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## Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. The broad purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, and the names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions – for a specific local authority. We are conducting an electoral review of Breckland District Council ('the Council') to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the authority.

The review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same. The Commission commenced the review in May 2012.

This review is being conducted as follows:

<b>Stage starts</b>	<b>Description</b>
26 March 2013	Consultation on council size
16 July 2013	Submission of proposals for ward patterns to the LGBCE
24 September 2013	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
21 January 2014	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
15 April 2014	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

## Draft recommendations

We proposed a council size of 49 members comprising a pattern of nine single-member, 14 two-member and four three-member wards. The recommendations were broadly based on those proposed by the Council and a representation from a group of district councillors headed by Councillor Jordan. In some areas we proposed modifications to improve the electoral equality and to provide for more easily identifiable boundaries.

Our draft recommendations for Breckland District Council sought to reflect the evidence of community identities received while ensuring good electoral equality and providing for effective and convenient local government.

## Submissions received

In response to consultation on our draft recommendations for Breckland we received 26 submissions. These were from the District Council, two district councillors, 17 parish councils, one parish councillor, one political group, and four local residents. All submissions can be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

# Analysis and final recommendations

## Electorate figures

As part of this review, Breckland District Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2019, a date five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2014. This is prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ('the 2009 Act'). These forecasts projected an increase in the electorate of 7.3% over this period.

We are content that these forecasts are the most accurate available at this time and have used these figures as the basis of our final recommendations.

## General analysis

Throughout the review process, the primary consideration has been to achieve good electoral equality, while seeking to reflect community identities and securing effective and convenient local government. Having considered the submissions received during consultation on our draft recommendations, we have sought to reflect community identities and improve the levels of electoral fairness.

Our final recommendations for Breckland are for a mixed pattern of nine single-member, 14 two-member and four three-member wards. We consider our recommendations provide for good electoral equality while providing an accurate reflection of community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

## What happens next?

We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Breckland District Council. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament and will be implemented subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for Breckland District Council, in 2015.

We are grateful to all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to the review through expressing their views. The full report is available to download at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

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

# 1 Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Breckland District Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 The submissions received from Breckland District Council during the initial stages of consultation of this review informed our *Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Breckland District Council*, which were published on 21 January 2014. We then undertook a period of consultation which ended on 14 April 2014.

## What is an electoral review?

3 The main aim of an electoral review is to try to ensure 'electoral equality', which means that all councillors in a single authority represent approximately the same number of electors. Our objective is to make recommendations that will improve electoral equality, while also trying to reflect communities in the area and provide for effective and convenient local government.

4 Our three main considerations – equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government – are set out in legislation<sup>1</sup> and 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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why are we conducting a review in Breckland?

5 We decided to conduct this review because, based on the December 2012 electorate figures, two wards in the district currently have variances of +/-30%. Dereham Central has an electoral variance of 34% and Templar has an electoral variance of 39%.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

6 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 instances, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. The names or boundaries of parishes will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

7 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)  
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)  
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL  
Alison Lowton  
Sir Tony Redmond  
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE  
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill  
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

## 2 Analysis and final recommendations

8 We have now finalised our recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Breckland District Council.

9 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for Breckland is to achieve a level of electoral fairness – that is, each elector’s vote being worth the same as another’s. In doing so we must have regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act),<sup>2</sup> with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities, in particular
  - the desirability of arriving at boundaries that are easily identifiable
  - the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties

10 Legislation also states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the date of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

11 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum. We therefore recommend strongly that in formulating proposals for us to consider, local authorities and other interested parties should also try to keep variances to a minimum, making adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. As mentioned above, we aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral fairness over a five-year period.

12 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Breckland District Council or the external boundaries or names of parish and town councils, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that our recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

13 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out the 2009 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different divisions or wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division or ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

14 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make such changes as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority ward arrangements. However, principal councils have powers under the Local Government and Public

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct Community Governance Reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

## Submissions received

15 Prior to, and during, the initial stage of the review, we visited Breckland District Council and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 24 submissions during the consultation on warding patterns, including a district-wide scheme from the Council. We received 26 submissions during the consultation period on our draft recommendations. All submissions may be inspected both at our offices and those of the Council. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

16 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2019, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2014. This is prescribed in the 2009 Act. These forecasts were broken down to polling district levels and projected an increase in the electorate of 7.3% to 2019. The forecasts provided by the Council took into account a number of housing developments planned for the district over the next six years, particularly in Croxton and Attleborough.

17 Having considered the information provided by the Council, we are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time and these figures form the basis of our final recommendations.

## Council size

18 Breckland District Council currently has 54 councillors elected from 36 wards, comprising 23 single-member, eight two-member and five three-member wards. During preliminary discussions on council size, the Council proposed a council size of 50, a reduction of four members. The submission from the Council had considered its governance and management structure, scrutiny of the Council, work on outside bodies, members' representational role and the Council's other statutory functions. Having considered the evidence we decided to consult on a council size of 50.

19 We received 19 submissions during the consultation on council size. These were from three parish councils, one parish councillor, and 15 local residents. The Council did not submit a representation during this consultation period. The submissions proposed a range in council sizes from 36 to 50.

20 We carefully considered the information provided during the consultation period. Although the submissions received provided mixed support for a council size of 50, we did not receive strong evidence for any other council size, nor was any evidence submitted to contradict the rationale presented by the Council. We were therefore minded to adopt a council size of 50 as the basis of this electoral review and invited proposals for warding arrangements based on this number of councillors.

21 We explained to all interested parties from the outset that the council size figure adopted at this stage of the review provided context for local stakeholders to submit their views on the wider electoral arrangements. We also explained that this council

size figure could be slightly adjusted in order to provide for warding patterns that create a better balance between the statutory criteria.

22 The Council's proposed warding pattern was based on a council size of 50 members. We investigated whether a council size of 50 provided the best allocation between the main towns and the rural area. We considered that a warding pattern based on 49 members resulted in a better allocation of councillors between the towns and the rural area and would provide for a scheme which would better meet our statutory criteria.

23 In proposing a council size of 49 as part of our draft recommendations we were of the view that such a size would not impact adversely on governance arrangements, member workload or councillors' representational role. We have not received any evidence during consultation on our draft recommendations to suggest otherwise. We have therefore confirmed a council size of 49 members for Breckland District Council as final.

## Electoral fairness

24 Electoral fairness, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. It is expected that our recommendations will provide for electoral fairness, reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

25 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The district average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the district (99,428 in 2013 and 106,694 by 2019) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 49 under our final recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 2,029 in 2013 and 2,177 by 2019.

26 Under our final recommendations, none of our proposed wards will have an electoral variance of more than 10% from the average for the district by 2019. We are satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Breckland.

## General analysis

27 Prior to formulating our draft recommendations we received 24 submissions on warding arrangements for Breckland, including two district-wide proposals, one from the Council and one from a group of councillors headed by Councillor Jordan. The Council's scheme was for the entirety of the district, while the warding pattern proposed by Councillor Jordan covered the whole of the rural area, but did not provide detailed proposals for the towns of Thetford, Dereham and Attleborough. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the district.

28 The warding patterns submitted by the Council and Councillor Jordan provided a mixed warding arrangement of single-, two- and three-member wards. Our draft recommendations were largely based on the proposals of both the Council and Councillor Jordan's group. We considered that in most parts of the district these

proposals provided for good levels of electoral equality, reflected community identities and provided for effective and convenient local government. Where we made modifications we did so to reflect evidence received on community identity and provide for improved levels of electoral equality.

29 We proposed a council size of 49, based on a pattern of nine single-member, 14 two-member and four three-member wards.

30 During consultation on our draft recommendations we received 26 submissions – from the District Council, two district councillors, 17 parish councils, one parish councillor, one political group and four local residents.

31 The Council was supportive of many of our draft recommendations but proposed modifications to the pattern of wards for Thetford and Dereham. The Council also proposed changes to the names of six wards.

32 The other submissions we received during consultation on our draft recommendations largely focused on specific areas. The majority of submissions received focused on our proposed wards of Wayland, Harling and Kenninghall.

33 Our final recommendations result in nine single-member wards, 14 two-member wards and four three-member wards. We consider our proposals provide for good levels of electoral equality while reflecting our understanding of community identities and interests in Breckland.

34 A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements is set out in Table 1 (on page 14) and on the large map accompanying this report.

## Electoral arrangements

35 This section of the report details the submissions we have received, our consideration of them, and our final recommendations for each area of Breckland. The following areas are considered in turn:

- Thetford and south-west Breckland (pages 8–10)
- Central Breckland (pages 10–11)
- Dereham and north Breckland (pages 11–12)
- Attleborough and south-east Breckland (pages 12–14)

36 Details of the final recommendations are set out in Table A1 on pages 19–21 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

### Thetford and south-west Breckland

37 Our draft recommendations for Thetford were for four two-member wards of Thetford Boudica, Thetford Burrell, Thetford Castle and Thetford Cathedral.

38 During consultation on our draft recommendations we received four submissions commenting on our proposed Thetford wards. The Council supported our proposals for four two-member wards, but proposed changes to the boundaries between Thetford Boudica and Thetford Cathedral wards, and between Thetford

Cathedral and Thetford Burrell.

39 The Council proposed that the Liberty Gardens estate should be included in Thetford Boudica ward, rather than in Thetford Cathedral. This proposal was supported by Thetford Town Council. We investigated whether it would be possible to include this area in our Thetford Boudica ward. Our investigations indicated that this modification would result in a two-member Thetford Burrell ward having 11% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. We do not consider that the Council provided sufficient evidence to justify this level of electoral inequality.

40 The Council also proposed that St Martin's Way be included with the neighbouring St John's Way in our Thetford Cathedral ward. This was supported by Thetford Town Council and Councillor Clark, the current councillor for Thetford Abbey ward. This would result in Thetford Burrell and Thetford Cathedral wards having 11% fewer and 12% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively. We do not consider that the evidence received justifies this level of electoral inequality. We have therefore decided not to modify our draft recommendations for Thetford Burrell ward.

41 Thetford Town Council also requested that we reconsider its original submission which proposed that the parishes of Croxton and Brettenham & Kilverstone be included in wards with part of Thetford Town. We considered that the Town Council did not provide persuasive evidence to support this modification and that our draft recommendations best reflected the community identities. Our proposals were also supported by Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council. It considered that the parish should not be included in a ward with Thetford town (see paragraph 46).

42 Both Breckland District Council and Thetford Town Council proposed Thetford Cathedral ward be renamed Thetford Priory to better reflect the associations of the local area. We have decided to adopt this name as part of our final recommendations.

43 South West Norfolk Liberal Democrats opposed our draft recommendations for a reduction in the number of Thetford councillors from nine to eight, but did not propose any specific ward boundary changes.

44 We received no other submissions regarding Thetford town. With the exception of the name change to Thetford Priory, we have decided to confirm our proposed two-member wards of Thetford Boudica, Thetford Burrell, Thetford Castle and Thetford Priory as final. Our proposed wards would have 6% more, 3% fewer, 6% more and 4% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

### **Forest**

45 Our draft recommendations for this area were for a two-member ward which would have 3% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

46 We received four submissions commenting on the Forest area. Breckland District Council supported our recommendations, as did Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council, which was 'very supportive' of the recommendation for a rural ward consisting of the parishes outside the Thetford Town boundary.

47 Other submissions commenting on Forest ward focused on the parish of Wretham. Our draft recommendations for this area included the parish of Wretham in Forest ward. As a result of the submissions received we have decided to include Wretham in our Wayland ward (see paragraph 75).

48 Our final recommendation is for a two-member Forest ward as proposed in our draft recommendations, but without the parish of Wretham. Forest ward is forecast to have 4% fewer electors per councillor than the district average of electors by 2019.

### **Bedingfeld, Nar Valley and Swaffham**

49 Our draft recommendations for this area were for the single-member wards of Bedingfeld and Nar Valley and a three-member Swaffham ward.

50 The Council supported our recommendations for these wards. We received no other submissions commenting on this area. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final. The single-member wards of Bedingfeld and Nar Valley and the three-member ward of Swaffham are forecast to have 4% more, 4% fewer and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

## **Central Breckland**

### **Ashill and Necton**

51 Our draft recommendations for this area were for a single-member Ashill ward and a single-member Necton ward. We received two submissions relating to this area. North Pickenham Parish Council objected to the proposed Ashill ward, stating that it considered the ward to be too large, but did not provide any alternative suggestions for the area.

52 Breckland District Council supported our draft recommendations in this area. We did not receive any further comments relating to Ashill or Necton. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final. The single member wards of Ashill and Necton are forecast to have 8% fewer and 7% fewer electors than the district average by 2019, respectively.

### **Saham Toney and Watton**

53 Our draft proposals were for a two-member Saham Toney ward and a three-member Watton ward. We received one submission regarding Watton; the Council supported our draft recommendations in the area. We are therefore confirming this ward as final. Our three-member Watton ward will have 2% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

54 The Council supported the boundaries of our proposed Saham Toney ward but proposed the ward instead be named Templar de Toni. We did not consider that the Council provided persuasive evidence that this name would better reflect the local area. We are therefore not adopting this proposal.

55 We received no other submissions regarding Saham Toney. We are therefore confirming this ward as final. Our two-member Saham Toney ward is forecast to have 5% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

## Dereham and north Breckland

56 Our draft recommendations for Dereham were for a three-member Dereham Neatherd ward for the east of the town and two-member wards of Dereham Withburga and Dereham Toftwood for the north-west and south-west of the town, respectively.

57 During consultation on our draft recommendations we received one submission regarding Dereham. The Council proposed a change to the boundary between Dereham Neatherd and Dereham Withburga. It proposed that Sheddick Court, Chase Court and the properties south of Dereham Golf Club be included in Dereham Withburga instead of in Dereham Neatherd. This would result in Dereham Withburga and Dereham Neatherd having 3% more and 9% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

58 We do not consider that the Council has provided a persuasive rationale for this change. While the B1108 is an identifiable boundary, the boundary along the back of Sheddick Court and Chase Court provides a better level of electoral equality and does not divide the community. The properties on these roads are accessed from Quebec Road, in Dereham Neatherd ward, and are separated from Dereham Withburga ward by a playing field.

59 We did not receive any further submissions regarding Dereham. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations in this area as final. The three-member Dereham Neatherd and two-member Dereham Toftwood and Dereham Withburga wards are forecast to have 7% fewer, 2% fewer and equal to the district number of electors per councillor by 2019, respectively.

## **Launditch, Hermitage and Whitewater**

60 Our draft recommendations for Launditch were for a single-member ward containing the parishes of Rougham, Lexham, Newton by Castle Acre, Great Dunham, Little Dunham, Fransham, Beeston with Bittering, Kempstone and Litcham. We received no submissions regarding this ward. We are therefore confirming our single-member Launditch ward as final. This ward will have 7% fewer electors than the district average by 2019.

61 North-east of Launditch we proposed a single-member Hermitage ward covering the parishes of Weasenham St Peter, Weasenham All Saints, Wellingham, Tittleshall, Mileham, Stanfield, Whissonsett, Colkirk and Horningtoft.

62 We received one submission regarding this ward. Brisley Parish Council commented that it had historical links with the Hermitage ward area and so should be included as part of this ward, rather than Upper Wensum. We did not consider that the Parish Council provided persuasive evidence to support this modification. We are therefore confirming our single-member Hermitage ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 2% fewer electors than the district average by 2019.

63 Our draft recommendations in this area also included the two-member Whitewater ward. We received three submissions regarding this ward. The Council stated that it supported the boundaries of the proposed ward, but suggested it be named Lincoln. Swanton Morely Parish Council also proposed this change. As the ward is similar to the current ward of that name, we are adopting this alternative ward

name as part of our final recommendations.

64 We received one other submission regarding this area. Beetley Parish Council stated it had no objection to the proposed ward. With the exception of the change in name, we are confirming the two-member Lincoln ward as final. The ward will have 8% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

### **Upper Wensum**

65 Our draft recommendations were for a two-member Upper Wensum ward consisting of the parishes at the edge of the district from Gateley to Hockering.

66 As discussed in paragraph 62, Brisley Parish Council objected to the parish being in our Upper Wensum ward and suggested it should be included in our Hermitage ward. As detailed above, we did not consider that the Parish Council provided persuasive evidence to support this modification.

67 The Council supported our proposed Upper Wensum ward. We received no other submissions regarding this area. We are therefore confirming our two-member Upper Wensum ward as final. This ward will have 5% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

### **Mattishall**

68 Our draft recommendations were for a two-member Mattishall ward consisting of the parishes of Mattishall, East Tuddeham, Yaxham, Garvestone, Hardingham, and Whinburgh & Westfield and a two-member Shipdham-with-Scarning ward including the parishes of Shipgham, Scarning and Cranworth.

69 We received one submission regarding this area, from the Council, which supported our draft recommendations. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations in this area as final. Our two-member Mattishall and Shipdham-with-Scarning wards will have 1% fewer and 2% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

### **Attleborough and south-east Breckland**

70 Our draft recommendations for Attleborough were for a two-member Burgh & Haverscroft ward and a three-member Queens & Besthorpe ward. We received two submissions regarding Attleborough. The Council supported our draft proposals. Attleborough Town Council did not comment on the proposed boundaries, but proposed that the ward names be amended to include a reference to Attleborough.

71 We have decided that evidence received supports changing the names of both wards. Therefore, our final recommendations are for a two-member Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft and three-member Attleborough Queens & Besthorpe wards, which are forecast to have 6% fewer and 3% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

### **Wayland**

72 Our draft recommendations were for a two-member ward, forecast to have 3% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

73 The Council supported the boundaries of the draft ward, but proposed the ward

be named All Saints & Wayland to retain the identity of the parishes in the current All Saints ward. This was also proposed by Great Ellingham Parish Council.

74 Little Ellingham Parish Council opposed our draft recommendations, stating that the residents of Little Ellingham were more closely aligned to Attleborough. It would not be possible to include Little Ellingham in a ward with Attleborough without also including Great Ellingham. Adding both Little and Great Ellingham parishes to our Attleborough Queens & Besthorpe ward would result in this ward having 20% more electors per councillor than the district average, and Wayland having 18% fewer. We have therefore decided not to make this modification.

75 Other submissions in this area focused on the parish of Wretham, which was included in the neighbouring Forest ward in our draft recommendations. Wretham Parish Council detailed the links the parish has with the parishes of Hockham and Stow Bedon & Breckles, in Wayland ward. The Parish Council also suggested that the Stanford Training Area forms a division between the parish and the remainder of Forest ward. This was supported by a local resident. Stow Bedon & Breckles Parish Council also provided evidence that Wretham parish has close links to Stow Bedon and other parishes in the Wayland ward.

76 We have therefore altered the boundary between our proposed Forest and Wayland wards. We have decided to include Wretham parish in our Wayland ward as part of our final recommendations. We have also decided to modify the ward name and propose the ward be named All Saints & Wayland under our final recommendations.

77 Our modified two-member All Saints & Wayland ward would have 8% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. We consider our modifications provide for good electoral equality and reflect community identity evidence received.

### **Buckenham, Harling and Kenninghall**

78 Our draft recommendations in this area were for the three single-member wards of The Buckenham & Banham, Harling, and Kenninghall.

79 We received seven submissions commenting on this area. A local resident expressed concern that The Buckenham & Banham ward would be too large for a single councillor, and proposed retaining the current wards in this part of the district. As the current Buckenham ward is forecast to have 42% fewer electors than the district average by 2019, we consider that maintaining the current wards would provide unacceptable levels of electoral inequality.

80 We received a representation from Roudham & Larling Parish Council which supported the proposed boundaries of our Harling ward, but proposed the ward be named Harling & Heathlands, the name of the current ward for this area. This name was also proposed by Breckland District Council. We consider that evidence received supports modifying this ward name and have decided to adopt the ward name Harling & Heathlands as part of our final recommendations.

81 We also received a representation from Garboldisham Parish Council which commented that it would prefer to be in Harling ward (renamed Harling & Heathlands) than in our Kenninghall ward, but did not provide any evidence to

support this. Including the parish in our Harling ward would result in it having 36% more electors than the district average. We consider this is an unacceptable level of electoral inequality. We are therefore maintaining the boundaries as proposed in our draft recommendations in this part of the district. In its representation, Garboldisham Parish Council also suggested that our Kenninghall ward should be renamed Guiltcross, as it suggested the boundaries of our proposed ward were largely similar to the current East and West Guiltcross wards covering this part of the district. This ward name was also proposed by Breckland District Council, a parish councillor, and two local residents. We consider that evidence received supports adopting the ward name of Guiltcross as part of our final recommendations

82 With the exception of the name changes, we are confirming our draft recommendations in this area as final. Our single-member The Buckenhams & Banham, Harling & Heathlands and Guiltcross wards are forecast to have 8% more, 9% more and 8% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, respectively.

## Conclusions

83 Table 1 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2013 and 2019 electorate figures.

**Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements**

	Final recommendations	
	2013	2019
Number of councillors	49	49
Number of electoral wards	27	27
Average number of electors per councillor	2,029	2,177
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0

**Final recommendation**  
 Breckland District Council should comprise 49 councillors serving 27 wards, as detailed and named in Table A1 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

## Parish electoral arrangements

84 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.

85 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, Breckland 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.

86 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for the parishes of Attleborough, Dereham and Thetford.

87 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 propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Attleborough parish.

**Final recommendation**

Attleborough Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Burgh (returning nine members) and Queens (returning six members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

88 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 propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Dereham parish.

**Final recommendation**

Dereham Town Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Central East (returning one member), Central West (returning two members), Neatherd (returning four members), Toftwood (returning three members) and Withburga (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

89 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 propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Thetford parish.

**Final recommendation**

Thetford Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Anne Bartholomew (returning one member), Boudica (returning three members), Burrell (returning four members), Castle (returning four members), Priory (returning three members) and Vicarage Road (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.



### 3 What happens next?

90 We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Breckland District Council. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for Breckland District Council in 2015.

91 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.



## 4 Mapping

### Final recommendations for Breckland

92 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for Breckland District Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Breckland District Council.

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

## Appendix A

**Table A1: Final recommendations for Breckland District Council**

Ward	Number of councillors	Electorate (2013)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 All Saints & Wayland	2	4,807	2,404	18%	4,696	2,348	8%
2 Ashill	1	2,114	2,114	4%	2,014	2,014	-8%
3 Bedingfeld	1	2,283	2,283	13%	2,264	2,264	4%
4 Attleborough Burgh & Haverscroft	2	3,983	1,992	-2%	4,089	2,045	-6%
5 Attleborough Queens & Besthorpe	3	4,616	1,539	-24%	6,742	2,247	3%
6 Dereham Neatherd	3	5,598	1,866	-8%	6,090	2,030	-7%
7 Dereham Toftwood	2	4,472	2,236	10%	4,285	2,143	-2%
8 Dereham Withburga	2	4,029	2,015	-1%	4,362	2,181	0%
9 Forest	2	2,147	1,074	-47%	4,182	2,091	-4%
10 Guiltcross	1	2,373	2,373	17%	2,359	2,359	8%
11 Harling & Heathlands	1	2,417	2,417	19%	2,378	2,378	9%
12 Hermitage	1	2,223	2,223	10%	2,128	2,128	-2%

**Table A1 (cont.) : Final recommendations for Breckland District Council**

Ward	Number of councillors	Electorate (2013)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Launditch	1	2,035	2,035	0%	2,020	2,020	-7%
14 Lincoln	2	4,089	2,045	1%	4,025	2,013	-8%
15 Mattishall	2	4,193	2,097	3%	4,293	2,147	-1%
16 Nar Valley	1	2,061	2,061	2%	2,086	2,086	-4%
17 Necton	1	2,026	2,026	0%	2,025	2,025	-7%
18 Saham Toney	2	3,641	1,821	-10%	4,129	2,065	-5%
19 Shipdham-with-Scarning	2	4,231	2,116	4%	4,445	2,223	2%
20 Swaffham	3	5,868	1,956	-4%	6,469	2,156	-1%
21 The Buckenhams & Banham	1	2,547	2,547	26%	2,362	2,362	8%
22 Thetford Boudica	2	4,304	2,152	6%	4,615	2,308	6%
23 Thetford Burrell	2	4,142	2,071	2%	4,240	2,120	-3%
24 Thetford Castle	2	4,089	2,045	1%	4,599	2,300	6%
25 Thetford Priory	2	4,435	2,218	9%	4,533	2,267	4%

**Table A1 (cont.): Final recommendations for Breckland District Council**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2013)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2019)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
26 Upper Wensum	2	4,851	2,426	20%	4,586	2,293	5%
27 Watton	3	5,854	1,951	-4%	6,678	2,226	2%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>99,428</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>106,694</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,177</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Breckland District Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each 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

### Glossary and abbreviations

AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	A landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward, expressed in parishes or existing wards, or parts of either
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 imbalance	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

Local Government Boundary Commission for England or LGBCE	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England assumed the functions of the Boundary Committee for England in April 2010
Multi-member ward or division	A ward or division represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	The 13 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and can be found at <a href="http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk">http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk</a>
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
PER (or periodic electoral review)	A review of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England, undertaken periodically. The last programme of PERs was undertaken between 1996 and 2004 by the Boundary Commission for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England
Political management arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enabled local authorities in England to modernise their decision making process. Councils could choose from two broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet or a cabinet with a leader
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">http://www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
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 district, 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 district council
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