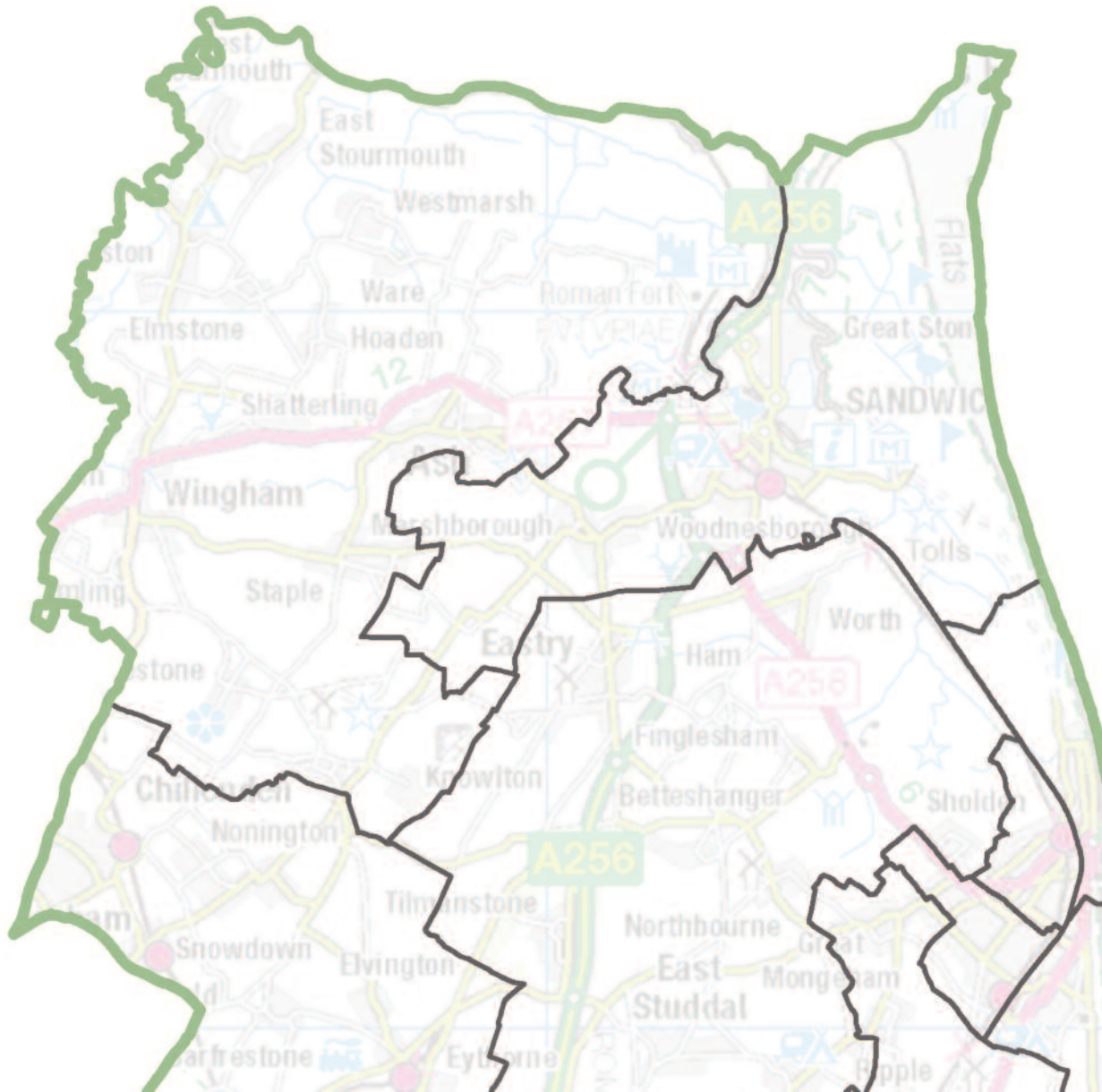


The
**Local Government
Boundary Commission**
for England



**New electoral arrangements for
Dover District Council**

Final recommendations

October 2018

Translations and other formats

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Table of Contents

Summary	1
Who we are and what we do	1
Electoral review	1
Why Dover?	1
Our proposals for Dover	1
What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?	2
1 Introduction	3
What is an electoral review?	3
Consultation.....	3
How will the recommendations affect you?.....	4
2 Analysis and final recommendations.....	5
Submissions received.....	5
Electorate figures.....	5
Number of councillors	6
Ward boundaries consultation	6
Draft recommendations consultation	7
Final recommendations	8
Eastry Rural, Little Stour & Ashstone and Sandwich	10
Deal and Walmer	14
Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe and Whitfield.....	18
Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell.....	20
Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne and Dover Downs & River	24
Dover Town	26
Conclusions.....	29
Summary of electoral arrangements.....	29
Parish electoral arrangements.....	29
3 What happens next?	33
Equalities.....	33
Appendix A.....	34
Final recommendations for Dover District Council	34
Appendix B.....	36
Outline map	36
Key	37
Appendix C.....	38
Submissions received.....	38
Appendix D.....	40
Glossary and abbreviations	40

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 Dover?

4 We are conducting a review of Dover at the request of Dover District Council.

Our proposals for Dover

- Dover should be represented by 32 councillors, 13 fewer than there are now.
- Dover should have 17 wards, four fewer than there are now.
- The boundaries of 15 wards should change, and two (Little Stour & Ashstone and Mill Hill) will stay the same.

5 **We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Dover.**

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 This electoral review was carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Dover 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?

9 Our three main considerations are to:

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

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

Consultation

11 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Dover. We then held two periods of consultation on warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft and final recommendations.

12 This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
23 January 2018	Number of councillors decided
30 January 2018	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
9 April 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
5 June 2018	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation
13 August 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
2 October 2018	Publication of final recommendations

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

2 Analysis and final recommendations

14 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

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

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

	2017	2023
Electorate of Dover	87,130	92,879
Number of councillors	32	32
Average number of electors per councillor	2,723	2,902

17 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Dover are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2023.

18 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the district or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

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

Electorate figures

20 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2023, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2018. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 7% by 2023, largely driven by development in the urban areas of the district.

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

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

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

Number of councillors

22 Dover District Council currently has 45 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that decreasing this number by 13, to a council size of 32, will make sure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

23 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 32 councillors – for example, 32 one-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

24 During the first stage of consultation, we received a full scheme based on a different number of councillors from a political group. We also received, during the warding patterns consultation, a submission from a councillor who expressed concern about how a reduction in council size would affect their workload. We did not consider that any evidence was contained within these submissions to justify altering the council size, and we therefore based our draft recommendations on a 32-member council.

25 We received a small number of submissions that commented on the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our draft recommendations. These submissions objected in general terms to the reduction in council size, but did not provide any evidence to recommend altering the proposed number of councillors. We have therefore based our final recommendations on a council size of 32 members.

Ward boundaries consultation

26 We received 120 submissions to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included four detailed district-wide proposals. A full scheme was received from Dover District Council, and another was received from the Dover District Council Labour Group. As part of their submission, the Labour Group also submitted a full pattern of wards put together by officers at Dover District Council, which was considered by the Council at an earlier stage in the review. All three of these schemes were based on a pattern of wards to be represented by 32 elected members. A scheme was also received from East Kent Coast Liberal Democrats, which was based on a pattern of wards to be represented by 37 elected members; whilst this scheme did provide for good electoral equality under a council size of 37, no compelling evidence was provided to justify a change in the agreed number of councillors.

27 The three district-wide schemes that proposed 32 councillors each provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Dover. We carefully considered the proposals received and concluded that the proposed ward boundaries would have good levels of electoral equality under all schemes. We also considered that they generally used clearly identifiable boundaries. However,

we were disappointed with the level of community identity evidence provided by all of those submitting full schemes, as the proposals were based largely around a desire to achieve electoral equality. The role of the Commission's recommendations is to seek to balance the three statutory criteria, and when putting together the draft recommendations we attempted to include all of the evidence we received to create a warding pattern that would not only have good levels of electoral equality, but that would accurately reflect the communities it represents. As a result, we put together a pattern of draft wards that took into account all of the evidence we received during the consultation, but that did not exactly mirror any of the full schemes we received.

28 Our draft recommendations were based on a combination of the district-wide proposals that we received, along with a submission received by a parish council which we felt provided persuasive evidence. In some areas of the district, we also took into account local information that we received, which provided 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. We also visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Dover helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

29 Our draft recommendations were for five one-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and one three-councillor ward. We considered that our draft recommendations provided for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

Draft recommendations consultation

30 We received 83 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included comments from the Council, political groups, an MP and councillors, along with parish and town councils, local organisations and residents. The majority of the submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in Eastry Rural, Middle Deal and Mill Hill.

31 We received a submission from Dover District Council noting our draft recommendations. This submission did not suggest any changes in the majority of the wards proposed, instead simply noting the Commission's proposals. The Council did propose an alternative warding pattern in the area covered by our draft Capel-le-Ferne & River ward; however, the proposal put forward a single-councillor Capel-le-Ferne ward with a variance of -19%. The Council acknowledged this high variance in their submission, but stated that 'the community identity of the residents' would be best served by a warding arrangement that separated Capel-le-Ferne and Hougham Without from the parish of River. However, whilst we acknowledge the points made in the Council's submission regarding the different communities in this area, we do not consider that a variance of -19% is an acceptable level of electoral inequality. We have identified an alternative option here.

32 A submission from the Dover & Deal Conservative Association objected to the Commission's use of the centre of roads as boundaries. However, as no alternatives were provided, we are not proposing to alter boundaries across the district on this basis.

33 A number of submissions that we received commented on the proposed parish warding arrangements in the parish of Walmer, including the submission from the Council. As part of the draft recommendations, due to the alterations to the district wards covering Walmer parish, the Commission was required to put forward new parish wards in this area. A number of respondents objected to the draft proposals to create two parish wards, instead proposing that the existing parish warding arrangement be retained, as this would provide for more effective and convenient local government. Whilst we are not able to retain the existing arrangements across Walmer due to the changes to the district ward boundaries, we are proposing three parish wards instead of the two proposed as part of the draft recommendations in response to the submissions received during the consultation.

34 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with a modification to the wards in the Eastry Rural and Sandwich area based on the submissions received, along with an alteration in Kingsdown Rural and Guston & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe. We have also made minor modifications to the boundaries between St Radigunds and Buckland, and between Tower Hamlets and Town & Castle. We are also proposing to alter the name of the draft Aylesham & Eythorne ward.

Final recommendations

35 Pages 10–28 detail our final recommendations for each area of Dover. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

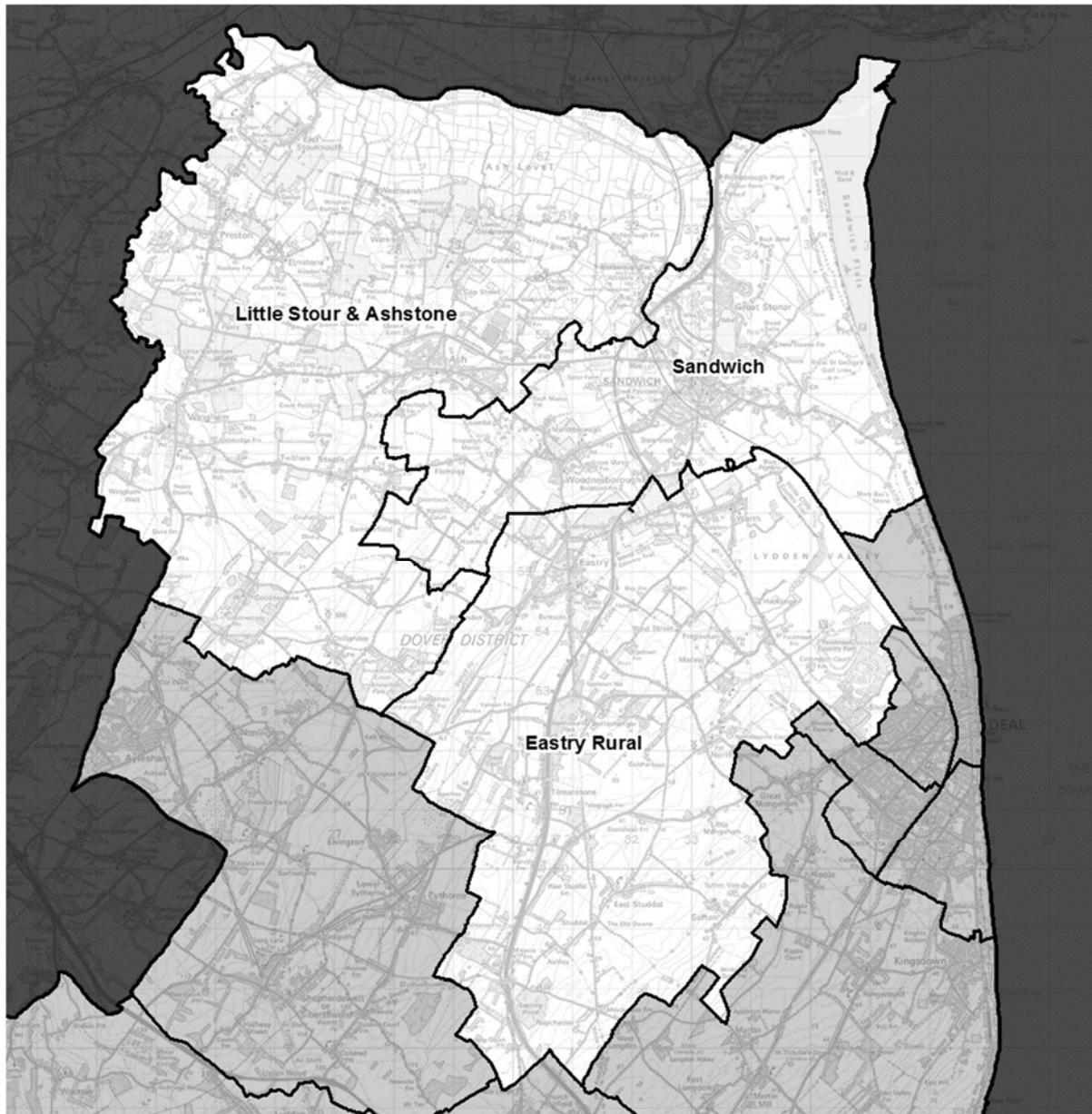
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

36 Our final recommendations are for one three-councillor ward, 13 two-councillor wards and three 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.

37 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on pages 34–5 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Eastry Rural, Little Stour & Ashstone and Sandwich



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Eastry Rural	2	-7%
Little Stour & Ashstone	2	4%
Sandwich	2	5%

Eastry Rural and Sandwich

38 We received a number of submissions regarding both the proposed Eastry Rural and Sandwich wards.

39 Woodnesborough Parish Council objected to the parish's inclusion in the proposed Eastry Rural ward and stated that the parish had strong links to Sandwich. It stated that the two areas share a number of services, and are close both socially and geographically. We considered that the submission provided strong evidence for a link between Woodnesborough and Sandwich, and we therefore looked to include Woodnesborough parish in the proposed Sandwich ward instead of in Eastry Rural. However, making this change in isolation would result in an Eastry Rural ward with a variance of -18% and a Sandwich ward with a variance of 16%. We do not consider that these variances are within the range that would be considered acceptable, and so we sought to make alterations elsewhere to facilitate the inclusion of Woodnesborough in a Sandwich ward.

40 We note that the village of Worth is closely connected to the neighbouring village of Eastry, and we are therefore proposing to include the area of Worth parish that is west of the railway line in the Eastry Rural ward. We looked at the possibility of including the whole of the parish of Worth in the proposed Eastry Rural ward, but note that there is no strong road access from Worth village to the area of the parish east of the railway line; this eastern area appears more strongly linked to the parish of Sandwich. We are therefore only proposing to include the western part of Worth parish in Eastry Rural. We note that Woodnesborough Parish Council state that Worth has connections with Eastry parish, especially regarding traffic arrangements. This alteration results in a two-councillor Eastry Rural ward, including part of Worth parish, with a projected electoral variance of -7%, and a two-councillor Sandwich ward, including Woodnesborough parish and the coastal part of Worth parish, with a projected electoral variance of 5%.

41 We received a submission from a local councillor objecting in general terms to the size of the proposed Eastry Rural ward, but no specific alternative boundaries were put forward in this submission. Additionally, we received a submission stating that the Northbourne area should not be included in Eastry Rural and should be included in a Deal ward. However, to transfer this area into Deal would result in an Eastry Rural ward with a variance of -18%, and no evidence was provided in the submission to justify this high variance. We are not therefore proposing to include Northbourne parish in a Deal ward.

42 A number of the submissions received, including a detailed representation from Sholden Parish Council, stated that the parish of Sholden should not be included in the proposed Eastry Rural ward, and that the area to the west of the railway line should be included in the proposed Middle Deal ward. The Parish Council's submission stated that the parish is strongly connected to Deal, and does not consider itself to be part of the rural community. Whilst we acknowledge the strong evidence regarding community identity put forward in the Parish Council's proposal, moving the parish of Sholden into the proposed Middle Deal ward would result in an Eastry Rural ward with a variance of -16% and a Middle Deal ward with a variance of 18% by 2023.

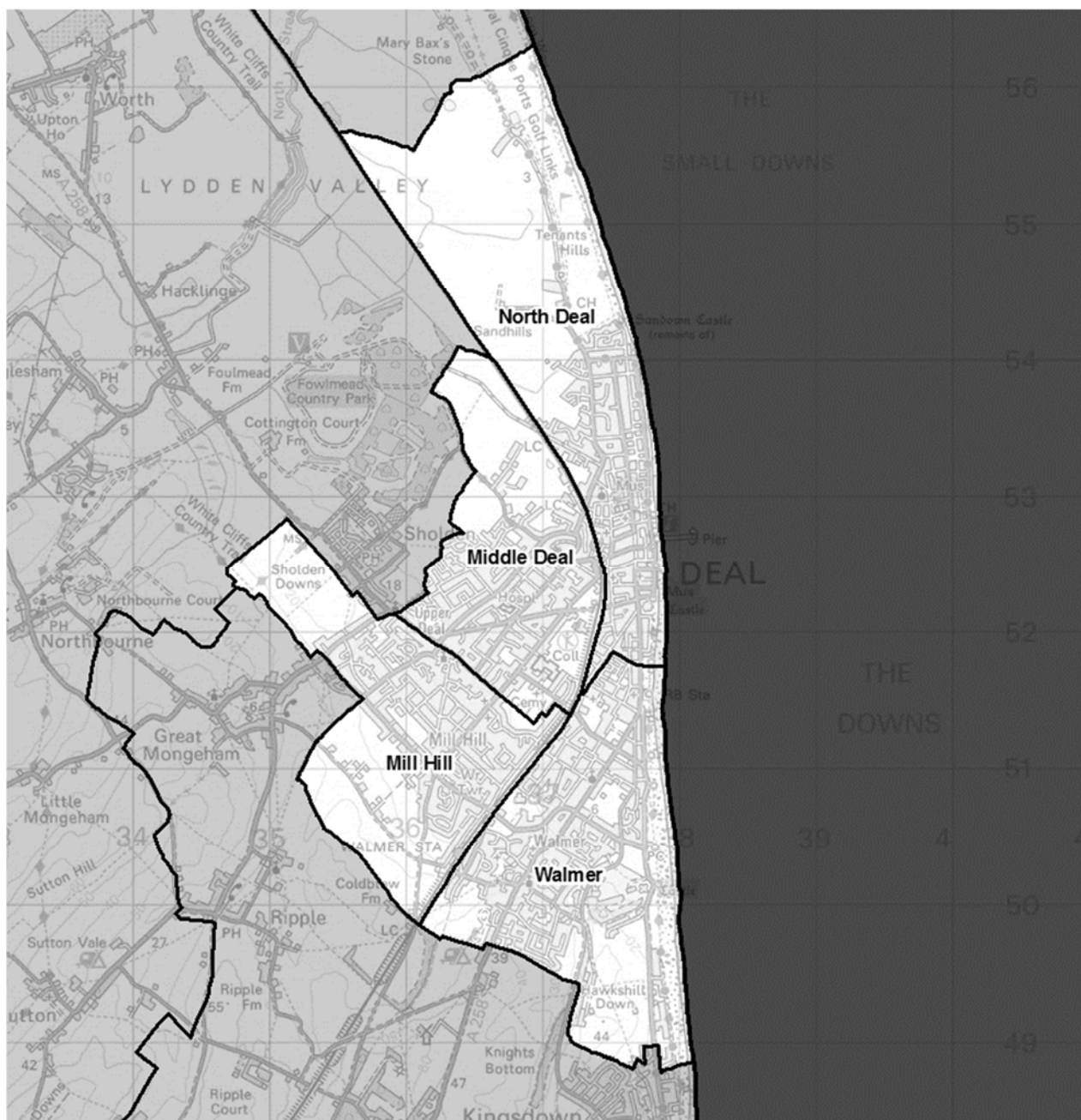
43 We looked at a number of different options in an attempt to mitigate these very high variances, as we felt that the submission from Sholden Parish Council provided for good evidence of community identity. However, we were unable to identify a way to accommodate this alteration and achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality without making significant alterations elsewhere in the district for which we have not received any evidence. These alterations, to either the proposed Little Stour & Ashstone or Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe wards, would also only correct the high electoral variance in Eastry Rural, and would not mitigate the high variance in Middle Deal. We looked at potential alterations in Middle Deal that could be made to improve the 18% variance, but had no evidence to justify making large-scale alterations here. Due to the lack of available alternative options, we are therefore proposing to retain the area of Sholden parish west of the railway line in the proposed Eastry Rural ward.

44 We received two submissions requesting that the boundary in Sandwich Bay be aligned with the coastline, rather than sitting out to sea. However, amendments to the external district boundary fall outside the scope of this review and we are therefore unable to make any alterations here.

Little Stour & Ashstone

45 We received one submission regarding our proposed Little Stour & Ashstone ward. This submission, from a local resident, expressed concern that the ward boundary appeared to cross the village of Ash. However, the proposed ward boundary follows the parish boundary here, and deviating from this would create an unviable parish ward. No alternative boundary was provided. We are therefore not proposing to make any alterations here, and are confirming our proposed Little Stour & Ashstone ward as part of the final recommendations. The two-councillor ward is projected to have an electoral variance of 4% by 2023.

Deal and Walmer



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Middle Deal	2	-1%
Mill Hill	2	4%
North Deal	2	-2%
Walmer	2	4%

Middle Deal and Mill Hill

46 We received a number of submissions opposing our draft Middle Deal and Mill Hill wards. Some of these submissions objected to the exclusion of Sholden parish from the proposed Middle Deal ward. However, as explained in paragraphs 42–3, we have been unable to include Sholden in the proposed Middle Deal ward without making significant changes across the district, for which we have no supporting evidence.

47 A submission from a local resident requested that the upper part of Mongeham Road be included in Eastry Rural, along with the parish of Sholden. However, this would result in the creation of an unviable parish ward and therefore we are unable to recommend this alteration as part of the final recommendations.

48 Many of the submissions received regarding the draft recommendations in this area objected to the location of the boundary between Mill Hill and Middle Deal along London Road. These submissions objected to a number of different streets west of London Road being included in the proposed Mill Hill ward. The respondents stated that the ‘Upper Deal’ area was distinctive and should be included in a ward with Middle Deal. However, to move the entirety of the suggested area around Addelam Road, Tormore Park and Fiveways Rise into Middle Deal would result in a variance of 14% in this ward.

49 A submission from the Dover & Deal Conservative Association, supported by the MP for this area, requested that the above area be included in Middle Deal rather than in Mill Hill, as Upper Deal is a ‘separate and distinct community’. The submission acknowledges that this creates a high electoral variance in Middle Deal, but suggests that this could be remedied by moving an area near the railway line into Mill Hill. However, no evidence was provided to support moving this area.

50 Whilst we acknowledge the strength of feeling behind the submissions received here, we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify an electoral variance of 14% in Middle Deal. We are therefore not proposing to make any alterations to our draft Mill Hill and Middle Deal wards. The two-councillor Mill Hill ward is projected to have an electoral variance of 4% by 2023, and the two-councillor Middle Deal ward is projected to have an electoral variance of -1% by 2023.

North Deal

51 A number of submissions received supported the proposed North Deal ward, with the inclusion of the eastern part of Sholden parish as proposed as part of the draft recommendations. We received a submission from the Friends of North Deal group that requested that Gilford Road be used as the southern boundary of the proposed North Deal ward. However, this would result in a North Deal ward with a variance of -15%, and a Walmer ward with a variance of 17%, and we do not consider that any evidence has been provided to justify such high electoral variances. We are therefore not proposing to amend this boundary as part of the final recommendations.

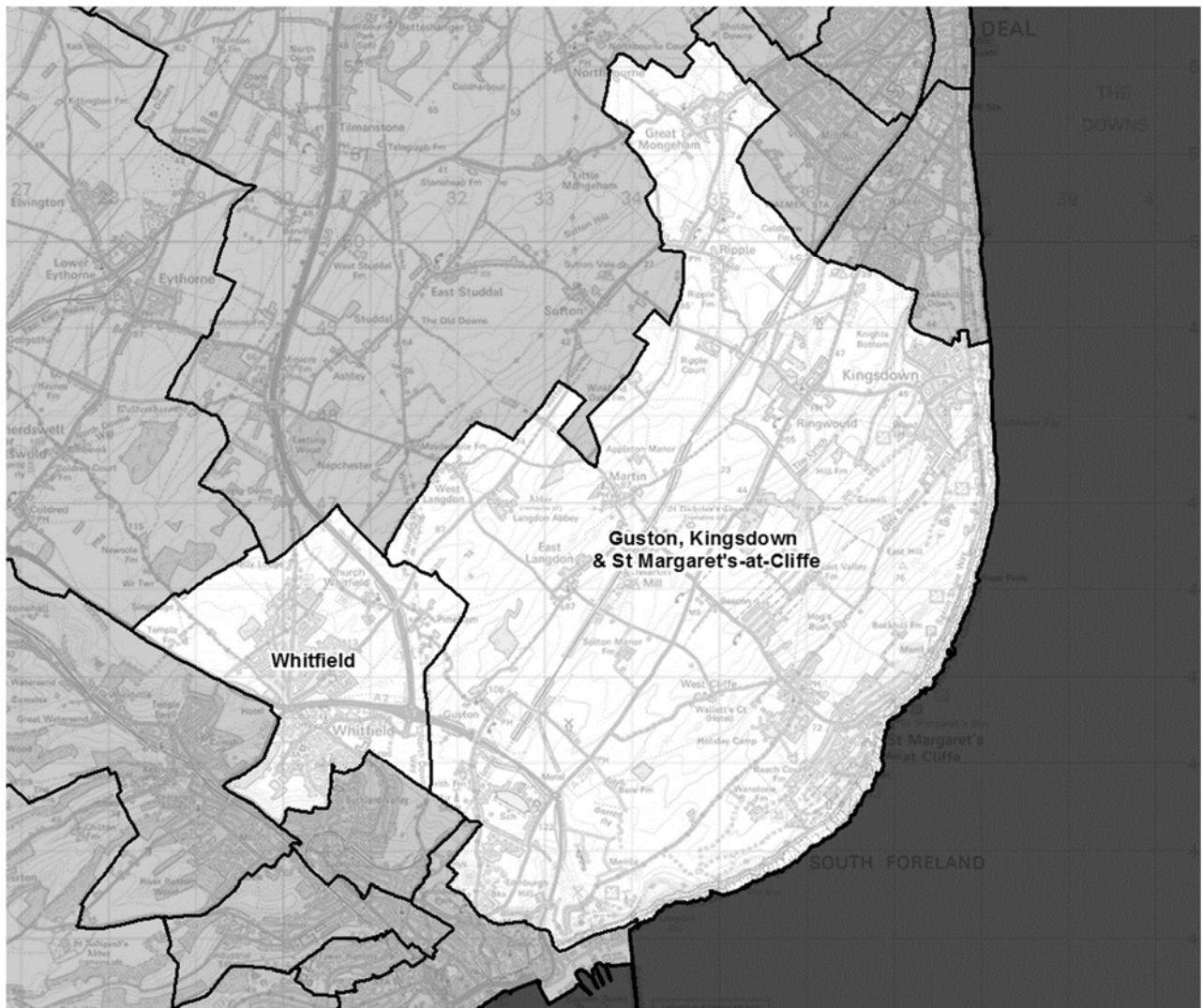
52 We consider that the proposed North Deal ward follows strong and identifiable boundaries, and are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations. This two-councillor ward is projected to have an electoral variance of -2% by 2023.

Walmer

53 We received a number of submissions relating to the proposed Walmer ward, all of which referred to the proposed parish warding arrangements. These submissions, including those from The Worshipful Town Mayor of Deal, Walmer Parish Council and The Deal Society, as well as the District Council and the Labour Group, did not object to the proposed Walmer district ward but expressed concern over the proposals for the parish wards. The submissions argued that effective and convenient local government would be more easily facilitated with the reinstatement of the existing parish warding arrangements. Due to the alteration of the district ward boundaries, we are required to amend the parish warding arrangements. However, we acknowledge that the draft proposals creating one large parish ward and one small parish ward do not necessarily facilitate effective and convenient local government. We are therefore proposing four parish wards for Walmer, similar to the existing parish wards in this area.

54 A submission from the local MP suggested that a small area west of the railway line be included in a Walmer ward as opposed to in Mill Hill. However, we consider that the railway line provides for a strong and identifiable boundary, as well as it being the parish boundary, and no evidence was provided to support this alteration. We are not proposing to make any alterations to the proposed district ward boundary in Walmer.

Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe and Whitfield



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe	2	2%
Whitfield	2	-7%

Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe

55 We received nine submissions regarding this area during the consultation on the draft recommendations. Respondents were supportive of the proposals to keep Ringwould with Kingsdown parish intact, and to link this parish with Ripple in the proposed Kingsdown Rural ward. St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council also stated that they were content with the draft proposals to link the parish with the neighbouring Guston parish.

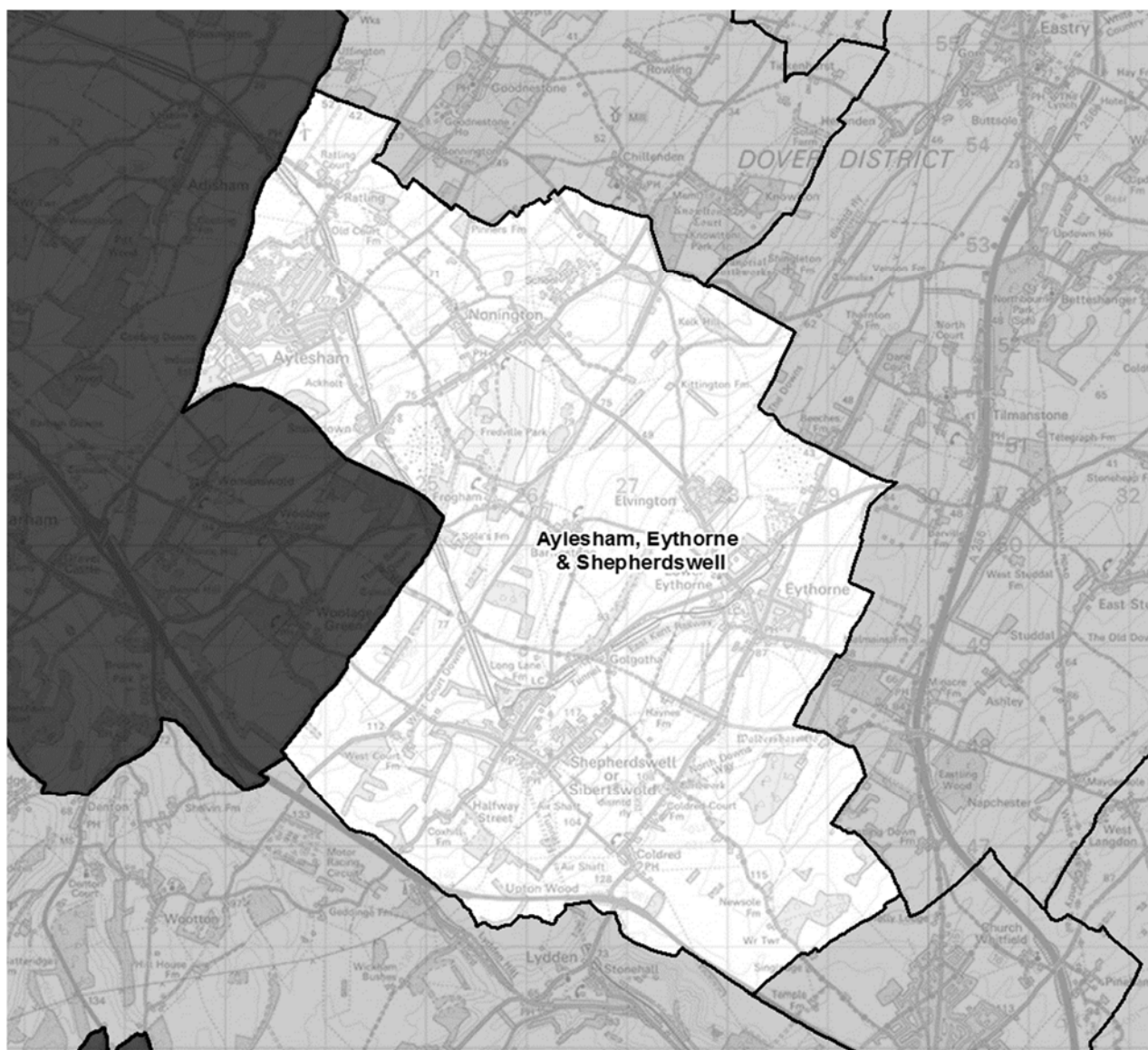
56 Langdon Parish Council made a submission stating that the proposals to include the parish in a Kingsdown Rural ward would sever the links between Langdon and the neighbouring St Margaret's-at-Cliffe parish. The Parish Council stated that the two parishes share a number of services, including churches and schools, and that they work together on transport issues, alongside their shared community groups. We considered the evidence put forward by Langdon Parish Council to be compelling, and we therefore looked for a way to accommodate this as part of our final recommendations. To move the parish of Langdon into the single-councillor Guston & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe ward would, however, result in that ward having a variance of 15% by 2023.

57 However, we note that combining this ward with the neighbouring Kingsdown Rural ward, to create a two-councillor ward, would allow Langdon parish to retain its links with St Margaret's-at-Cliffe, as well as maintaining the links between Ripple and Ringwould with Kingsdown parish. This two-councillor ward would also allow for a good level of electoral equality, having a projected variance of 2% by 2023. We consider that this proposal retains the important community links that have been described throughout the review process, as well as providing for effective and convenient local government. We are therefore proposing a two-councillor Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe ward, with a projected variance of 2% by 2023.

Whitfield

58 During the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received one submission regarding the proposed Whitfield ward. This submission, from a local resident, supported the proposal to include the Rokesley Road area of Dover parish in the proposed Whitfield ward. The Council also expressed their support for this ward in their submission. We are therefore confirming the proposed Whitfield ward as part of the final recommendations. This ward will be represented by two councillors and is projected to have an electoral variance of -7% by 2023.

Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell	3	0%

Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell

59 In response to the consultation on the draft recommendations, we received several submissions regarding the proposed Aylesham & Eythorne ward. These submissions objected to the proposed three-councillor ward in this area, largely on the basis that respondents felt that future development in Aylesham would entitle that area to its own two-councillor ward. The submissions, including from a councillor and from Aylesham Parish Council, stated that they believe that there will be more development in Aylesham than is included within the forecast figures.

60 However, we have examined the forecast figures and also visited the development sites during our tour of the area, and are content that the figures provided by the Council are appropriate. We are therefore unable to create a ward comprised solely of Aylesham parish, as a single-councillor Aylesham ward would have a variance of 45%, and allocating two councillors to Aylesham would result in an electoral variance of -27% by 2023.

61 We received a submission from a local resident requesting that the proposal put forward during the previous stage of consultation to include Elvington in a ward with Aylesham be re-examined. However, as stated in the draft recommendations report, we do not consider that separating the Elvington area from the rest of the parish of Eythorne would be representative of the community links within the parish. We received a submission during the consultation on the draft recommendations supporting our decision to keep the parish intact. A submission from the local MP supported including Elvington in a proposed Aylesham ward, but objected to the proposal to include the village of Eythorne in the same ward. However, as stated in our draft recommendations, during our tour of the area we noted that Elvington and Eythorne are closely linked, as well as being in the same parish. We do not consider that any evidence has been received to support placing Elvington and Eythorne in different wards, and we are therefore not proposing any alterations to our draft recommendations in this area.

62 The Council noted the proposals in this area in their submission and stated that the projected 0% variance allowed for future housing growth beyond 2023. The Labour Group supported the proposals here. However, the Dover & Deal Conservative Association suggested that the existing Aylesham ward be retained; this ward, constituting the parishes of Aylesham and Nonington, would have a variance of -14% by 2023. The Association argued that 'additional settlements' should not be included within the ward, and that the warding pattern here should revert to the existing arrangements in order to facilitate an alternative warding pattern in the south of the district. However, no alternative warding pattern for the south-west was provided, and we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify the electoral variance of -14% that would result from the maintenance of the existing Aylesham ward.

63 During the formulation of the draft recommendations, we moved away from the proposals put forward in the full schemes received in order to create a ward in this area that meant that the parish of Eythorne could remain entirely in one district ward. We do not consider that any compelling evidence was received during the consultation on the draft recommendations to justify moving away from the proposed three-councillor ward here. We acknowledge the strength of feeling regarding the

distinct community identity of Aylesham. However, we consider that whilst the proposed ward includes a number of different communities, it avoids splitting any communities between wards.

64 We are proposing to alter the name of this ward to Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell, as suggested by Dover District Council, in order to more accurately reflect the ward's constituent communities. We are confirming the proposed ward boundaries as part of our final recommendations. The three-councillor Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell ward is projected to have an electoral variance of 0% by 2023.

Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne and Dover Downs & River



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne	1	1%
Dover Downs & River	2	-5%

Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne and Dover Downs & River

65 We received eight submissions regarding the draft recommendations in this area, in addition to comments from the Council. One submission, from a local resident, requested that the existing Lydden ward be retained in this area; however, this would result in a variance of -29% under the new council size and no evidence was provided to justify such high levels of electoral inequality. One submission also stated that the proposed Dover Downs ward is too large, but focused mainly on the provision of council services, which fall outside of the powers of the LGBCE. We also received a submission from a local resident requesting that the Dover Downs ward be renamed. However, as no alternative ward names were provided in this submission, we are not proposing to remove the name Dover Downs in this area.

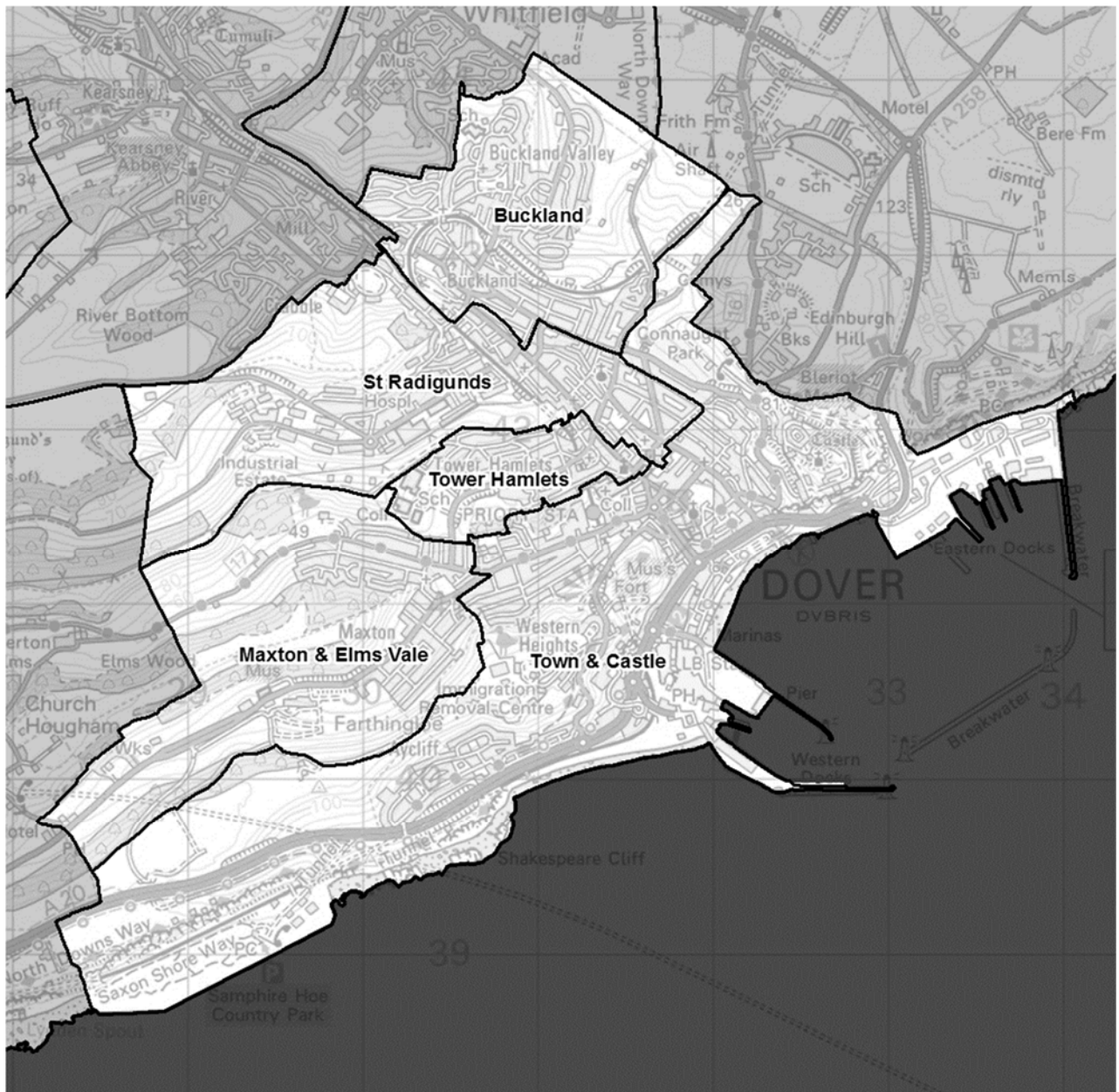
66 In their submission, Dover District Council stated that the parish of River should not be included in a ward with Capel-le-Ferne and Hougham Without, as it has very few links with the two more rural parishes. The Council considered that the best warding pattern here would be a single-councillor River ward, and a single-councillor ward comprising the parishes of Capel-le-Ferne and Hougham Without. However, the Council's proposals would result in a Capel-le-Ferne ward with a projected variance of -19% by 2023. In their submission, the Council state that whilst this variance is high, it should be deemed acceptable on the grounds that it would be more representative of community identity in the area. However, in putting together a set of recommendations, the Commission must seek to balance its three statutory criteria, and we do not consider that a ward with a variance of -19% would provide for an acceptable level of electoral equality.

67 A local councillor suggested that Alkham should remain with River, as under the existing arrangements, as the two areas share similar traffic concerns. However, the existing ward in this area would have a variance of -38% under the proposed new council size, and we are unable to recommend such a high level of electoral inequality as part of our final recommendations.

68 We therefore looked for an alternative solution in this area, as we accept that the River area is not strongly linked to Capel-le-Ferne and Hougham Without. Submissions from a number of local residents proposed that Alkham be linked to Capel-le-Ferne and Hougham Without, as the areas share similar concerns. This proposal would also provide for good levels of electoral equality, resulting in a single-councillor ward with a variance of 1% by 2023. We consider that this ward would provide a good reflection of the three statutory criteria. We are therefore including this single-councillor Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne ward as part of our final recommendations.

69 We are also proposing to include the parish of River in the proposed Dover Downs ward, to be renamed Dover Downs & River as part of the final recommendations, as moving Alkham to the neighbouring ward results in a Dover Downs ward with a variance of -15%, outside what would normally be considered an acceptable level of electoral inequality. We acknowledge that River is a community in itself; however, we consider that it is more beneficial to include different communities in the same ward rather than having to split a community elsewhere in order to achieve electoral equality. Our proposed Dover Downs & River ward would have a variance of -5% by 2023.

Dover Town



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Buckland	2	-4%
Maxton & Elms Vale	1	5%
St Radigunds	2	-5%
Tower Hamlets	1	2%
Town & Castle	2	8%

Buckland, Maxton & Elms Vale, St Radigunds, Tower Hamlets and Town & Castle

70 We received a number of submissions regarding the five proposed wards within the town of Dover. Five of these submissions objected to any proposal to move away from the draft ward name of Town & Castle; however, as we did not receive any representations requesting that this ward name be altered, we are therefore retaining Town & Castle as the ward name, as we consider that it is representative of the area that it covers. A submission from The Dover Society stated that, whilst the group would ideally like the existing Town & Pier and Castle wards to be retained, if this is not possible the proposed ward should be called Town & Castle. We are unable to retain the existing wards in this area as, due to the reduction in council size, the Castle and Town & Pier wards would have variances of -35% and -38% respectively, which is significantly outside of what the Commission considers an acceptable level of electoral inequality.

71 We received a number of submissions regarding the area to the north of Maison Dieu Road, around Salisbury Road. These submissions objected to this area's inclusion in the proposed St Radigunds ward, stating that this area should either become its own ward or be included in the proposed Town & Castle ward. Respondents stated that they considered this area to have its own identity that was separate from St Radigunds. However, to move this area into the proposed Town & Castle ward would result in a St Radigunds ward with a variance of -16% and a Town & Castle ward with a variance of 19% by 2023. Whilst we acknowledge the strength of feeling behind these submissions, and accept that this area is a distinct community, we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify the high electoral variances that would result. We are therefore not proposing to include the aforementioned area in the Town & Castle ward. This area is too small to form its own Castle Charlton ward, as requested by the Dover & Deal Conservative Association, as a single-member ward here would have a variance of -79%.

72 We received two submissions referencing a small area of land to the rear of the Ambulance Station and Winchelsea Terrace; these submissions requested that this area of land be included in the proposed Town & Castle ward rather than in the proposed Tower Hamlets ward, as it is separated from Tower Hamlets by fencing and access is gained solely from Town & Castle ward. We are proposing to include this minor change in the final recommendations, as this change does not affect any electors. Subject to this minor amendment, we are confirming our Town & Castle ward as part of the final recommendations. This two-councillor ward is projected to have an electoral variance of 8% by 2023.

73 We received a submission from a district councillor supporting the Commission's draft recommendations in Tower Hamlets. Subject to the minor amendment mentioned in paragraph 72, we are therefore confirming our proposed Tower Hamlets ward as part of the final recommendations. This single-councillor ward is projected to have an electoral variance of 2% by 2023.

74 We received one submission requesting that the existing Priory ward be retained; however, whilst the evidence of the community identity of this area that was provided in the submission was strong, the existing ward in this area would have a variance of -35% under the current council size, and the entire district would need to

be re-warded in order to accommodate this change. We are not proposing to make any alterations here.

75 A number of the submissions, including from the Dover & Deal Conservative Association and the local MP, requested that the area around Buckland Paper Mill be included in the proposed Buckland ward, as opposed to in the St Radigunds ward as detailed in the draft recommendations. We note that these properties look towards the Buckland ward, as they are separated from St Radigunds by a railway line, and consider that moving this small number of electors from St Radigunds into Buckland would provide for stronger and more identifiable boundaries. We are therefore proposing to use the railway line as the boundary between the two wards in this area. We are also proposing to include The Old Flour Mill and Cawsey Cottages, both properties on Lorne Road, in the proposed Buckland ward, as put forward by Dover District Council.

Conclusions

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

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2017	2023
Number of councillors	32	32
Number of electoral wards	17	17
Average number of electors per councillor	2,723	2,902
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	4	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

Dover District Council should be made up of 32 councillors serving 17 wards, representing three single-councillor wards, 13 two-councillor wards and one three-councillor ward. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Dover District Council.

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

Parish electoral arrangements

77 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.

78 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, Dover District 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.

79 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Dover Town Council, Sholden Parish Council, Walmer Parish Council and Worth Parish Council.

80 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 Dover parish.

Final recommendation Dover Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Buckland	4
Maxton & Elms Vale	2
Rokesley	1
St Radigunds	4
Tower Hamlets	2
Town & Castle	5

81 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 Sholden parish.

Final recommendation Sholden Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing three wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Hyton	2
Sholden	4
Tenants Hill	1

82 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 Walmer parish.

Final recommendation Walmer Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Gladstone	2
St Saviour's	3
Upper Walmer	5
Wellington	5

83 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 Worth parish.

Final recommendation Worth Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing two wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Sandwich Bay	2
Village	5

3 What happens next?

84 We have now completed our review of Dover. 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

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

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Dover District 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	Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne	1	2,694	2,694	-1%	2,925	2,925	1%
2	Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdsweil	3	7,676	2,559	-6%	8,698	2,899	0%
3	Buckland	2	5,548	2,774	2%	5,556	2,778	-4%
4	Dover Downs & River	2	5,383	2,692	-1%	5,497	2,749	-5%
5	Eastry Rural	2	4,951	2,476	-9%	5,402	2,701	-7%
6	Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe	2	5,738	2,869	5%	5,945	2,973	2%
7	Little Stour & Ashstone	2	5,544	2,772	2%	6,060	3,030	4%
8	Maxton & Elms Vale	1	3,047	3,047	12%	3,050	3,050	5%
9	Middle Deal	2	5,536	2,768	2%	5,774	2,887	-1%
10	Mill Hill	2	6,079	3,040	12%	6,018	3,009	4%
11	North Deal	2	5,877	2,939	8%	5,687	2,844	-2%

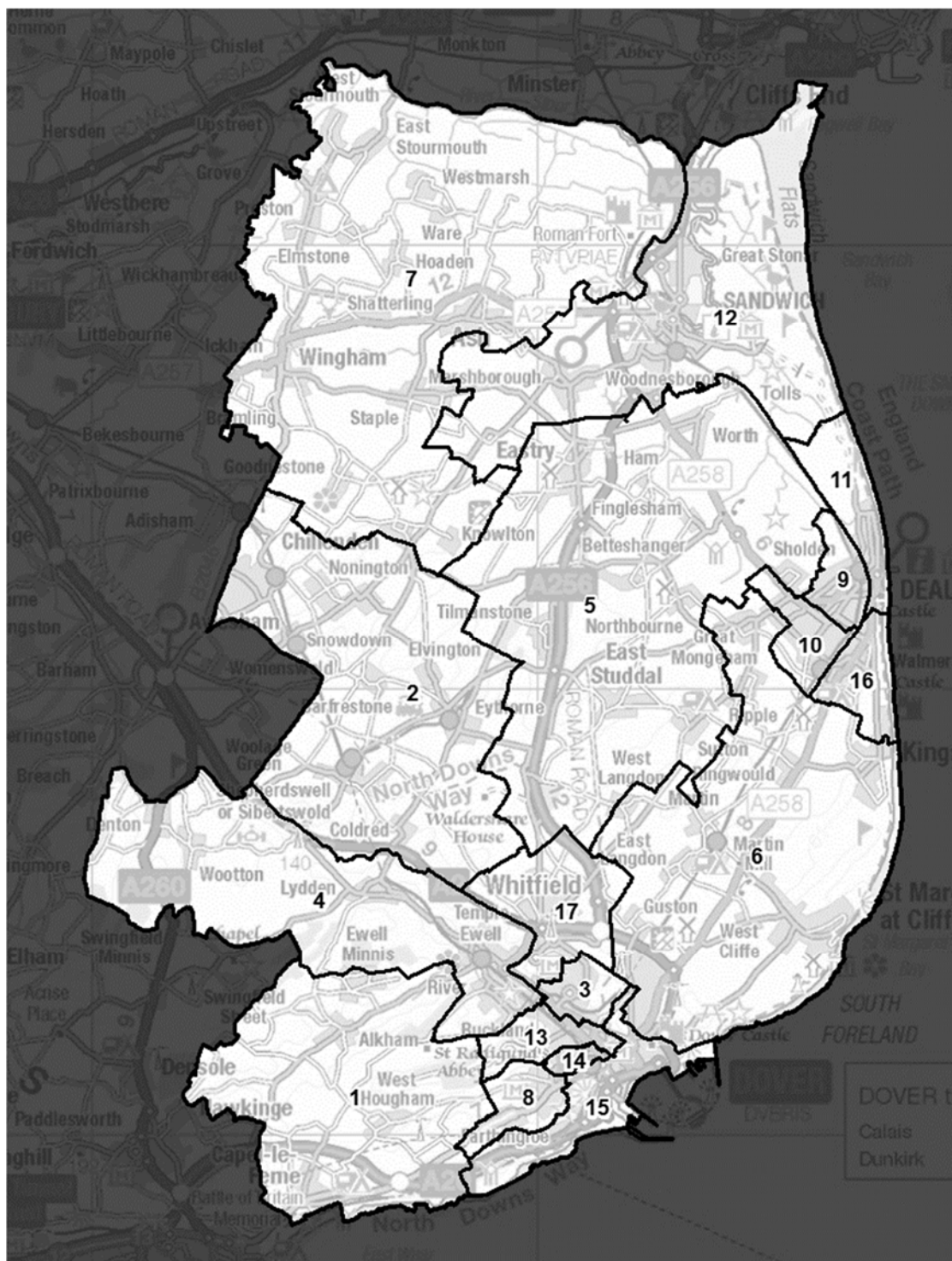
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12 Sandwich	2	5,163	2,582	-5%	6,079	3,040	5%
13 St Radigunds	2	4,639	2,320	-15%	5,501	2,751	-5%
14 Tower Hamlets	1	2,893	2,893	6%	2,963	2,963	2%
15 Town & Castle	2	5,815	2,908	7%	6,290	3,145	8%
16 Walmer	2	5,833	2,917	7%	6,010	3,005	4%
17 Whitfield	2	4,714	2,357	-13%	5,424	2,712	-7%
Totals	32	87,130	–	–	92,879	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,723	–	–	2,902	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Dover District 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 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



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/south-east/kent/dover>

Key

1. Alkham & Capel-le-Ferne
2. Aylesham, Eythorne & Shepherdswell
3. Buckland
4. Dover Downs & River
5. Eastry Rural
6. Guston, Kingsdown & St Margaret's-at-Cliffe
7. Little Stour & Ashstone
8. Maxton & Elms Vale
9. Middle Deal
10. Mill Hill
11. North Deal
12. Sandwich
13. St Radigunds
14. Tower Hamlets
15. Town & Castle
16. Walmer
17. Whitfield

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

Local Authority

- Dover District Council

Political Group

- Dover & Deal Conservative Association
- Dover Labour Group

Councillors

- Councillor P. Brivio (Dover District Council)
- Councillor P. Carter (Dover District Council)
- Councillor B. Gardner (Dover District Council)
- Councillor L. Keen (Dover District Council)
- Councillor M. Rose (Dover District Council)

Member of Parliament

- Charlie Elphicke MP

Mayor

- The Worshipful Town Mayor of Deal

Local Organisations

- Castle Forum
- Friends of North Deal
- The Deal Society
- The Dover Society

Parish and Town Council

- Aylesham Parish Council
- Langdon Parish Council (two submissions)
- Ripple Parish Council
- Sholden Parish Council
- St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council (two submissions)
- Walmer Parish Council
- Woodnesborough Parish Council

Local Residents

- 60 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

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

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

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