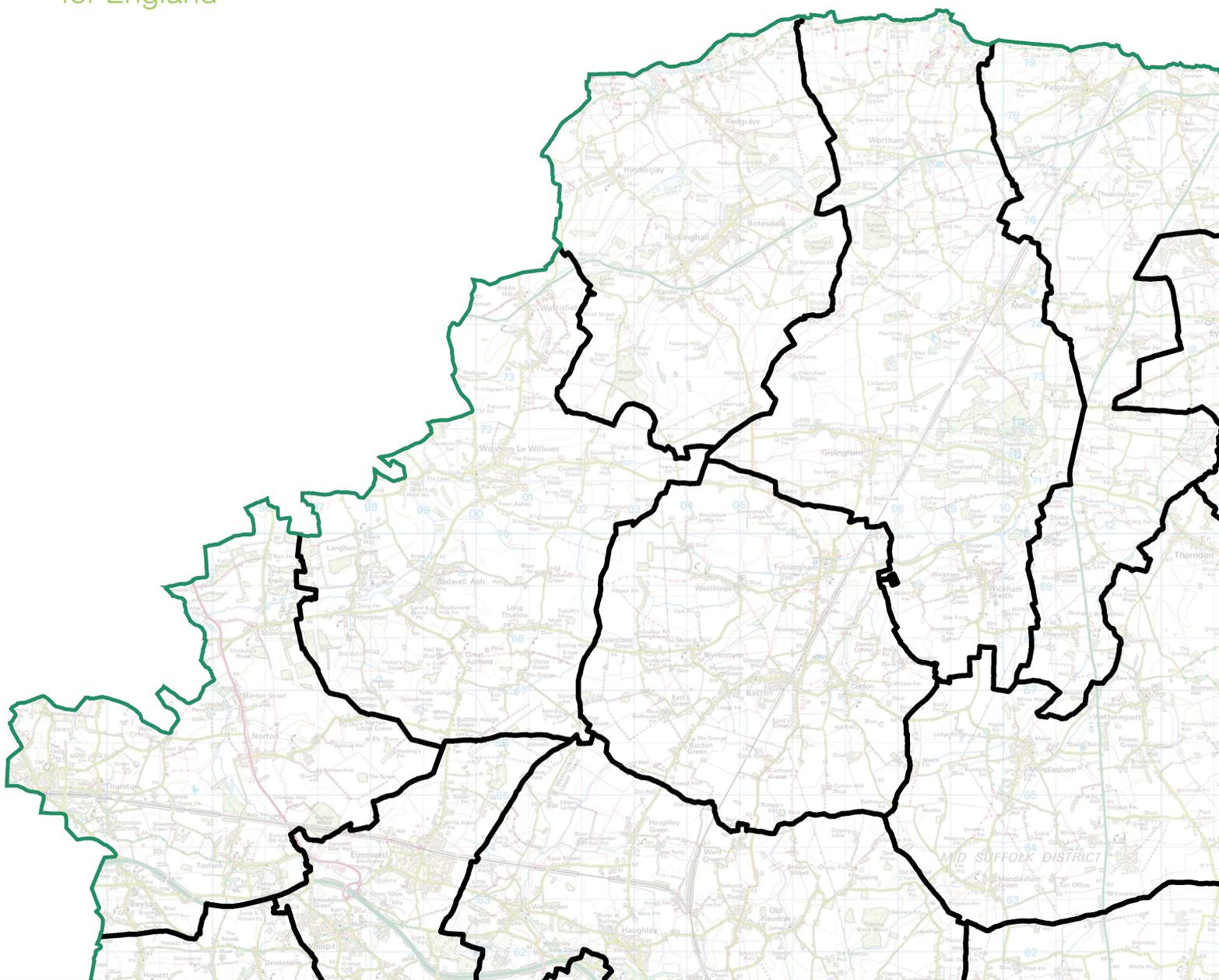


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for
Mid Suffolk District Council
Final recommendations

August 2018

Translations and other formats

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Summary

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

2 Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Electoral review

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

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

Why Mid Suffolk?

4 We are conducting a review of Mid Suffolk District Council as the value of each vote in district elections varies depending on where you live in Mid Suffolk. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

Our proposals for Mid Suffolk

- Mid Suffolk should be represented by 34 councillors, six fewer than there are now.
- Mid Suffolk should have 26 wards, four fewer than there are now.
- The boundaries of all wards should change, none will stay the same.

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

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

6 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹

7 The members of the Commission are:

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

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

1 Introduction

8 This electoral review was carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Mid Suffolk are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district.

What is an electoral review?

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 Mid Suffolk. We then held a period of consultation on the future warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during this consultation informed our initial set of draft recommendations. We then consulted on these draft recommendations. It was during this second round of consultation that a series of anomalies in the baseline electorate figures were identified. At this point we paused the review and did not publish our final recommendations for Mid Suffolk as planned. We worked with the Council to correct these anomalies and published a set of new draft recommendations and carried out a further round of consultation. We have now concluded this consultation and have developed our final recommendations.

12 This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
18 April 2017	Number of councillors decided
13 June 2017	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
14 August 2017	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
3 October 2017	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation

11 December 2017	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and identify anomalies in the data. Formulation of new draft recommendations
6 March 2018	Publication of new draft recommendations, start of third consultation
30 April 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
7 August 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 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.

	2018	2023
Electorate of Mid Suffolk	79,119	82,784
Number of councillors	34	34
Average number of electors per councillor	2,327	2,435

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 Mid Suffolk will 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 5% by 2023. This is mainly due to moderate growth in Blakenham, Thurston and Stowmarket.

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 During our consultation on warding arrangements, we received several submissions from parish councils including Gislingham and Thurston that queried the electorate forecasts for their parish. These parishes were of the opinion that the forecast growth was too high. In light of the feedback received, the Commission contacted Mid Suffolk District Council for further clarification. The Council were of the opinion that the figures provided were accurate as they were based on up-to-date planning information. They further explained that the Local Plan, referred to by respondents, was not at a sufficiently advanced stage for them to be able identify any future development above that already accounted for in the Council's electorate figures.

22 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, the Commission also identified anomalies with the electorate figures in relation to a housing development in the Chilton area of Stowmarket. It was decided that the electoral review should be paused so that we could establish the full extent of the irregularities in the figures. The Commission then issued a new set of draft recommendations.

23 We consider that the revised electorate forecasts we received continue to represent the best available data and we have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

Number of councillors

24 Mid Suffolk District Council currently has 40 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that decreasing the number of councillors by six will ensure the Council can continue to carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively. We also received a submission from Suffolk Green Party that suggested a council size of between 38 and 42 would be appropriate for the authority but they did not provide compelling evidence to support this assertion.

25 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 34 councillors – for example, 34 one-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

26 We received one further submissions about the number of councillors during our new draft recommendations consultation; however, this submission offered no alternative number and therefore our final recommendations are based on a council size of 34.

Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received 26 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included four detailed district-wide proposals from Mid Suffolk District Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on Mid Suffolk District Council and a proposal with two options from the Suffolk Green Party. The schemes from the Liberal Democrat Group on Mid Suffolk District Council and the Suffolk Green Party were based on 34 elected councillors and the scheme from Mid Suffolk District Council was based on a pattern of wards to be represented by 35 elected

councillors. The evidence received in support of two of these schemes – those from the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council – was limited.

28 The four district-wide schemes each provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Mid Suffolk. We carefully considered the proposals received and noted that whilst most of the proposed ward boundaries would have acceptable levels of electoral equality, all the schemes varied significantly from one another. This made it very difficult to put together a coherent warding pattern across the district using parts of each proposal. None of the four district-wide schemes provided a warding pattern for Stowmarket parish. However, we did receive a warding pattern for this area from Stowmarket Town Council.

29 The scheme from Mid Suffolk District Council was based on a 35-member council, an increase of one from the figure that we consulted on. Whilst we reserve the right to increase or decrease the number of councillors during the course of the review, we could not identify reasons that justified the increase in the number of councillors nor accept the relatively high electoral variances that would result. The two options we received from Mid Suffolk Green Party also provided for poor electoral equality in a number of areas. The scheme from the Liberal Democrat Group on Mid Suffolk District Council provided acceptable electoral equality across the district.

30 Our draft recommendations used elements of all the district-wide proposals that we received, particularly in areas where a good degree of consensus existed. We have made modifications to the proposed boundaries based on other local evidence we received regarding community links and locally recognised boundaries. Our recommendations are also informed by information gathered during our visit to the district. In some areas, we considered that none of the proposals provided an effective balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

Draft recommendations

31 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, we received 25 submissions including responses from Mid Suffolk District Council, Mid Suffolk Liberal Democrats, Mid Suffolk Green Party, a number of councillors, local organisations, parish councils and local residents.

New draft recommendations

32 As mentioned above, we then issued a new set of draft recommendations based on the revised electorate figures we established with the Council. These new draft recommendations were based on our original draft recommendations subject to modifications to take account of the submissions received during that consultation and to take account of the revised electorate figures.

33 These new draft recommendations were for eight two-councillor wards and 18 one-councillor wards.

Final recommendations

34 During the consultation on our new draft recommendations we received 15 submissions, including a response from Mid Suffolk District Council which supported the proposed ward boundaries. We also received submissions from a number of parish councils and local residents.

35 Our final recommendations are based on our new draft recommendations with one amendment to take account of evidence received during the consultation for the Redlingfield area.

36 Pages 10–19 detail our final recommendations for each area of Mid Suffolk. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

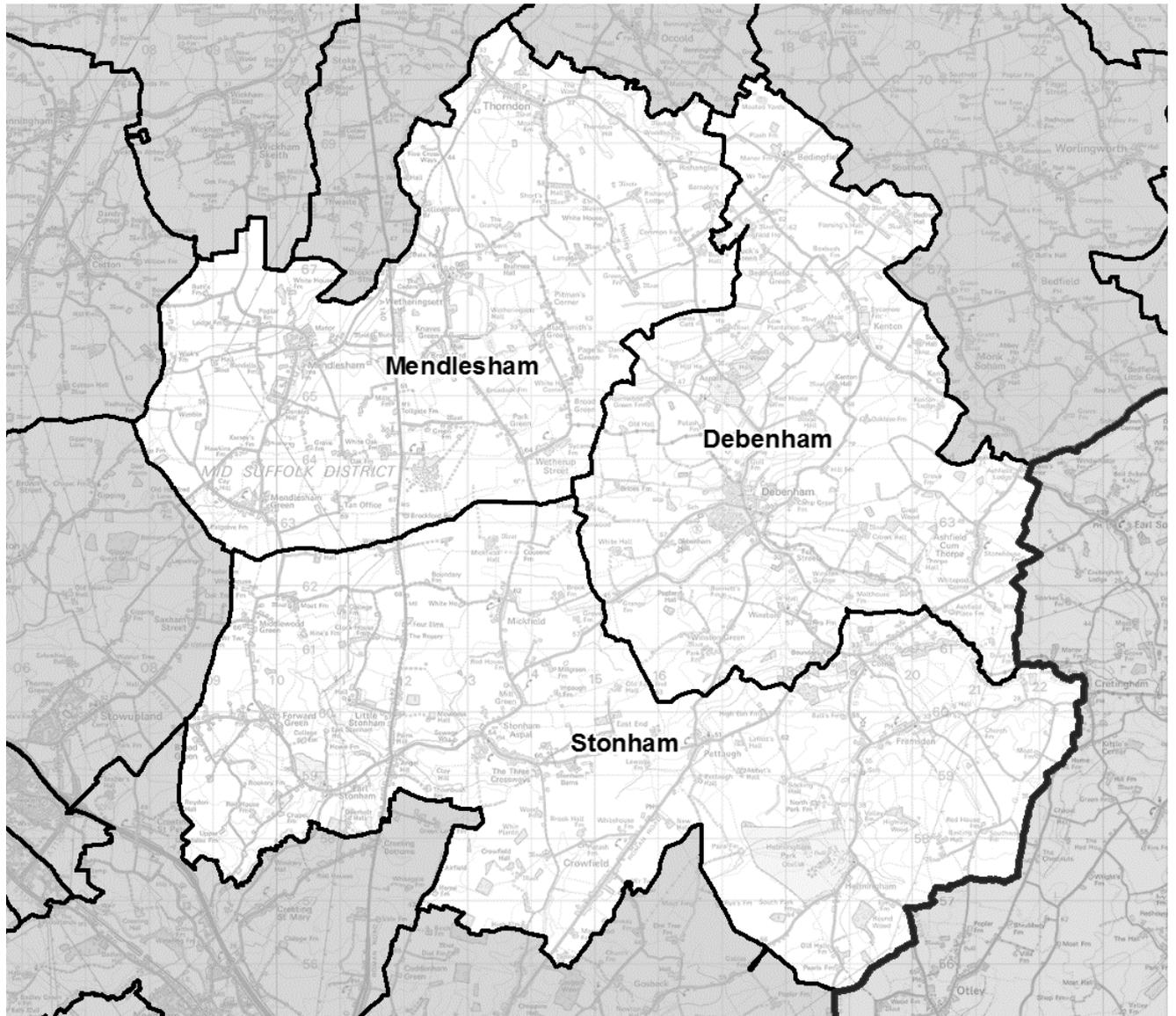
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

37 Our final recommendations are for eight two-councillor wards and 18 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.

38 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on pages 24–6 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Eastern parishes



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Debenham	1	1%
Mendlesham	1	-2%
Stonham	1	-3%

Debenham, Mendlesham and Stonham

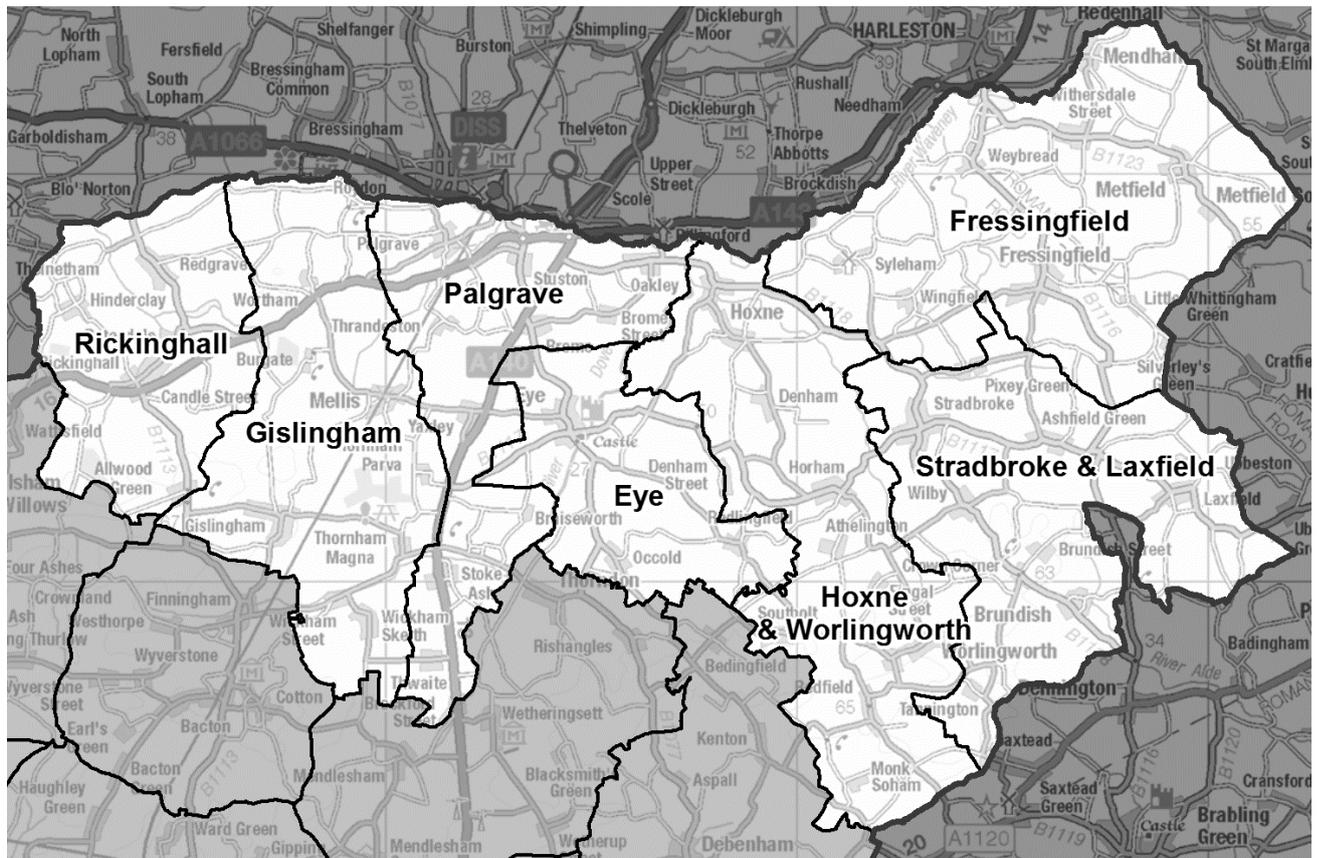
39 In response to our new draft recommendations, we received one submission that made reference to the wards in this area. This submission was received from Cotton Parish Council.

40 The submission did not support the inclusion of the Cotton parish in the ward of Bacton and argued for the inclusion of Cotton parish in a Mendlesham ward. This was a point that was made to us at the previous stage of consultation and considered at that stage. We have carefully considered this submission but have been unable to identify a warding pattern that allows the parish of Cotton to be included in a Mendlesham ward and still provide acceptable electoral equality.

41 In our new draft recommendations, we indicated we were particularly keen to see further submissions for this area that provided sufficient evidence to justify a ward with a significantly higher electoral variance. If we were to include Cotton parish in Mendlesham ward, this would result in an electoral variance of 18% in that ward, and -19% in Bacton ward. We do not consider sufficient evidence has been received to persuade us move away from our new draft recommendations in this area.

42 Our final recommendations for this area are therefore as proposed under our new draft recommendations. They are for the three single-councillor wards of Debenham, Mendlesham and Stonham. All three wards have good electoral equality.

Northern parishes



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Eye	1	3%
Fressingfield	1	1%
Gislingham	1	4%
Hoxne & Worlingworth	1	-4%
Palgrave	1	-9%
Rickinghall	1	-1%
Stradbroke & Laxfield	1	5%

Gislingham and Palgrave

43 In response to the proposed changes to the Gislingham and Palgrave wards we recommended under our new draft recommendations, we received one response. Gislingham Parish Council were in favour of the revised proposal.

44 We therefore propose that the new draft recommendations for the two single-member wards of Gislingham and Palgrave are confirmed as final.

Eye and Hoxne & Worlingworth

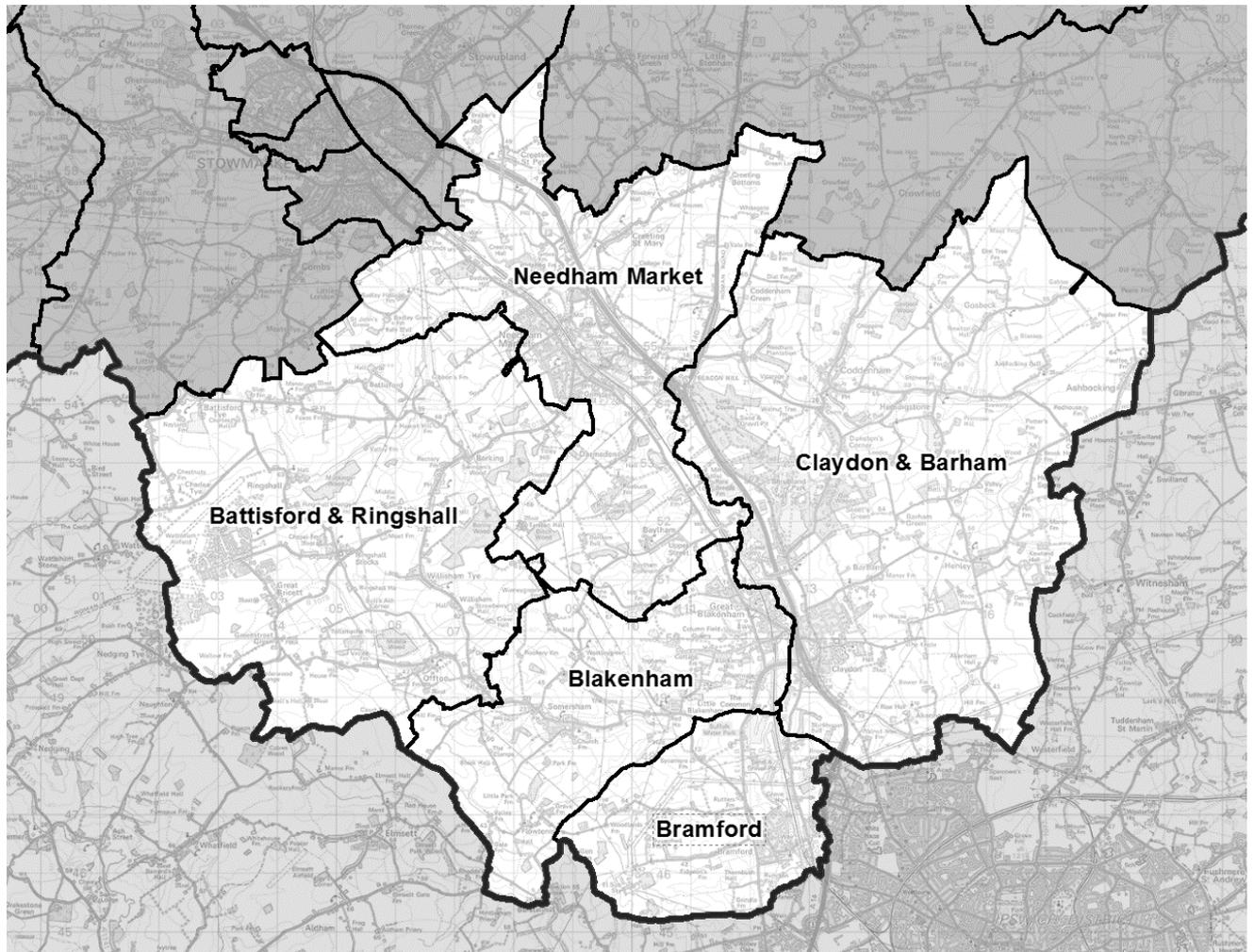
45 We received one submission that made reference to these two wards. That submission was from Redlingfield Parish Council. It disagreed with the reduction in the size of the council and argued that the ward of Hoxne & Worlingworth would be geographically too large. Furthermore, the Parish Council argued that it shared community links to Athelington and Horham through a village magazine and also links to Eye and Occold for shopping, schooling and leisure activities.

46 Having carefully considered the evidence received, we are persuaded to include Redlingfield parish in our Eye ward, to recognise its community links to Eye and Occold. This proposed change still provides good electoral equality for both wards. We therefore confirm our new draft recommendations for these wards as final, subject to this change.

Fressingfield, Rickingham and Stradbroke & Laxfield

47 We received no submissions relating to these wards during our consultation on our new draft recommendations and we confirm those proposals as final.

Southern parishes



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Battsiford & Ringshall	1	0%
Blakenham	1	9%
Bramford	1	-8%
Claydon & Barham	2	0%
Needham Market	2	3%

Battisford & Ringshall, Blakenham, Bramford, Claydon & Barham and Needham Market

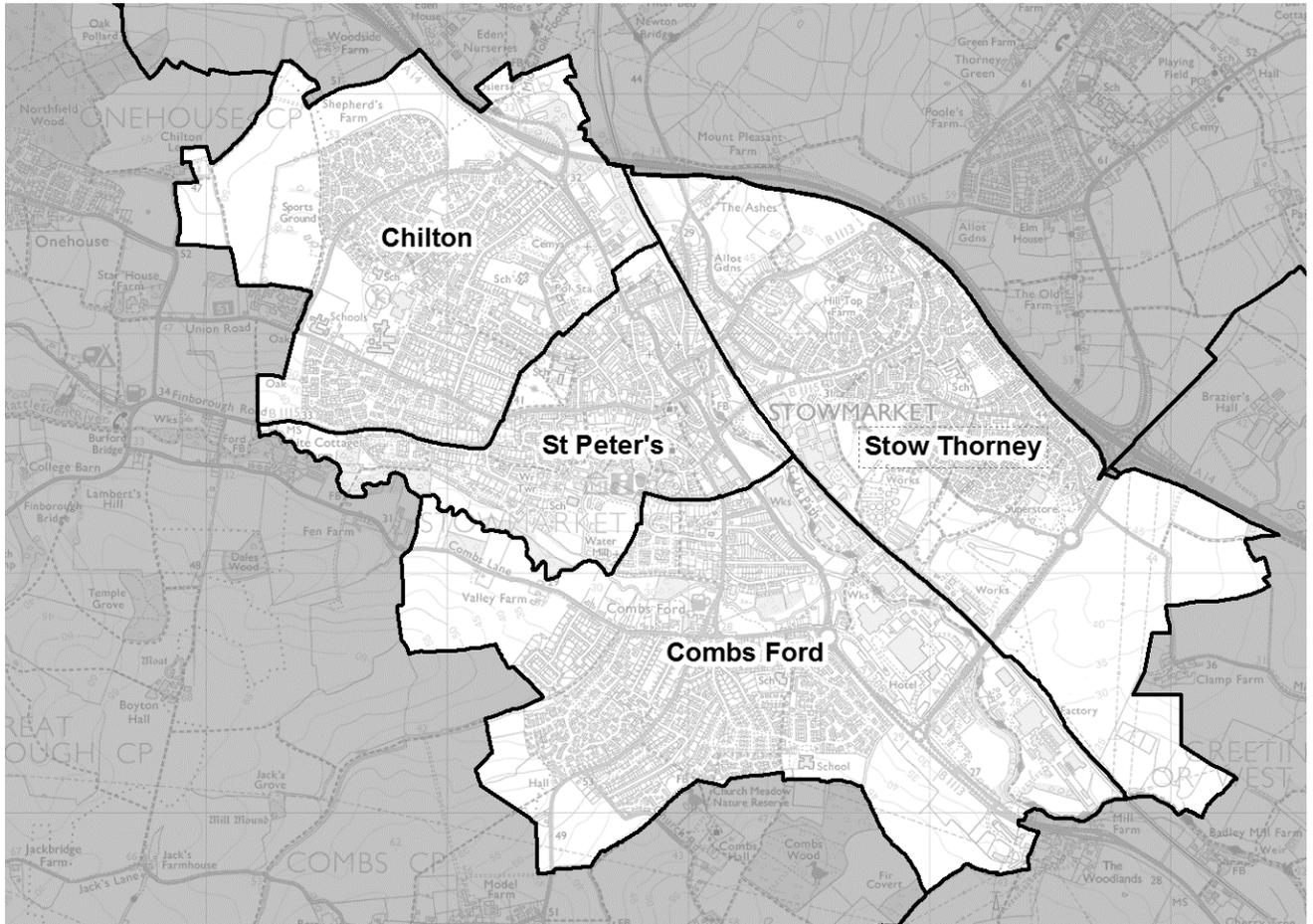
48 We received three submissions that referred to wards in this area, all from local residents. One submission was in support of the inclusion of the parish of Barking in Battisford & Ringshall ward.

49 Another submission objected to part of our proposals. A local resident from Coddensham objected to any proposed changes to the ward boundaries. They did not provide an alternative warding pattern and, as mentioned previously, the reduction of six councillors across the district means that it is not possible to retain any existing wards.

50 The third submission referred to our proposed Claydon & Barham ward and suggested that Claydon and Blakenham would make a better ward. However, this submission did not suggest how this ward would be made up, nor submit any evidence to show why this was a more appropriate proposal than our proposed Claydon & Barham ward.

51 We have therefore decided to confirm our five proposed wards for this area as final.

Stowmarket



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Chilton	2	6%
Combs Ford	2	6%
St Peter's	1	-3%
Stow Thorney	2	-9%

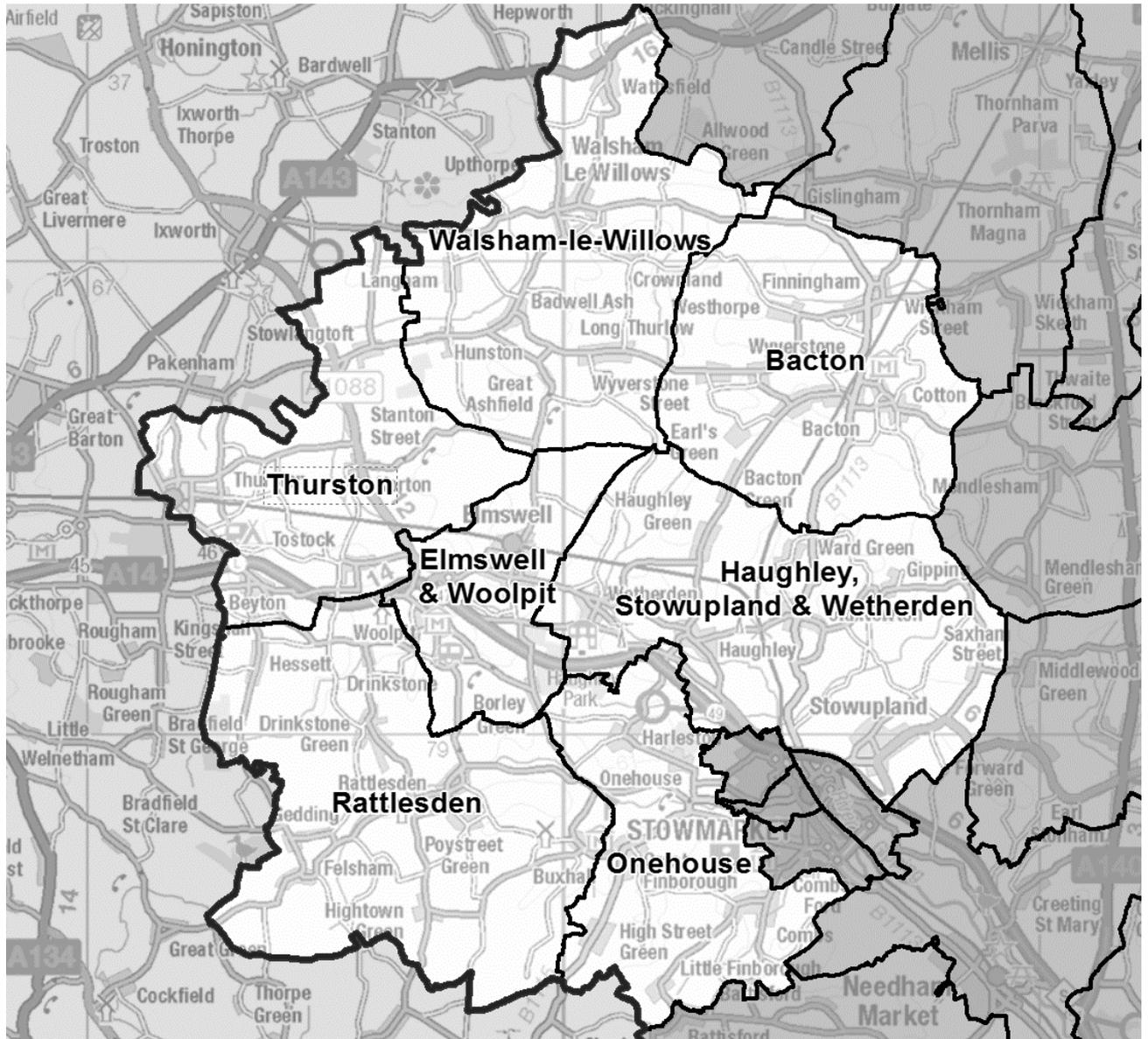
Chilton, Combs Ford, St Peter's and Stow Thorney

52 The two comments we received on our recommendations for Stowmarket were from Mid Suffolk District Council and Stowmarket Town Council. Both submissions again expressed opposition to our proposal for six town council wards in Stowmarket.

53 As explained in our previous recommendations report, under legislation, we are obliged to create a parish ward wherever a parish is divided by either a ward or county division boundary. The proposed wards of St Peter's and Chilton are both crossed by county division boundaries and therefore must contain two parish wards. It is for this reason that Stowmarket parish must comprise six parish wards.

54 In light of this, we have therefore decided to confirm our new draft recommendations for the town as final.

Western parishes



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Bacton	1	0%
Elmswell & Woolpit	2	0%
Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	2	-8%
Onehouse	1	0%
Rattlesden	1	1%
Thurston	2	-1%
Walsham-le-Willows	1	9%

Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden

55 We received one comment that related to our proposed two-member Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden ward. This was from Wetherden Parish Council, which reiterated its desire to be included in an Elmswell & Woolpit ward. However, we did not receive an alternative warding proposal that would resolve the poor electoral equality that would result as a consequence of moving Wetherden into an adjoining ward. We therefore recommend that it remain part of our proposed Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden ward.

Bacton, Elmswell & Woolpit, Onehouse, Rattlesden, Thurston and Walsham-le-Willows

56 As mentioned in paragraphs 39–42 the only submission we received for this area was from Cotton Parish Council, which did not wish to be included in Bacton ward. As stated earlier in this report, we have received insufficient information to justify the high electoral variances that would result from this change. We therefore confirm our new draft recommendations as final for this area.

Conclusions

57 The table below shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2018 and 2023 electorate figures.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2018	2023
Number of councillors	34	34
Number of electoral wards	26	26
Average number of electors per councillor	2,327	2,435
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

Mid Suffolk District Council should be made up of 34 councillors serving 26 wards representing 18 single-councillor wards and eight two-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for the Mid Suffolk District Council. You can also view our final recommendations for Mid Suffolk District Council on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Parish electoral arrangements

58 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.

59 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, Mid Suffolk 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.

60 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Stowmarket parish.

Final recommendation	
Stowmarket Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Chilton North	3
Chilton South	2
Combs Ford	5
St Peter's North	1
St Peter's South	1
Stow Thorney	4

3 What happens next?

61 We have now completed our review of Mid Suffolk. 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

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

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Mid Suffolk District Council

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2018)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bacton	1	2,368	2,368	2%	2,446	2,446	0%
2 Battisford & Ringshall	1	2,419	2,419	4%	2,435	2,435	0%
3 Blakenham	1	2,290	2,290	-2%	2,643	2,643	9%
4 Bramford	1	1,952	1,952	-16%	2,250	2,250	-8%
5 Chilton	2	4,410	2,205	-5%	5,146	2,573	6%
6 Claydon & Barham	2	4,776	2,388	3%	4,890	2,445	0%
7 Combs Ford	2	4,779	2,390	3%	5,154	2,577	6%
8 Debenham	1	2,438	2,438	5%	2,463	2,463	1%
9 Elmswell & Woolpit	2	4,819	2,410	4%	4,885	2,443	0%
10 Eye	1	2,310	2,310	-1%	2,498	2,498	3%
11 Fressingfield	1	2,451	2,451	5%	2,466	2,466	1%
12 Gislingham	1	2,520	2,520	8%	2,544	2,544	4%
13 Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	2	4,414	2,207	-5%	4,467	2,234	-8%

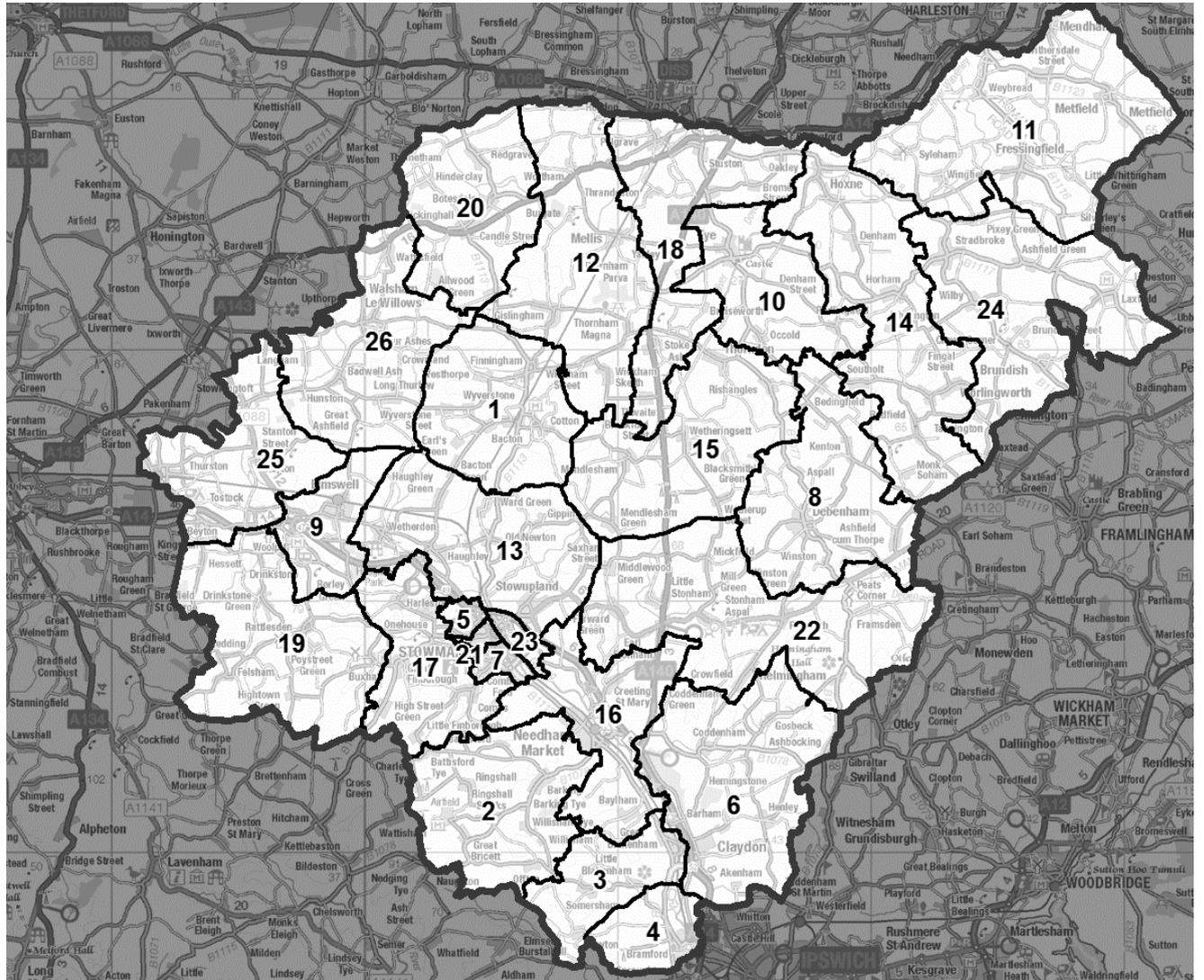
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2018)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
14 Hoxne & Worlingworth	1	2,323	2,323	0%	2,335	2,335	-4%
15 Mendlesham	1	2,324	2,324	0%	2,397	2,397	-2%
16 Needham Market	2	4,860	2,430	4%	5,038	2,519	3%
17 Onehouse	1	2,236	2,236	-4%	2,446	2,446	0%
18 Palgrave	1	2,200	2,200	-5%	2,211	2,211	-9%
19 Rattlesden	1	2,444	2,444	5%	2,471	2,471	1%
20 Rickingham	1	2,390	2,390	3%	2,408	2,408	-1%
21 St Peter's	1	2,319	2,319	0%	2,369	2,369	-3%
22 Stonham	1	2,343	2,343	1%	2,353	2,353	-3%
23 Stow Thorney	2	4,118	2,059	-12%	4,428	2,214	-9%
24 Stradbroke & Laxfield	1	2,435	2,435	5%	2,560	2,560	5%
25 Thurston	2	4,584	2,292	-2%	4,832	2,416	-1%
26 Walsham-le-Willows	1	2,597	2,597	12%	2,649	2,649	9%
Totals	34	79,119	-	-	82,784	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,327	-	-	2,435	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Mid Suffolk 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



Key

1. Bacton
2. Battisford & Ringshall
3. Blakenham
4. Bramford
5. Chilton
6. Claydon & Barham
7. Combs Ford
8. Debenham
9. Elmswell & Woolpit
10. Eye
11. Fressingfield
12. Gislingham
13. Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden
14. Hoxne & Worlingworth
15. Mendlesham
16. Needham Market
17. Onehouse
18. Palgrave
19. Rattlesden
20. Rickingham
21. St Peter's
22. Stonham
23. Stow Thorney
24. Stradbroke & Laxfield
25. Thurston
26. Walsham-le-Willows

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

Appendix C

Submissions received

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

Local Authority

- Mid Suffolk District Council

Parish and Town Council

- Cotton Parish Council
- Gislingham Parish Council
- Redlingfield Parish Council
- Stowmarket Town Council
- Wetherden Parish Council

Local Residents

- 9 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

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

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

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