⁵ to create the new authority with 55 councillors.

23 As part of its submission on warding arrangements, the Council confirmed its preference for a council size of 55. We noted that the proposal for a 55-member council for East Suffolk would constitute a reduction of 39% in terms of the overall number of councillors representing the area to be covered by the new authority. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that the proposed number of councillors will make sure the Council can carry out its new roles and responsibilities effectively.

24 It is open to the Commission to amend the total number of councillors by one or two if we consider it will facilitate a better warding pattern. However, in East Suffolk we considered that 55 councillors would provide a warding pattern that would meet the statutory criteria and we therefore developed our draft recommendations based on a 55-member council. During consultation on the draft recommendations we received a number of submissions that considered that a 55-member council would result in wards that were too large. However, we did not receive any information that persuaded us that we should adopt an alternative number of councillors.

25 Having considered the evidence received throughout the review, we have decided to confirm our proposed council size of 55 as final.

Draft recommendations and consultation

26 Prior to developing our draft recommendations, we received two submissions on ward boundaries for the new council. Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils (hereafter referred to as 'the Councils') provided a detailed district-wide submission, and Councillor Deacon put forward a detailed submission for Felixstowe. Our draft recommendations were based largely on the Councils' district-wide proposals. In some areas, we considered that the scheme did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria, so we identified alternative wards. We also toured the area in order to look at the various different options on the ground. This tour of the area helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

⁵ The East Suffolk (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 (S.I 2018/640)

27 In response to our consultation on our draft recommendations, we received 83 submissions. These included submissions from the Councils, Dr Dan Poulter MP, political groups, local organisations, parish and town councils, and local residents. The Councils stated that they were broadly supportive of the draft recommendations, but suggested some amendments including names changes in three wards.

28 Dr Dan Poulter MP expressed his support for the draft recommendations, in particular supporting the warding patterns in the south of East Suffolk.

29 We received a number of submissions opposing the draft Sandlings and Blyth Estuary wards, along with a number of submissions regarding the draft Wainford ward. We received support for the proposed Carlford & Fynn Valley ward.

30 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with a number of modifications to the wards along the coast; we are proposing changes to the draft Blyth Estuary, Leiston, Sandlings and Deben & Ore wards as a result of evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. We are also recommending changes to the draft Rendlesham & Wickham Market ward. We are proposing a minor amendment between the Orwell & Villages and Martlesham & Purdis Farm ward, as well as moving away from our draft recommendations in Felixstowe. We are also making a number of ward name changes.

Final recommendations

31 Pages 8–26 detail our final recommendations for each area of East Suffolk. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁶ criteria of:

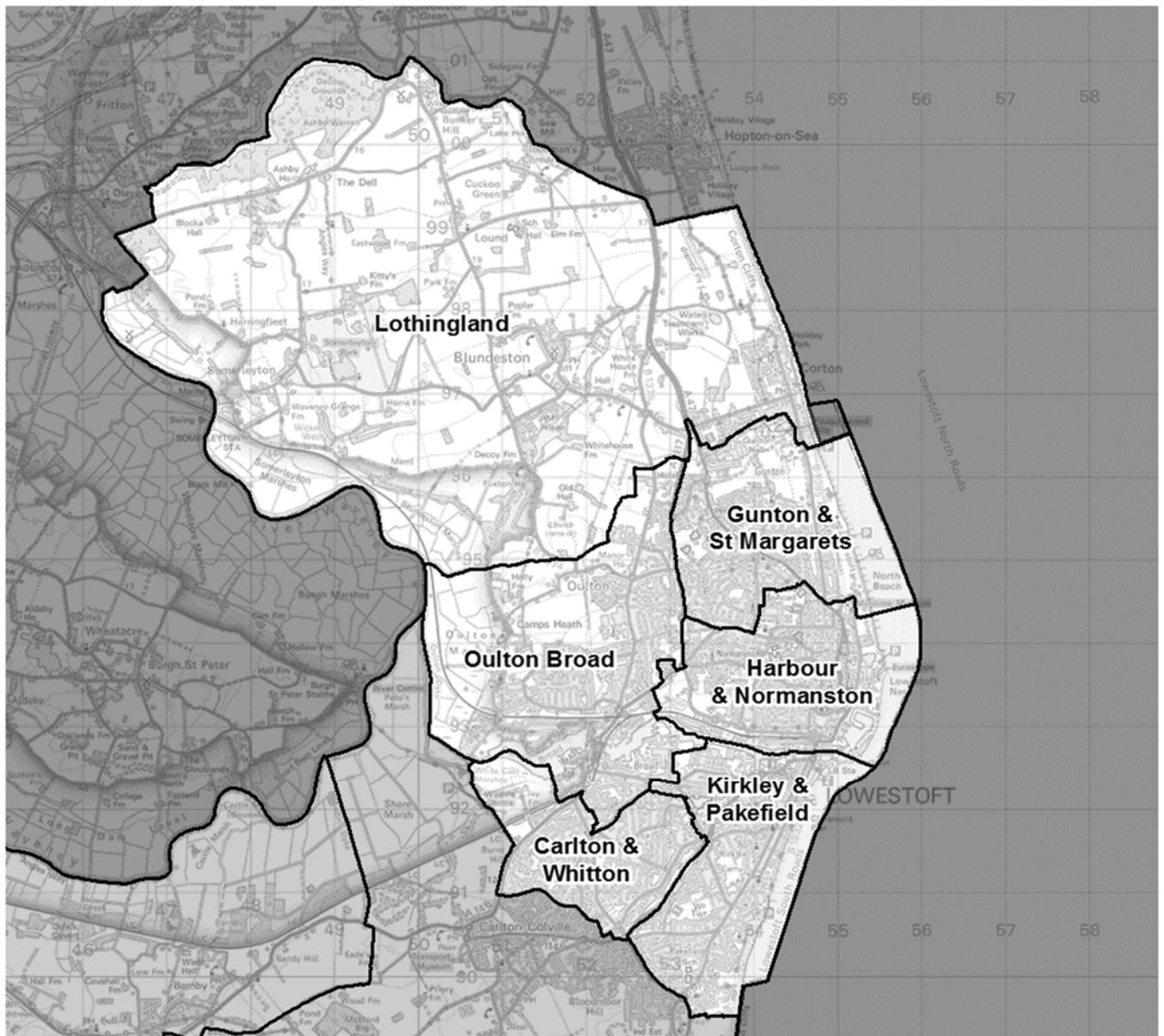
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

32 Our final recommendations are for eight three-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and 11 one-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.

33 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on page 31–3 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁶ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Lowestoft and surrounding area



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Carlton & Whitton	2	9%
Gunton & St Margarets	2	7%
Harbour & Normanston	3	5%
Kirkley & Pakefield	3	-2%
Lothingland	1	-12%
Oulton Broad	3	4%

Carlton & Whitton, Gunton & St Margarets, Harbour & Normanston and Kirkley & Pakefield

34 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received two submissions regarding the wards covering the Lowestoft area, along with general support from the Councils. A local resident queried the boundary of the proposed Gunton & St Margarets ward near the Benjamin Britten Music Academy, and requested that the boundary run continuously along the centre of the A1117. However, in this area the boundary follows the parish boundary, and to amend this area would result in an unviable parish ward with no electors.

35 Lowestoft Town Council opposed the draft recommendations in their submission, but did not provide an alternative warding pattern. As no alternative options were provided, we do not propose to make any alterations to the wards in this area as a result of the Town Council's submission.

36 We are therefore confirming our draft wards here as part of the final recommendations.

Lothingland

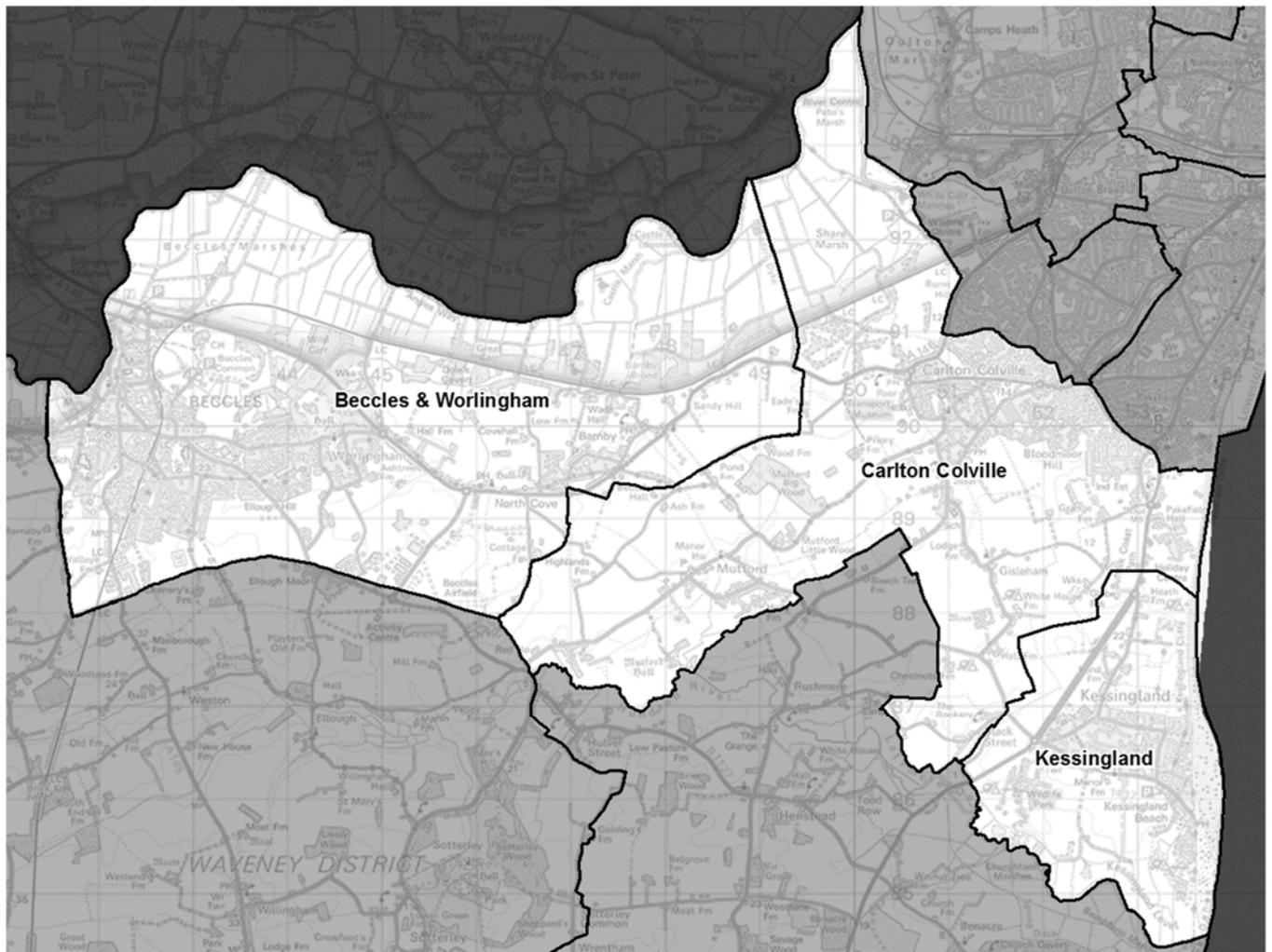
37 In response to the consultation on the draft recommendations for Lothingland, we received a submission from a local resident who queried whether a single councillor would be able to provide effective representation, given the size of the proposed ward. However, this submission did not provide for any alternative warding pattern for the area, and we are therefore not minded to amend the proposed ward here.

38 We note that the proposed Lothingland ward has a projected electoral variance of -12% by 2023. However, we consider that this ward follows strong and identifiable boundaries. We are therefore confirming this single-councillor ward as part of our final recommendations.

Oulton Broad

39 During the consultation, we received a submission from a local resident expressing concern over the inclusion of the village of Oulton within the proposed Oulton Broad ward, and what this alteration would mean for the payment of local charges. However, the proposed district ward in this area will have no effect on the administration or community charges of Oulton parish. As the submission did not provide for an alternative warding pattern in this area, we are not proposing to make any alterations here as part of our final recommendations.

Beccles, Carlton Colville and Kessingland



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Beccles & Worlingham	3	9%
Carlton Colville	2	4%
Kessingland	1	-2%

Beccles & Worlingham

40 The Councils objected to the draft recommendations in this area, and again recommended their original proposal for two wards here. During the previous stage of the review, the Councils proposed a two-councillor Beccles ward with a variance of 11%, covering Beccles parish only, and a single-councillor Worlingham ward with a variance of 4%, comprising the parishes of Worlingham, North Cove and Barnby. At that stage, we noted that there was no clear boundary between the Beccles and Worlingham parishes, and that the area would be better served by a three-councillor ward, combining the Councils' two proposed wards. This was supported by our visit to the area, during which we noted that the parish boundary does not act as a barrier between two separate communities.

41 We note the Councils' reiteration of their original proposals, and the statement that the parish of Worlingham should not be 'subsumed' into Beccles and that North Cove and Barnby are even 'lesser linked to Beccles'. However, we consider that the three-councillor ward would not prevent the individual communities from retaining their distinct identities, whilst also providing for a good level of electoral equality and providing for strong and identifiable boundaries. We do not consider that there was any information provided in the submission made by the Councils to justify moving away from the draft recommendations here.

42 A local resident queried the electorate forecasts in this area; however, we have confirmed with the local authority that the development to which the resident refers had not been formally accepted in any form by the Councils at the time at which the electorate figures and projections for this review were agreed.

43 We are therefore confirming our draft Beccles & Worlingham ward as part of the final recommendations.

Carlton Colville and Kessingland

44 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, the Commission did not receive any submissions relating to the proposed Kessingland ward. One submission was received, from a local resident, in support of the proposed Carlton Colville ward as it keeps the area known as The Dales in one ward. We are therefore confirming them as part of the final recommendations.

Bungay & Wainford

45 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, the Commission received a number of submissions relating to this area. Bungay Town Council opposed the draft recommendations here, stating that a number of the communities included in the ward looked more towards Beccles than Bungay, and that the Wainford name proposed for this ward at the draft stage was not representative of the area covered. The Town Council considered that the size of the ward and the number of parishes contained within it would affect the level of representation from councillors, and proposed that the grouped parishes of Weston, Shadingfield, Ellough, Willingham St Mary and Sotterley should instead be included in the neighbouring Beccles & Worlingham ward. However, including these parishes in a Beccles ward would result in an electoral variance of 14%.

46 The Commission also received a submission from the Bungay & The Saints branch of the Waveney Constituency Labour Party ('the Labour Party Group'), proposing that the parish of Ellough be included in the neighbouring Beccles & Worlingham ward as it is 'effectively the industrial estate' for the area. However, this would require splitting the grouped parish council outlined above, and we do not consider that this would provide for effective and convenient local government. We are therefore not recommending this change as part of the final recommendations.

47 Two local residents and the Labour Party Group stated in their submissions that they considered that the proposed ward in this area was too large, and should be split to contain Bungay in one ward, and the remaining parishes in another. However, a single-councillor Bungay ward containing only the parish of Bungay would have a projected electoral variance of 19% by 2023, and we do not consider that any compelling evidence has been received to justify this level of electoral inequality. We are therefore not proposing to alter the ward boundaries here as part of the final recommendations.

48 Both the Town Council and the Councils recommended in their submissions that the ward name here be changed to Bungay & Wainford to be more reflective of the area covered. We agree with this modification and are therefore proposing to rename this ward as Bungay & Wainford as part of the final recommendations.

Halesworth & Blything

49 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received four submissions on this area along with general support from the Council. A local resident requested that the parishes of Cookley, Walpole, Chediston, Bramfield and Thorington be included in a ward with Halesworth. A similar proposal was also put forward by Halesworth Town Council, which suggested that Cookley, Walpole and Chediston be included in the ward with Halesworth. However, little evidence regarding community identity was provided to support this proposal, and it would result in a variance of -23% in the neighbouring Kelsale & Yoxford ward. A number of alterations would therefore be required in order to mitigate this variance. While we note the alternatives proposed we have not been persuaded that this ward does not reflect the statutory criteria. We do not consider that an alternative warding pattern resulting in a ward with a poor variance or which requires significant knock-on effects to mitigate such a poor variance is justified. We are therefore not proposing to make an alteration here.

50 A local resident did not provide comments on the boundary of this ward but considered that the draft name of 'Blything' was not representative of the area, suggesting Blyth Valley as an alternative. Another local resident proposed renaming the draft ward as Halesworth to reflect the largest settlement of the ward.

51 We are proposing to rename this ward as Halesworth & Blything as part of the final recommendations, as we consider that this name is reflective of both the urban and rural areas of the ward. This also reflects our general approach to ward names in primarily rural wards where we have sought to name what we consider is the largest settlement along with another name to reflect the area as a whole, if there is one known to us. We are not proposing to alter the boundaries of this ward as part of the final recommendations.

Kelsale & Yoxford

52 We received four submissions relating to this area, in addition to general support from the Councils. Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council expressed a general concern over the size of the proposed ward and stated that their links lie more with the Saxmundham area; however, no alternative warding pattern was provided here.

53 A local resident opposed the draft recommendations in this area, stating that Walpole, Cratfield and Linstead should be included in a Halesworth ward, and that Leiston should be included in Kelsale & Yoxford. However, this proposal would have significant knock-on effects on the surrounding wards, and no evidence was put forward to justify moving away from the draft recommendations here.

54 A local resident supported the boundaries here but proposed an alternative name of Kelsale & Chediston; however, we are content that the two primary settlements are represented in the name of this ward and are not proposing to alter it. Another local resident queried the eastern boundary of this ward; however, as this follows the parish boundary in the area, we are content to retain this as part of the final recommendations.

Southwold and Wrentham, Wangford & Westleton

27 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received three submissions in addition to general support from the Councils for the draft Blyth Estuary ward. Blythburgh with Bulcamp & Hinton Parish Council expressed general concern over the number of parishes included in the ward, but did not provide for an alternative warding pattern.

28 The East Suffolk Liberal Democrats considered that the draft Blyth Estuary ward was too large, and opposed our assertion that the coastal focus of the area towards Southwold would act as a unifying factor for the other communities in the area. They recommended an alternative warding pattern here with one ward focused on Southwold.

29 A local resident expressed concern about the size of the draft ward and stated that Southwold should be the focus of a smaller ward, given its prominence as a tourist destination in the area. The submission also put forward a proposal that would

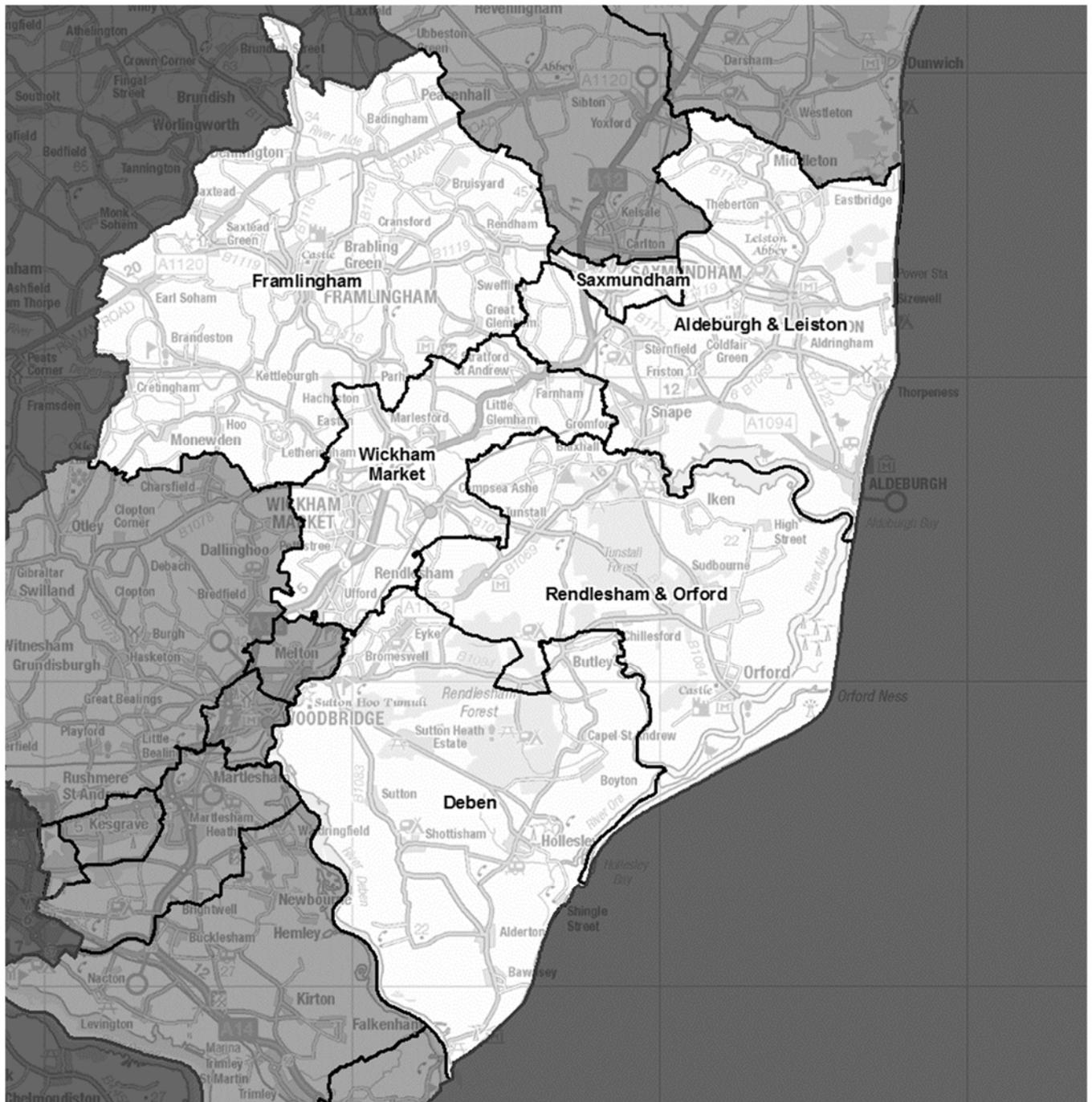
require significant alterations to the surrounding wards in the area, but provided little evidence in support of such a radical change.

55 We recognise that the draft ward here is a large ward covering a diverse range of communities, and have identified an alternative warding pattern. We consider that a single-councillor ward focused on the coastal community in and around Southwold, and a single-councillor ward representing those communities along the A12 corridor, would allow for effective representation in the area whilst allowing for good levels of electoral equality. We consider that our new proposed Southwold ward, comprising the parishes of Southwold, Reydon and Walberswick, reflects the distinctive and more tourism-focused communities in this area. While we note that there is no road access between Walberswick and the remainder of the Southwold ward, we consider that this does not inhibit the community connections in this area and are satisfied that this ward reflects our statutory criteria.

56 We note that the proposed Wrentham, Wangford & Westleton ward still comprises parishes which respondents consider do not have strong connections. However, we consider that creating a single-councillor ward here with good electoral equality will allow for effective representation, and that the A12 provides for good internal transport links. We also consider that, by creating a separate ward based on Southwold, this ward focused along the A12 will have a better focus for community identity. We also do not consider that any viable alternative options to this ward were received during the consultation.

57 We are therefore including a single-councillor Southwold ward with a variance of -6% and a single-councillor Wrentham, Wangford & Westleton ward with a variance of -5% as part of the final recommendations.

Central West Suffolk



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Aldeburgh & Leiston	3	-7%
Deben	1	0%
Framlingham	2	-4%
Rendlesham & Orford	1	9%
Saxmundham	1	-5%
Wickham Market	1	6%

Aldeburgh & Leiston, Deben, Rendlesham & Orford and Wickham Market

58 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received a number of submissions regarding the proposals in this area. We received general support for the wards here from the Councils and a local resident. Some of the submissions opposed the draft Sandlings ward in particular. In our draft recommendations, we recognised that the proposed Sandlings ward may not fully reflect the communities in the area and asked for further views on alternative warding patterns here. The Aldeburgh Society opposed the Commission's draft recommendations, stating that the strong community in Aldeburgh would not be adequately reflected by the draft single-councillor ward. They noted that Aldeburgh shares strong connections with the neighbouring Leiston area and provided detailed evidence in their submission about how Aldeburgh residents use leisure and shopping facilities in Leiston.

59 Aldeburgh Town Council considered that the town of Aldeburgh should be represented by two councillors because of the stresses experienced on a seasonal basis. A local resident opposed the draft recommendations for this area, and proposed an alternative warding pattern linking Aldeburgh to parishes to the north but excluding Leiston.

60 Leiston & District Labour Party objected in general terms to the proposed draft wards in this area, in particular the decision not to use the River Alde as a boundary; however, the submission did not provide any alternative warding patterns. A local resident stated that the geographical barrier of the River Alde estuary has, historically, limited links between areas to the north and the south, which we had combined in our draft recommendations. This submission also noted strong local links between Aldeburgh and Leiston, as residents from both towns share a number of facilities.

61 A number of the respondents, including local residents, who opposed our draft recommendations in relation to Aldeburgh considered that the town should be represented by two councillors because of the seasonal pressures, the high number of second homes in the area, and the impact of large infrastructure projects such as wind farms and Sizewell C.

62 We have been persuaded by the evidence received that the River Alde should be the boundary between wards in this area and that Aldeburgh should be linked to the north with Leiston. We are persuaded that our draft recommendations would not reflect communities effectively and that the River Alde acts as a barrier in this area rather than as a focal point.

63 Whilst we note the representations that considered Aldeburgh should be represented by two councillors, this did not in itself persuade the Commission during its deliberations. It was arguments and information about communities that the Commission was persuaded by and in particular the River Alde acting as a boundary between communities. The number of members a ward has follows the decision to identify a ward that reflects community identities which we are persuaded our three-councillor Aldeburgh & Leiston ward will do.

64 Accordingly, we are proposing a three-councillor Aldeburgh & Leiston ward, comprising the entirety of our draft Leiston ward along with the parishes of

Aldeburgh, Friston and Snape, as well as the parishes of Sternfield and Benhall which were included in the draft Rendlesham & Wickham Market ward. While we did not receive representations directly about Sternfield and Benhall parishes we consider that they have strong road links into the Aldeburgh & Leiston ward and are a similar distance from these towns as they were to Wickham Market in the Rendlesham & Wickham Market ward in which they were included as part of the draft recommendations.

65 Given the decision to create a three-councillor Aldeburgh & Leiston ward, and after considering all of the representations received, we are also making a number of changes to the wards to the south of the River Alde. We consider that these changes are broadly supported by the evidence received during the consultation, and as well as facilitating the Aldeburgh & Leiston ward, also provide for wards that reflect our statutory criteria.

66 Our draft Rendlesham & Wickham Market ward was supported by Dr Dan Poulter, MP for the area, as well as in general terms by the Councils. However, we also received representations that stated that the ward should be divided in to two single-councillor wards with each ward based on Wickham Market or Rendlesham.

67 As part of our final recommendations, we are proposing a single-councillor Wickham Market ward focused on Wickham Market and the parishes around it along the A12. We consider that this ward allows for a smaller ward focused on Wickham Market and which is likely to reflect community identities. We note it keeps together in one ward the parishes of Stratford St Andrew, Farnham, Marlesford and Little Glemham, which we consider have a particular community of interest given the 'campaign to secure a bypass for [the four parishes]' as noted by Dr Dan Poulter MP. We also note Marlesford Parish Council's support for a single-councillor ward based on Wickham Market and have included the parish of Campsea Ashe in this ward on the basis of the shared community events between the two parishes.

68 We have also identified a single-councillor Rendlesham & Orford ward. We consider that this ward responds to the request to identify smaller single-member wards as noted by Boyton Parish Council who considered that the draft Deben & Ore ward was too large. We also consider that it responds to Bromeswell Parish Council who supported the draft Deben & Ore ward on the basis that it linked villages of a similar size with similar interests; we note our Deben ward is smaller than the ward outlined in our draft recommendations and continues to link villages of a similar size with similar interests.

69 Rendlesham Parish Council expressed a preference for a single-councillor ward and identified a number of parishes surrounding Rendlesham which it considered it should be linked with. We note that as part of our final recommendations we have not been able to identify a pattern that will facilitate this ward but consider that in identifying a single-councillor ward for Rendlesham we have provided for a ward that will have a greater focus for its community.

70 We have identified a pattern of wards based on maintaining entire parishes which we consider provides a good reflection of the statutory criteria and broadly responds to the representations received during the consultation. We consider that using the River Alde, River Deben and Butley River as the boundaries between our proposed Deben and Rendlesham & Orford wards we are providing clear and identifiable boundaries and we are satisfied that they meet the statutory criteria.

71 We are proposing a single-councillor Deben ward, comprising the parishes of Butley, Eyke, Capel St Andrew, Boyton, Bromeswell, Sutton Heath, Sutton, Hollesley, Shottisham, Alderton, Bawdsey and Ramsholt, with a projected electoral variance of 0% by 2023. We are also proposing a single-councillor Rendlesham & Orford ward, comprising the parishes of Blaxhall, Tunstall, Iken, Sudbourne, Rendlesham, Wantisden, Chillesford, Orford and Gedgrave. This Rendlesham & Orford ward has a projected electoral variance of 9%.

Framlingham and Saxmundham

72 We received support for the proposed Framlingham ward from Dr Dan Poulter, MP, who stated that the parishes in the area look towards Framlingham for services. The Councils also expressed general support for this ward. We did not receive any substantive submissions relating to the proposed Saxmundham ward, with the exception of receiving general support from the Councils. We are therefore confirming our draft Framlingham and Saxmundham wards as part of the final recommendations.

Kesgrave, Martlesham and Woodbridge



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Carlford & Fynn Valley	2	-5%
Kesgrave	3	2%
Martlesham & Purdis Farm	2	5%
Melton	1	-1%
Orwell & Villages	2	12%
Rushmere St Andrew	1	-1%
Woodbridge	2	-8%

Carlford & Fynn Valley

73 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received a number of submissions relating to the proposed Carlford & Fynn Valley ward, including 19 submissions supporting the proposals. A number of residents and a local councillor expressed their support for the proposed boundaries, stating that the ward kept rural villages with similar interests together. The proposed ward was also supported by Dr Dan Poulter MP, who stated that the Carlford & Fynn Valley ward was reflective of the parishes' rural nature and the way in which the A12 acts as a boundary. Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford Parish Councils also supported the proposals in this area.

74 Otley Parish Council opposed the draft Carlford & Fynn Valley ward, stating that the area would be better served by a smaller ward represented by a single councillor. Bredfield Parish Council also opposed the proposals; the Parish Council accepted the proposal to include Bredfield in a rural ward, but considered that the proposed Carlford & Fynn Valley ward should be split into two single-councillor wards to provide for a more 'logical' councillor workload. This proposal was also put forward by Westerfield Parish Council, stating that different areas within the proposed ward experienced different issues and therefore two single-councillor wards would be more well suited to the area. A county councillor expressed general support but considered that two single-councillor wards would be more appropriate in the Carlford & Fynn Valley area, stating that the parishes closer to Ipswich and Kesgrave would have different concerns to those in the north and east of the proposed ward.

75 We do not consider that we have received persuasive evidence to create two single-councillor wards in this area, as a number of submissions explicitly supported the proposals. We are therefore retaining a two-councillor Carlford & Fynn Valley ward as part of the final recommendations.

Kesgrave and Rushmere St Andrew

76 Six submissions were received during the consultation on the proposed Kesgrave ward. These submissions, from Kesgrave Town Council, four district councillors and an MP, supported the proposed Kesgrave ward.

77 A submission was received from a local resident in support of the parish warding arrangements in the proposed Rushmere St Andrew ward. A local resident requested that the Rushmere St Andrew ward be extended to include an area of Kesgrave; however, no evidence was provided to support making an alteration to this ward.

78 We are therefore not proposing to make any changes to the draft Kesgrave and Rushmere St Andrew wards as part of our final recommendations.

Martlesham & Purdis Farm and Orwell & Villages

79 We received a number of submissions during the consultation on the draft recommendations referring to the proposed Martlesham & Purdis Farm and Orwell & Villages wards. A local resident objected to the proposals linking Martlesham with Purdis Farm; however, no alternative warding pattern was provided.

80 A local councillor objected to the proposed Martlesham & Purdis Farm ward, stating a preference for one of the warding proposals put forward by the Councils during the previous stage of the review. We acknowledge this opposition to the draft recommendations; however, we note that the Councils moved away from their original proposals in this area to allow for a 'clearer distinction between the suburban areas of Martlesham and Purdis Farm' and the more rural areas. We are therefore not proposing to change the proposed ward to reflect the earlier proposal from the Councils here.

81 Waldringfield Parish Council stated in their submission that the parish is much more strongly linked to the area included in the proposed Orwell & Villages ward, and should not be included in Martlesham & Purdis Farm. The Parish Council state that the parish shares a number of services and facilities with the parishes in the proposed Orwell & Villages ward, including a cross-parish Speedwatch scheme, leisure facilities and community events. This proposal was also put forward by a local councillor, who stated that the rural nature and close parish connections in Orwell & Villages reflected the character of Waldringfield. We consider that the evidence received regarding Waldringfield was persuasive, and are proposing to include the parish in the Orwell & Villages ward as part of the final recommendations. We note that this results in a projected electoral variance of 12% for the Orwell & Villages ward. However, we consider that the strong local connections demonstrated to us by respondents to the consultation justify this variance.

Melton and Woodbridge

82 We received support for the proposed wards in Melton and Woodbridge from the Councils, as well as from the MP. We did not receive any other submissions regarding these wards, and we are therefore confirming Melton and Woodbridge as part of the final recommendations.

Felixstowe



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Eastern Felixstowe	3	-2%
Western Felixstowe	3	-9%

Eastern Felixstowe and Western Felixstowe

83 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received a number of submissions relating to the proposed wards in Felixstowe. The Councils, Felixstowe Town Council and two local residents supported the draft recommendations, agreeing with a north/south arrangement of wards. Felixstowe Town Council supported the draft recommendations, on the basis that they would not affect the existing Town Council warding arrangements.

84 However, we also received opposition to our recommendations. While some respondents opposed the proposals on the basis that they provided for multi-member wards or provided little justification for their opposition, others provided an alternative scheme supported with evidence of community identity. Those who opposed our draft recommendations considered that the boundary between the draft wards was not clear.

85 Felixstowe Town Centre Residents' Association and two branches of the East Suffolk Liberal Democrats submitted proposals to alter the pattern of wards in Felixstowe – both Liberal Democrat groups submitted the same proposals. The proposals submitted focused on splitting the town into an Eastern Felixstowe ward and a Western Felixstowe ward. Both sets of proposals identified the A154 Garrison Lane as an identifiable and locally acknowledged boundary between the east and west of Felixstowe. The Liberal Democrats noted that the Walton area is more strongly connected to the western part of the town than to the east. The Liberal Democrats' proposed Eastern Felixstowe ward would comprise the entirety of the coastline of Felixstowe, along with the Old Felixstowe area. The Felixstowe Town Centre Residents' Association proposed a similar ward here, stating that an Eastern Felixstowe ward would contain the town centre shopping area, as well as the small area of shops on High Road East. Both groups considered that the A154 Garrison Lane would provide for a strong and identifiable boundary between two wards. These alternative proposals were supported by a number of local residents, who stated that they would be easily recognised locally as well as retaining clearly defined historical settlements in the same ward which we are persuaded reflect current communities.

86 The Commission considered all of the information received during the consultation and balanced the fact that the Councils and the Town Council supported the draft recommendations with the persuasive evidence in support of the alternatives provided. While recognising that the draft recommendations did receive some support, we consider that the proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrats should be adopted, subject to one amendment.

87 We are therefore moving away from our draft recommendations in Felixstowe to recommend an Eastern Felixstowe ward and a Western Felixstowe ward.

88 We were persuaded that a Western Felixstowe ward would better reflect communities, provide for effective and convenient local government and have a stronger and more easily identifiable boundary than our draft recommendations. We were persuaded that the area of Walton has strong links to the south and west of the railway line with residents both sides of the railway line going to Maidstone Infant School and residents of Walton using the supermarket and Haven Medical Centre in

West ward. We also note that the Liberal Democrats noted the community links forged by the linking of St Mary's Church in Walton with St Philips Church which are both in the proposed Eastern Felixstowe ward.

89 We agree with the proposal to unite the seafront in an Eastern Felixstowe ward which stretches from Landguard in the south to Felixstowe Ferry in the north. We agree that having this coastal area in one ward with 'shared interests and issues such as coastal erosion, floor risks and tourism' will provide for effective and convenient local government. We note that this ward joins the town retail centre and beachfront together providing for a community more focused on these industries rather than the port focus of the Western Felixstowe ward.

90 We also agree with the respondents who noted that that the boundary between the wards outlined in our draft recommendations is not clear as it weaves around the area to the east of the High Street. We agree with the use of Garrison Lane and consider it is very clear and identifiable. We are, however, proposing one amendment which is to transfer houses north of Langer Road into the Western Felixstowe ward and to use the railway line as the boundary between the two wards instead. We consider that while Garrison Lane is very clear, where it turns into Langer Road the railway line should be used instead. During our tour of the area we considered that residents living both sides of Langer Road should be included in the same ward and we have not been persuaded that the boundary proposed here should be adopted.

91 We consider that the proposed wards have good internal connectivity and are representative of the communities in the area where we have received such evidence during the consultation. Accordingly, we are proposing an Eastern Felixstowe ward and a Western Felixstowe ward with forecast variances of -2% and -9% respectively, by 2023.

Conclusions

92 The table below shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2017 and 2023 electorate figures.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2017	2023
Number of councillors	55	55
Number of electoral wards	29	29
Average number of electors per councillor	3,471	3,670
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	5	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

East Suffolk Council should be made up of 55 councillors serving 29 wards representing 11 single-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and eight three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for East Suffolk Council.

You can also view our final recommendations for East Suffolk on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Parish electoral arrangements

93 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.

94 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, East Suffolk 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.

95 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 Felixstowe Town Council, Lowestoft Town Council, Oulton Parish Council, Oulton Broad Parish Council and Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council.

96 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 Felixstowe parish.

Final recommendation	
Felixstowe Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Coastal	8
Marshes	1
Port	4
Walton	3

97 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 Lowestoft parish.

Final recommendation	
Lowestoft Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing eight wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Elmtree	3
Gunton	1
Harbour & Normanston	6
Kirkley	3
Pakefield	3
St Margarets East	2
St Margarets West	1
Tom Crisp	1

98 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 Oulton parish.

Final recommendation

Oulton Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Oulton East	1
Oulton West	9

99 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 Oulton Broad parish.

Final recommendation

Oulton Broad Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Oulton Broad North	7
Oulton Broad South East	3
Oulton Broad South West	2

100 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 Rushmere St Andrew parish.

Final recommendation

Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Rushmere St Andrew Beech	2
Rushmere St Andrew Tower	10
Rushmere St Andrew Village	3

3 What happens next?

101 We have now completed our review of East Suffolk 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

102 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.

Appendix A

Final recommendations for East Suffolk Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Aldeburgh & Leiston	3	9,504	3,168	-9%	10,226	3,409	-7%
2	Beccles & Worlingham	3	11,873	3,958	14%	12,013	4,004	9%
3	Bungay & Wainford	2	6,984	3,492	1%	7,331	3,666	0%
4	Carlford & Fynn Valley	2	6,637	3,319	-4%	6,938	3,469	-5%
5	Carlton & Whitton	2	7,934	3,967	14%	7,985	3,993	9%
6	Carlton Colville	2	7,564	3,782	9%	7,641	3,820	4%
7	Deben	1	3,546	3,546	2%	3,676	3,676	0%
8	Eastern Felixstowe	3	10,162	3,387	-2%	10,802	3,601	-2%
9	Framlingham	2	6,293	3,147	-9%	7,052	3,526	-4%
10	Gunton & St Margarets	2	7,773	3,887	12%	7,828	3,914	7%
11	Halesworth & Blything	2	6,525	3,263	-6%	6,928	3,464	-6%

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12	Harbour & Normanston	3	11,259	3,753	8%	11,522	3,841	5%
13	Kelsale & Yoxford	1	3,245	3,245	-7%	3,322	3,322	-9%
14	Kesgrave	3	11,144	3,715	7%	11,196	3,732	2%
15	Kessingland	1	3,481	3,481	0%	3,607	3,607	-2%
16	Kirkley & Pakefield	3	10,683	3,561	3%	10,819	3,606	-2%
17	Lothingland	1	2,928	2,928	-16%	3,217	3,217	-12%
18	Martlesham & Purdis Farm	2	6,213	3,107	-10%	7,734	3,867	5%
19	Melton	1	3,264	3,264	-6%	3,636	3,636	-1%
20	Orwell & Villages	2	7,547	3,774	9%	8,191	4,096	12%
21	Oulton Broad	3	10,307	3,436	-1%	11,395	3,798	4%
22	Rendlesham & Orford	1	3,805	3,805	10%	4,006	4,006	9%
23	Rushmere St Andrew	1	3,513	3,513	1%	3,638	3,638	-1%
24	Saxmundham	1	3,212	3,212	-7%	3,504	3,504	-5%
25	Southwold	1	3,212	3,212	-7%	3,444	3,444	-6%
26	Western Felixstowe	3	8,708	2,903	-16%	10,058	3,353	-9%

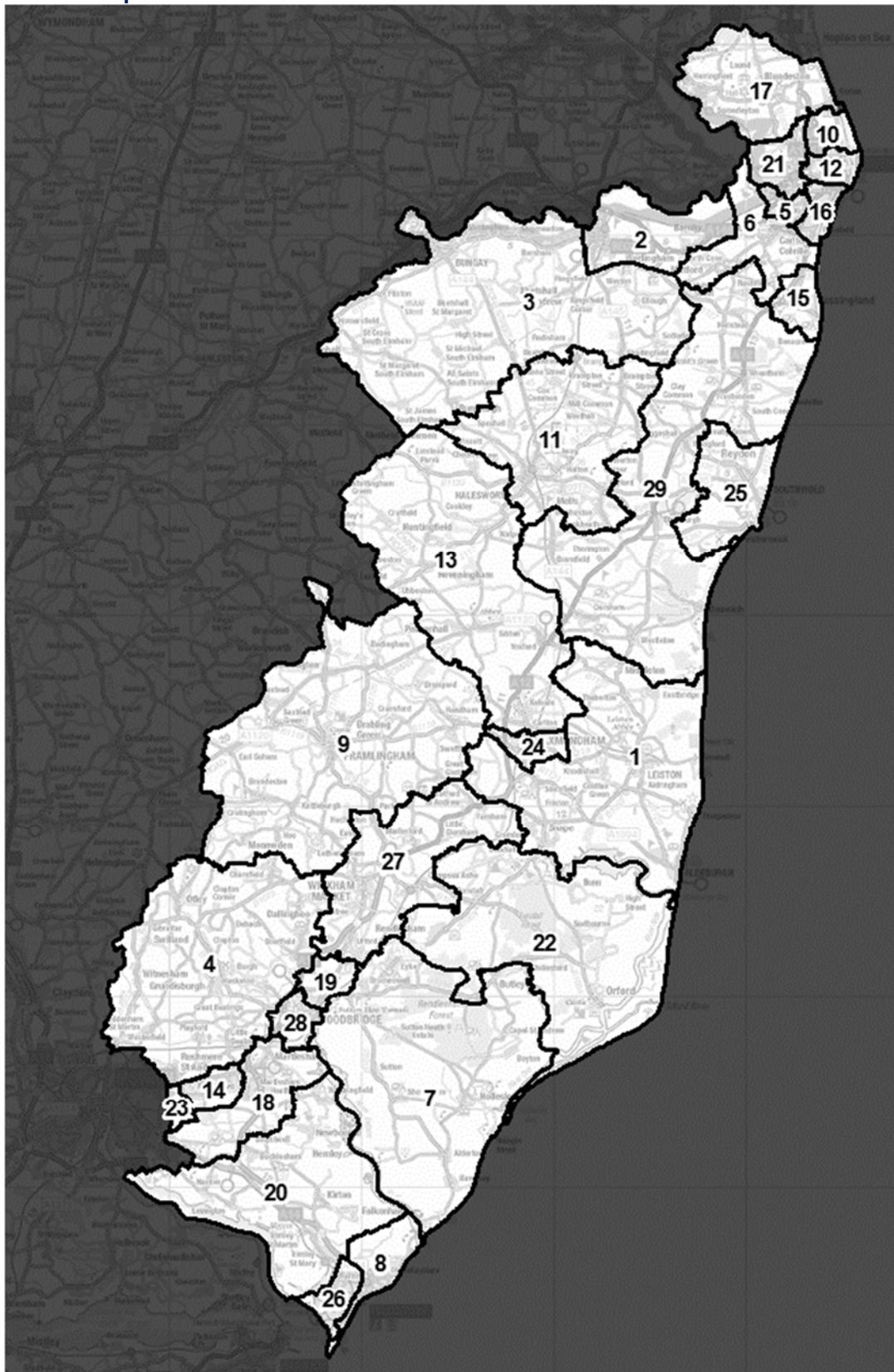
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
27 Wickham Market	1	3,804	3,804	10%	3,897	3,897	6%
28 Woodbridge	2	6,401	3,201	-8%	6,740	3,370	-8%
29 Wrentham, Wangford & Westleton	1	3,369	3,369	-3%	3,490	3,490	-5%
Totals	55	190,890	-	-	201,837	-	-
Averages	-	-	3,471	-	-	3,670	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils.

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

Appendix B

Outline map



Key

1. Aldeburgh & Leiston
2. Beccles & Worlingham
3. Bungay & Wainford
4. Carlford & Fynn Valley
5. Carlton & Whitton
6. Carlton Colville
7. Deben
8. Eastern Felixstowe
9. Framlingham
10. Gunton & St Margarets
11. Halesworth & Blything
12. Harbour & Normanston
13. Kelsale & Yoxford
14. Kesgrave
15. Kessingland
16. Kirkley & Pakefield
17. Lothingland
18. Martlesham & Purdis Farm
19. Melton
20. Orwell & Villages
21. Oulton Broad
22. Rendlesham & Orford
23. Rushmere St Andrew
24. Saxmundham
25. Southwold
26. Western Felixstowe
27. Wickham Market
28. Woodbridge
29. Wrentham, Wangford & Westleton

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

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/east-suffolk>

Local Authority

- Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils

Political Groups

- Bungay & The Saints Branch of the Waveney Constituency Labour Party
- East Suffolk Liberal Democrats
- Felixstowe, Martlesham & District Branch of the East Suffolk Liberal Democrats
- Leiston & District Branch of the Labour Party

Councillors

- Councillor C. Hedgley (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor J. Kelso (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor S. Lawson (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor G. Lynch (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor D. McCallum (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor S. Mower (Suffolk Coastal District Council)
- Councillor P. Palmer (Aldeburgh Town Council)
- Councillor R. Whiting (Suffolk County Council)

Member of Parliament

- Dr D. Poulter MP

Local Organisations

- Felixstowe Town Centre Residents' Association
- The Aldeburgh Society

Parish and Town Councils

- Aldeburgh Town Council
- Blythburgh with Bulcamp & Hinton Parish Council
- Boyton Parish Council
- Bredfield Parish Council
- Bromeswell Parish Council
- Bungay Town Council
- Felixstowe Town Council

- Great Bealings Parish Council
- Halesworth Town Council
- Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council
- Kesgrave Town Council
- Kettleburgh Parish Council
- Little Bealings Parish Council
- Lowestoft Town Council
- Marlesford Parish Council
- Otley Parish Council
- Playford Parish Council
- Rendlesham Parish Council
- Waldringfield Parish Council
- Westerfield Parish Council

Local Residents

- 46 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Local Government Changes Order	A legal document which implements a merger of two local authority areas.
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors

Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average

Ward

A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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.

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