

# New electoral arrangements for Suffolk County Council Final Recommendations

September 2021

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## **A note on our mapping:**

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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# Introduction

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.<sup>1</sup> We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

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

## What is an electoral review?

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

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

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

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

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

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

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why Suffolk?

7 We are conducting a review of Suffolk County Council ('the Council') as the value of each vote in Suffolk County Council elections varies depending on where you live in 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.

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

- The divisions in 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 county.

## Our proposals for Suffolk

9 Suffolk should be represented by 70 councillors, five fewer than there are now.

10 Suffolk should have 68 single-councillor divisions and one two-councillor division.

11 The boundaries of all but one division should change.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

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

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

## Review timetable

14 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Suffolk. We then held three periods of consultation with the public on division patterns for the county. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

15 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
17 September 2019	Number of councillors decided
24 September 2019	Start of consultation seeking views on new divisions
13 January 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
15 September 2020	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
23 November 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
11 May 2021	Publication of further draft recommendations; start of limited consultation
21 June 2021	End of limited consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
7 September 2021	Publication of final recommendations





## Analysis and final recommendations

16 Legislation<sup>2</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>3</sup> 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 divisions.

17 Our initial review timetable for Suffolk County Council scheduled the publication of final recommendations in 2020. The Council therefore provided us with electorate forecasts for 2025. While there has been a delay to the publication of these final recommendations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we remain confident in the accuracy of the 2026 forecasts provided (see paragraphs 22–25) and have used them as the basis of our proposed divisions.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create divisions 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.

19 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.

	2019	2026
Electorate of Suffolk	563,760	591,842
Number of councillors	70	70
Average number of electors per councillor	8,054	8,455

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a division is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the division as having ‘good electoral equality’. All of our proposed divisions for Suffolk will have good electoral equality by 2026.

## Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received or on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the initial scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These

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

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

forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 5% by 2025.

23 In response to our division patterns consultation, a number of respondents provided some localised comments questioning the forecast figures in their areas. We noted these comments but believe that the developments referred to by the respondents are beyond the forecast period and not yet subject to detailed planning applications or approvals.

24 In response to the draft recommendations, a number of respondents also suggested that there were developments that have not been reflected in the forecast figures. However, we are satisfied that all appropriate development was included in the forecast figures at the time they were put together. We are aware that planning applications may have been approved since then, but we cannot continually revisit the figures during the review process.

25 As a result of considerable delays caused by the Covid-19 outbreak, the review will now conclude in 2021. We have agreed with the Council that these figures remain an accurate forecast of local electors in 2026 and have therefore used them as the basis of our final recommendations.

## Number of councillors

26 Suffolk County Council currently has 75 councillors. The Conservative and Labour groups on the Council proposed reducing the council size to 70. The Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group on the Council proposed retaining the existing council size. Councillor Nettleton proposed a reduction to 72 councillors.

27 We looked at all the evidence provided and concluded that a council size of 70 would ensure the Council could carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively, while also ensuring a good allocation of councillors between the constituent districts.

28 In response to the division pattern consultation, draft recommendations consultation and further draft recommendations consultation we received a number of comments expressing a preference for the existing council size or alternatives. However, these comments were not accompanied by strong new evidence.

29 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. On balance, we have not been persuaded to move away from a council size of 70. We have therefore used this number as the basis of our final recommendations.

## Councillor allocation and coterminosity

30 A council size of 70 provides the following allocation between the district councils in the county. We have also listed the percentage of district wards that are wholly contained within our proposed divisions. We refer to this as coterminosity.

Authority	Allocation of councillors	Coterminosity
Babergh <sup>4</sup>	9	67%
East Suffolk <sup>5</sup>	24	41%
Ipswich <sup>6</sup>	12	38%
Mid Suffolk <sup>7</sup>	10	58%
West Suffolk <sup>8</sup>	15	74%

## Division boundaries consultation

31 We received 66 submissions in response to our consultation on division boundaries. These included a county-wide proposal from Suffolk County Council Conservative Group. For the borough of Ipswich, we also received a joint proposal from Ipswich Labour Party & Suffolk County Council Labour Group, as well as a proposal from Ipswich Liberal Democrats. South Suffolk Conservative Association put forward proposals for the district of Babergh and part of the district of West Suffolk. Councillor Nettleton put forward proposals for West Suffolk. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for division arrangements in particular areas of the county.

32 Suffolk County Council requested that we draw up a pattern based solely on single-councillor divisions. We sought to reflect this request in the draft recommendations, only considering a move away from this pattern of single-councillor divisions where we received compelling evidence during consultation that an alternative pattern will better reflect our statutory criteria. However, in light of the evidence, our draft recommendations proposed a uniform pattern of single-member divisions.

33 We received a number of comments about coterminosity between district wards and divisions. Where possible, we sought to reflect this in our draft recommendations. However, this must be balanced against the statutory criteria and in some instances it is necessary to move away from coterminous arrangements in

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<sup>4</sup> Coterminosity based on the final recommendations for Babergh District Council.

<sup>5</sup> Coterminosity based on the final recommendations for East Suffolk Council.

<sup>6</sup> Coterminosity based on the final recommendations for Ipswich Borough Council.

<sup>7</sup> Coterminosity based on the final recommendations for Mid Suffolk District Council.

<sup>8</sup> Coterminosity based on the final recommendations for West Suffolk Council.

order to secure electoral equality or reflect community identity or effective and convenient local government.

34 Our draft recommendations also took into account local evidence we received during the first consultation period. These submissions provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas, we considered that the proposals for division arrangements did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries. We based our draft recommendations on a mixture of the proposals from the Conservative Group, Councillor Nettleton, Ipswich Labour Party & Suffolk County Council Labour Group, Ipswich Liberal Democrats and a number of other local comments, as well as including some of our own amendments.

35 We visited the area in order to look at the various proposals on the ground. This visit to Suffolk helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

36 Our draft recommendations were for 70 single-councillor divisions. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

37 We received 209 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included county-wide responses from Suffolk County Council Conservative Group ('Conservative Group') and Suffolk County Council Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group ('Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group'). We also received comments on their respective districts from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, East Suffolk Council and West Suffolk Council. South Suffolk Conservatives put forward alternative proposals for part of Babergh. We received alternative proposals for the Woodbridge and surrounding area of East Suffolk from a number of councillors, parishes, political groups and residents.

38 We received over 90 submissions in relation to our Beccles and Worlingham & Kessingland divisions. We also received significant comments on our proposals for the Moreton Hall area and Euston areas of West Suffolk. In addition, we received comments on Babergh and Mid Suffolk with relatively limited comments on Ipswich.

39 A number of respondents proposed changes to create divisions that cross district boundaries or proposed transferring areas from one district to another. However, we are unable to recommend divisions that cross district boundaries. In addition, we are unable to change the external boundary of any district as part of a

review. This can only be done via a Principal Area Boundary Review, which is not within the scope of this review.

40 A number of respondents proposed changes to parish boundaries to facilitate changes to division boundaries. We are unable to amend the external boundaries of parishes as part of this review. This can only be done as part of a Community Governance Review carried out by a district council.

41 Having considered the representations received, we considered that we should undertake a period of further consultation in the Woodbridge and Beccles areas of East Suffolk and the northern area of West Suffolk, including Bury St Edmunds. Accordingly, we published 'Further draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements in parts of East Suffolk and West Suffolk council areas of Suffolk County Council' where we detailed an alternative pattern of divisions to those outlined in the draft recommendations. In the remainder of the county, our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations.

## Further draft recommendations consultation

42 We undertook a period of limited consultation on proposals for parts of East Suffolk and West Suffolk council areas of Suffolk County Council. In response, we received 117 submissions, which put forward a mixture of support and objection for our further draft recommendations.

43 In East Suffolk, there were significant objections to our proposals to divide Melton parish between Wilford and Woodbridge divisions. However, we also received support for these suggestions. We also received proposals for modifications to our further draft recommendations between Framlingham & Wickham Market and Saxmundham & District divisions. We received a mixture of support and objections for our proposals for a two-councillor Beccles & Kessingland division, with some respondents accepting it as a compromise, while others objected, with some citing the fact it would be the only two-councillor division in Suffolk.

44 In West Suffolk we received objections to Clare division, including arguments related to the area it covers and the number of parishes. We also received objections relating to the knock-on effect of the further draft recommendations on Haverhill East & Rural division. We received a mixture of support and objections to our proposals for Bury St Edmunds, with respondents reiterating earlier evidence regarding the Moreton Hall area. A number of respondents suggested an alternative configuration of divisions for the remainder of Bury St Edmunds. In the surrounding rural area, we received a mixture of support and objections to our further draft recommendations.

45 We received a number of responses on areas not put forward as part of our further draft recommendations. We have been unable to consider these comments

as we were not seeking further information on these areas, and it would be unfair to other people who may have wished to comment but did not because they did not realise comments would be considered.

46 A number of respondents expressed support for the existing divisions or rejected the need for an electoral review. We note these comments, but given the changes to council size and poor levels of electoral equality in some of the existing divisions, changes are required.

## Final recommendations

47 Our final recommendations are for 68 single-councillor divisions and one two-councillor division. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

48 The tables and maps on pages 11–42 detail our final recommendations for each area of Suffolk. They detail how the proposed division arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>9</sup> criteria of:

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

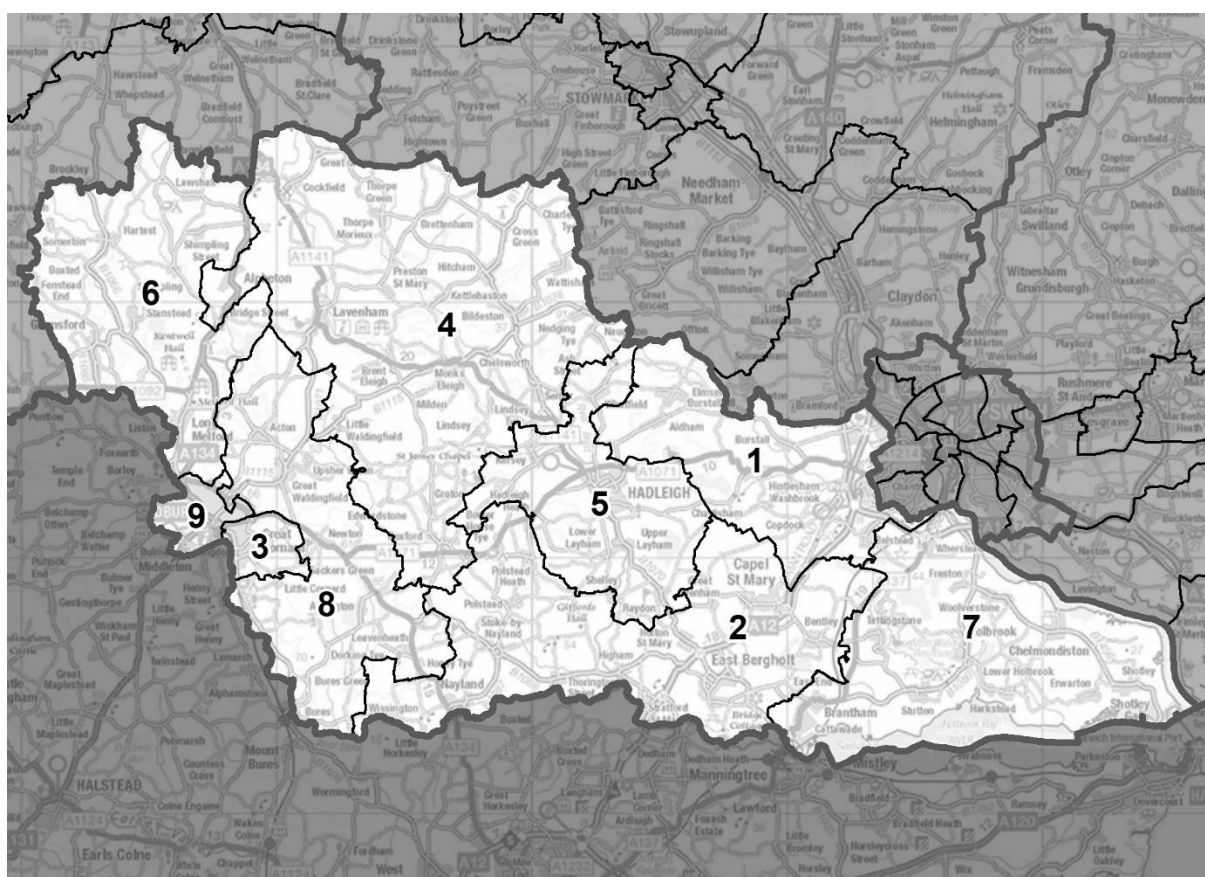
49 A summary of our proposed new divisions is set out in the table starting on page 51 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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<sup>9</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.



## Babergh



Division number	Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
1	Brook	1	-8%
2	Constable	1	8%
3	Cornard & Sudbury East	1	-3%
4	Cosford	1	-2%
5	Hadleigh	1	0%
6	Melford	1	-2%
7	Peninsula	1	0%
8	Stour Valley	1	1%
9	Sudbury West	1	-5%

### *Hadleigh and Brook*

50 In response to the draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections for these divisions. The Conservative Group and South Suffolk Conservatives argued that Bentley parish should be in Brook division, not Constable division. They argued that this would improve electoral equality between the two divisions and would reflect links between schools in Bentley and Copdock. They also argued that Bentley parish is in a district ward with Copdock parish. A local resident also argued for the inclusion of Bentley parish in Brook division.



51 The Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group stated that Aldham and Elmsett parishes should be in Cosford division. The Group argued that the parishes have much closer links there than with Brook division, where the villages look to Ipswich rather than Hadleigh. Aldham Parish Council argued that it should be in Cosford division, or failing that Hadleigh division, citing a lack of links and connections with the parishes in Brook division. Elmsett Parish Council also rejected links to Brook division, putting forward alternative proposals for areas of Babergh and also Mid Suffolk, including a number of divisions that crossed the district boundary. As discussed in paragraph 39, we are unable to create divisions that cross district boundaries.

52 A number of residents also argued that Aldham and Elmsett parishes should be in Cosford division, with one stating that Aldham should be in Hadleigh division if it could not be accommodated in Cosford. Councillor Busby argued that Elmsett parish should not be separated from Whatfield parish. Kersey Parish Council expressed concern about its inclusion in Hadleigh division, arguing that it would be better served in Cosford division. However, it also argued that Cosford division should contain fewer parishes. Two local residents expressed support for the inclusion of Kersey parish in Hadleigh division, citing links to shops and the high school. These residents suggested that Hadleigh division should be renamed Hadleigh & East Cosford division to reflect the inclusion of parishes beyond Hadleigh in the division. One of the residents also suggested that to reflect this, Cosford division should be renamed West Cosford.

53 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the comments about Bentley parish, and evidence of links between local schools and the fact that Bentley is in the same district ward as parishes in Copdock & Washbrook ward. We also note that including Bentley parish in Brook division would improve electoral equality there, and in Constable division, from 8% fewer and 8% more than the county average by 2026, respectively, to equal to the average for both divisions.

54 However, this must be balanced against the strong evidence of community identity received from Bentley Parish Council that formed part of our draft recommendations. As stated in our previous report, our visit to the area confirmed that while the A12 is not an insignificant boundary, Bentley has good access, under the A12, to the services in Capel St Mary. In addition, while adding Bentley to Brook division would place it in the same division as most of the parishes in Copdock & Washbrook district ward, it would not provide coterminosity with the ward as Wenham Magna and Wenham Parva would remain in Constable division. On balance, despite the improvement in electoral equality that would result, we consider Bentley parish is better retained in Constable division, reflecting links to Capel St Mary. We are therefore not amending this boundary as part of our final recommendations.

55 We note the arguments for transferring Aldham and/or Elmsett parishes to Cosford division, or possibly Hadleigh division. Incorporating these parishes within Cosford division would also require the inclusion of Whatfield parish, as this parish lies between Aldham and Elmsett parishes and Cosford division. In assessing the geographic configuration of the parishes, we do not believe it would provide a good balance of our statutory criteria to transfer only one or other of Aldham or Elmsett parishes into Cosford division, as this would leave one isolated from the other. In addition, while there was community evidence to support incorporating both parishes into Cosford division, given this would also require the transfer Whatfield parish, this would leave Brook division with 18% fewer electors than the county average by 2026, with Cosford division worsening to 12% more electors than the average. We do not consider the worsening of electoral equality to these levels can be justified by the evidence received and we have therefore not adopted this amendment as part of our final recommendations.

56 Adding Aldham and Elmsett parishes to Hadleigh division would worsen electoral equality in Hadleigh and Brook divisions to 11% more and 18% fewer electors than the county average by 2026, respectively. Again, we do not consider the worsening of electoral equality to these levels can be justified on the basis of the evidence received, and we have therefore not adopted this amendment as part of our final recommendations.

57 We have considered the comments from the parish of Kersey about being included in Cosford division. However, although transferring it to Cosford division would have a limited impact on electoral equality, we note the links to Hadleigh identified by the residents in their responses. On balance, we are not persuaded to amend the boundary. We also note the suggested name changes, but believe the use of the east and west prefixes makes the division names less clear in this area. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Hadleigh and Brook divisions as final.

#### *Constable, Cosford and Stour Valley*

58 In response to the draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections for these divisions. South Suffolk Conservatives put forward an alternative division pattern, with proposals for a modified Cosford division and new Lavenham & Sudbury North East and Stour Valley divisions.

59 South Suffolk Conservatives argued for the inclusion of Assington, Leavenheath, Little Cornard and Newton parishes in their modified Cosford division, arguing that the parishes are in the existing division with Boxford and Edwardstone parishes. They also added Polstead parish to Cosford division, citing shared concerns around the A1071 and some community links to Boxford. The proposed Lavenham & Sudbury North East division removed the southern parishes from Stour

Valley division, arguing these parishes share no links around schools or transport. To offset the impact on electoral equality by moving these parishes, South Suffolk Conservatives added a number of parishes to Cosford division, arguing that this would provide coterminosity with Lavenham district ward as well as road links via the A1071. Finally, they proposed transferring Bures St Mary parish to their proposed Stour Valley division to achieve coterminosity with Bures St Mary & Nayland district ward.

60 A local resident expressed support for South Suffolk Conservatives' proposals, providing additional evidence of community links, particularly the parishes to the north-east of Sudbury.

61 The Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group objected to a number of parishes included within Cosford division and specifically to the inclusion of Alpheton parish, arguing that it would be better to include Acton parish. The Group also objected to the division name Constable, arguing that Samford should be retained as it has historical meaning. Councillor Busby argued that Nayland-with-Wissington and Stoke-by-Nayland parishes should not be in Constable division.

62 Polstead Parish Council responded with 'no comments' to make. Newton Parish Council expressed concern about the geographic size of a number of divisions, as well as the number of parishes included and lack of connections between them. However, the parish council did express support for its inclusion in Stour Valley division. A resident argued that the proposed Constable division contained too many electors, while another argued that Cosford division should be renamed West Cosford and Hadleigh division renamed Hadleigh & East Cosford.

63 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. As stated in the Hadleigh and Brook section (paragraphs 50–57), we received evidence to support the transfer of Bentley parish from Constable division to Brook division. This would reduce the geographic size of Constable division, while also improving electoral equality in Constable and Brook divisions. As discussed above, however, we have decided not to adopt this proposal as we consider that the evidence of community links between Bentley and Capel St Mary parishes, provided as part of the draft recommendation, should be reflected in our recommendations. We are therefore retaining Bentley parish in Brook division.

64 We note the alternative proposals from South Suffolk Conservatives and the evidence from a resident. However, we have particular concerns about the Cosford division proposed by the South Suffolk Conservatives, which runs the entire width of the district. We are not persuaded that there are good links between communities in the north and south of this division. While the proposed Lavenham & Sudbury North East division is more compact, this cannot be accommodated without also

incorporating the very large Cosford division, of which we have significant concerns. On balance, we have therefore not been persuaded to adopt these proposals.

65 We note the concerns of the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group, but do not believe it has provided strong evidence for transferring Alpheton parish out of Cosford division. In addition, Acton parish contains a large number of electors and including it within Cosford division would worsen electoral equality in Cosford and Stour Valley divisions to 13% more and 17% fewer electors than the county average by 2026, respectively. We are therefore not adopting this amendment as part of our final recommendations.

66 We note Councillor Busby's comments about the inclusion of Nayland-with-Wissington and Stoke-by-Nayland parishes in Constable division. However, the only alternative arrangement for these parishes would be to include them in Stour Valley division, and this would worsen electoral equality there to 19% more electors than the county average by 2026. In light of this poor level of electoral equality and lack of strong supporting community identity evidence, we are not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

67 Finally, we note the proposed name changes, but for the reasons outlined in the Hadleigh and Brook section (paragraph 57) – as well as the limited evidence or support from other stakeholders for the other changes – we are not adopting them as part of our final recommendations. We are therefore confirming our Constable, Cosford and Stour Valley divisions as final.

#### *Cornard & Sudbury East, Melford and Sudbury West*

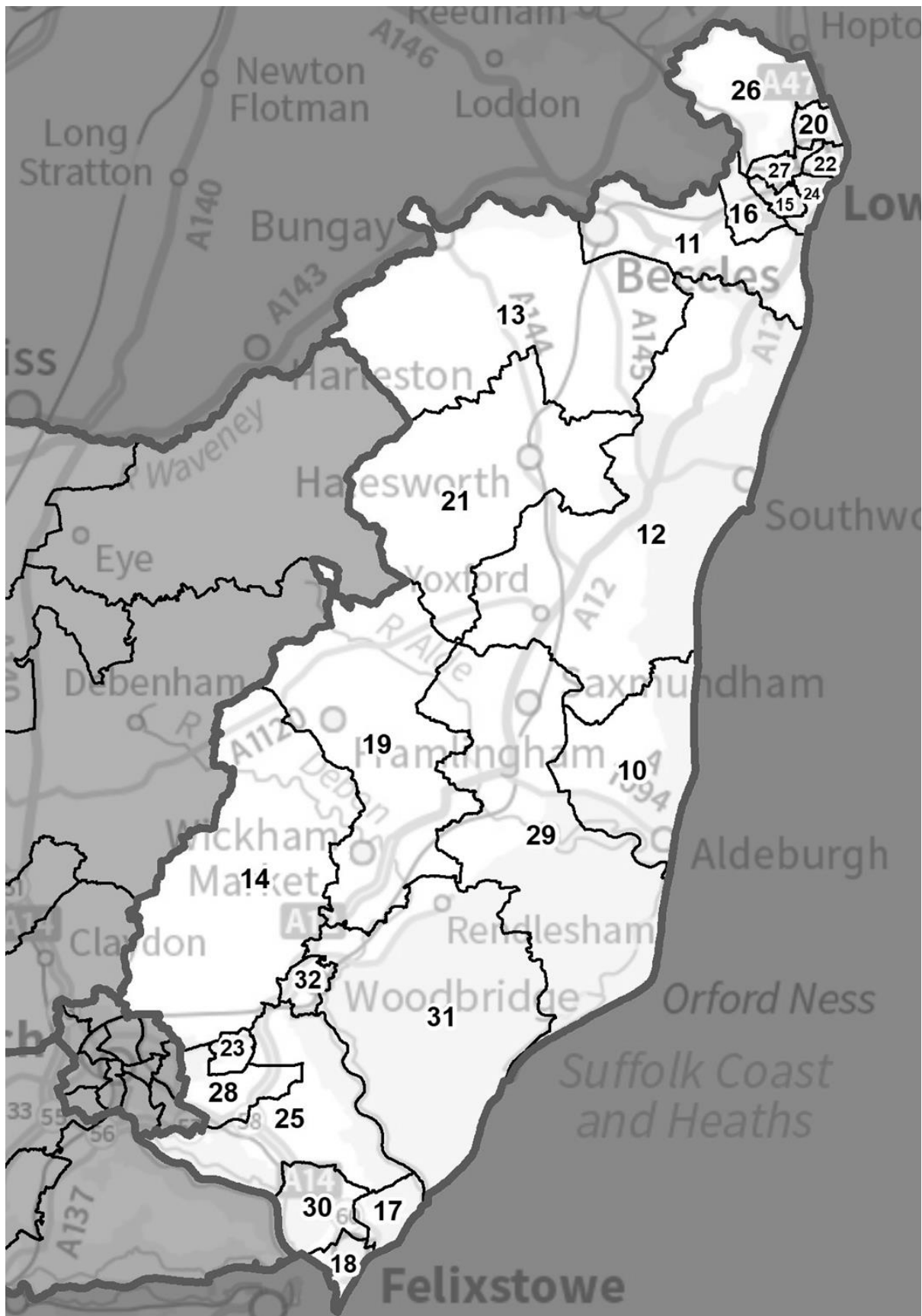
68 In response to the draft recommendations, we received support for these divisions. However, Babergh District Council stated that the boundary between Cornard & Sudbury East and Sudbury West should be conterminous with the parish boundary to avoid the creation of a small parish ward. We note these comments, but this would worsen electoral equality in Cornard & Sudbury West division to 11% fewer electors than the average by 2026. While we acknowledge the district council's concern, we do not consider we have received sufficient evidence to justify this worsening of electoral equality. We are therefore not including this amendment within our final recommendations.

69 South Suffolk Conservatives recommended that Cornard & Sudbury East division be renamed Cornard & Sudbury South East to reflect the name of their proposed Lavenham & Sudbury North East division. However, as discussed in the Constable, Cosford and Stour Valley section (paragraphs 58–67), we have not been persuaded to adopt the proposals for Lavenham & Sudbury North East and are therefore not persuaded by this name change. We also note there was no other support for a name change for this division. We are therefore confirming our Cornard & Sudbury East, Melford and Sudbury West divisions as final.

### *Peninsula*

70 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our Peninsula division and no other significant comments. We are therefore confirming this division as final.

## East Suffolk



Division number	Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
10	Aldeburgh & Leiston	1	-5%
11	Beccles & Kessingland	2	1%
12	Blyth Estuary	1	-4%
13	Bungay	1	-7%
14	Carlford	1	0%
15	Carlton & Whitton	1	4%
16	Carlton Colville	1	-6%
17	Felixstowe Clifflands	1	2%
18	Felixstowe Maritime	1	-2%
19	Framlingham & Wickham Market	1	4%
20	Gunton	1	-5%
21	Halesworth	1	-9%
22	Harbour	1	6%
23	Kesgrave	1	7%
24	Kirkley & Pakefield	1	9%
25	Martlesham	1	-9%
26	Oulton	1	1%
27	Oulton Broad & Normanston	1	0%
28	Rushmere St Andrew	1	-5%
29	Saxmundham & District	1	-10%
30	Walton & Trimleys	1	-7%
31	Wilford	1	-6%
32	Woodbridge	1	-1%

#### *Gunton, Harbour, Oulton and Oulton Broad & Normanston*

71 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our proposals for these divisions. Lowestoft Town Council noted that the proposals reduced the number of councillors for its area from six to five. A local resident argued that Oulton division should be renamed Lothingland in order to restore an historical name and to avoid a name focusing on only one of the constituent parishes.

72 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the general support for our draft recommendations. We also considered the proposed division name change, but note that the naming convention of using the name of a single parish is used elsewhere in East Suffolk. In addition, we have received no other submissions suggesting the name is changed. We are therefore not amending the division name as part of our final recommendations and confirm our draft recommendations as final.



### *Carlton & Whitton, Carlton Colville and Kirkley & Pakefield*

73 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our proposals for these divisions. However, as discussed in paragraphs 75–81 (below), we received significant objections to our proposals for Beccles and Worlingham & Kessingland divisions. A number of respondents argued that Kessingland would be better served in a division with the Pakefield area of Lowestoft. However, we have rejected any proposal to link these areas as they would significantly worsen electoral equality in both areas and require a total redrawing of the division boundaries in Lowestoft and the surrounding area.

74 We received no other significant comments. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

### *Beccles & Kessingland*

75 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received for this area during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed a two-councillor Beccles & Kessingland division.

76 In response to the further draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections. Suffolk County Council Conservatives, Suffolk Coastal Conservative Association, Councillor Hicks and a number of local residents objected to the two-councillor proposal, arguing that we should revert to the draft recommendation proposals for two single-councillor divisions. They argued that the Council had requested the presumption of single-councillor divisions and that having a single two-councillor division would cause confusion. In addition, it was suggested that if the option of multi-member divisions had been a consideration, they may have been proposed elsewhere. A resident argued that Beccles is a significant town with its own community identity and could be separated from Worlingham. Barnby Parish Council reiterated its connection to Beccles and lack of links to Kessingland, but did not put forward an alternative proposal.

77 Beccles Town Council expressed reluctant support for a two-councillor Beccles & Kessingland division as an acceptable compromise, but reiterated the lack of links to Kessingland. A number of residents objected to the draft recommendations and further draft recommendation, but did not provide any alternative proposals. The Green, Independent & Liberal Democrat Group on East Suffolk Council gave support for a two-councillor division, but also expressed concerns about our proposals to link Beccles, Worlingham, Barnby and North Cove parishes with Kessingland, arguing that the latter would be better placed in a division with Pakefield. East Suffolk Liberal Democrats expressed general support for the further draft recommendations for East Suffolk.



78 Finally, Councillors Byatt, Gooch and Pitchers objected to the inclusion of an area around Pakefield Hall in our proposed two-councillor division. We note these concerns but also note that the alternative proposal would require the creation of a parish ward of Gisleham parish with only around 50 electors. We do not consider the creation of such a small parish ward provides effective and convenient local government, and we are therefore not adopting this proposal.

79 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting some limited support for the creation of a two-councillor Beccles & Kessingland division, and also objections. In finalising our recommendations, it is important that we consider all of the evidence received across all three consultation periods. While our initial draft recommendations in this area reflected the Council's request for single-member divisions, we received very strong community evidence that the proposal had split Beccles parish from its neighbouring Barnby, North Cove and Worlingham parishes, with which it has close ties. In light of the level of strong objections to our draft recommendations, we considered it sensible to explore ways to address the concerns, noting that it was not possible to secure a viable warding pattern based on single-councillor divisions. We therefore concluded that the best option was to create a two-councillor division, which while joining a number of communities without links, avoided the separation of parishes with strong links. Although this moved us away from a uniform pattern of single-councillor divisions, we considered it better to reflect the strongly argued links between Beccles parish and neighbouring Barnby, North Cove and Worlingham parishes.

80 We note that our further draft recommendations have not received strong support and that there is some evidence for reverting to the draft recommendations. We also note that a number of respondents are not in favour of either proposal, stressing the links between Beccles, Worlingham, Barnby and North Cove parishes.

81 However, as identified in the further draft recommendations, we have been unable to identify a way to maintain the ties between Beccles and its neighbouring parishes in a division that is separate from Kessingland, while also securing good levels of electoral equality. On balance, we remain of the view that it is better to unite Beccles, Worlingham, Barnby and North Cove parishes in a division, even if this also includes Kessingland parish and goes against the Council's request for a uniform pattern of single-councillor divisions. While we have sought to reflect this in our proposals, we are not bound by this request, and we are able to consider multi-councillor divisions if we are of the view that our statutory criteria would not be reflected in a single-councillor arrangement. In this instance, we are of that view. We are therefore confirming the two-councillor Beccles & Kessingland division as final.

#### *Bungay and Halesworth*

82 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our proposals for these divisions. A local resident argued that Bungay division

should be renamed Wainford as this is an historical name and was used until 2005. The resident also argued the proposal would avoid the name focusing on only one of the constituent parishes.

83 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the support for our draft recommendations for this area. We also considered the proposed division name change, but note that the naming convention of using the name of a single parish is used elsewhere in East Suffolk. In addition, we have received no other submissions suggesting the name is changed. We are therefore not amending the division name as part of our final recommendations and are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

#### *Aldeburgh & Leiston and Blyth Estuary*

84 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our proposals for these divisions. Bramfield & Thornington Parish Council argued that Thornington parish should be in the same parish as Bramfield, as reflected by our draft recommendation to include them both in Blyth Estuary division. A local resident argued that Blyth Estuary division should be renamed Heritage Coast, arguing this would reflect the area as a whole as well as its historical and coastal nature.

85 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the support for our draft recommendations. We also note the proposed division name change and while it has some merit, we have received no other submissions suggesting this name change. On balance, we are therefore not amending the division name as part of our final recommendations and are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

#### *Carlford, Wilford and Woodbridge*

86 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Carlford, Wilford and Woodbridge divisions.

87 In response to the further draft recommendations, we receive a mixture of support and objections, with particular concerns expressed over the division of Melton parish between Wilford and Woodbridge divisions.

88 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, Suffolk Coastal Conservatives, Councillor Hicks, Councillor Porter, Councillor Sanders, Melton Parish Council and a number of residents objected to the further draft recommendations for Wilford and Woodbridge division, expressing support for the initial draft recommendations. They objected to the division of Melton parish between two divisions. Respondents rejected the argument that Woods Lane is a clearer boundary than Pytches Road,

adding that local people were well aware of the division between Melton and Woodbridge parishes. They argued that the proposals divided the Melton community and would require the creation of parish wards for the parish, which is currently unwarded. They also argued that the proposals reduced coterminosity with Melton ward. Some respondents questioned the logic for including Woodbridge Primary School in Woodbridge division while separating Melton Primary School from the rest of Melton. Some argued that Melton Primary School should remain with the rest of the Melton parish in Wilford division. Councillor Sanders added that the further draft proposals also remove Melton's dock and recreational facilities.

89 Respondents also argued that under the initial draft recommendations, Melton parish would act as the core of the Wilford division, being a focus for the parishes between the River Deben and River Butley. Respondents stated that Woods Lane (A1152) is a key transport link that connects the area to the A12 and that there are growing problems around traffic. They argued that using Woods Lane as a boundary would split the road between two councillors, making it harder to address the issues, adding that electors to the south of the road are less affected. Finally, concern was also expressed that the further draft recommendations for Wilford also worsened electoral equality for this division.

90 East Suffolk Liberal Democrats expressed general support for the further draft recommendations for these divisions. Suffolk Coastal Labour Party and Woodbridge Branch Labour Party also expressed support, arguing that the proposals reflected the links between parts of Melton and Woodbridge parishes. Councillor Yule also expressed support for the further draft recommendations.

91 The Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group on East Suffolk Council expressed support for reflecting links between Melton and Woodbridge parishes, but objected to the proposal to split Melton parish between divisions. A number of residents argued the whole of Melton parish should be in Woodbridge division, citing links there, rather than in Wilford division.

92 Councillor Page and Woodbridge Liberal Democrat Action Group expressed general support for the further draft recommendations for Wilford and Woodbridge divisions, particularly as they avoid linking Ufford parish with Woodbridge, while having Melton parish sit between them. They considered it preferable to link parts of Melton to Woodbridge, reiterating links to the area along Pytches Road. However, they did point out that the proposals transferred Melton Primary School to Woodbridge division, along with dividing Woods Lane between councillors. They proposed retaining these areas in Wilford division along with the electors on the north end of Melton Road and those that access Woods Lane. Woodbridge Town Council also expressed support for further draft recommendations, but stated that Melton Primary School should be retained in Wilford division.

93 A number of residents also expressed support for the further draft proposals, including the transfer of part of Melton parish to Woodbridge division. They cited links for services into Woodbridge, arguing that some residents in this area did not realise they lived in Melton parish. Some also supported the further draft recommendations because they avoided the initial draft recommendation proposal that linked Woodbridge to rural parishes.

94 Councillor Hedgley and Great Bealings Parish Council expressed support for Carlford division. A resident suggested that Woodbridge division should be renamed Woodbridge & Melton.

95 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the support and objections for the further draft recommendations. We note that a number of respondents referred to proposals that kept the grouped parishes of Butley, Capel St Andrew and Wantisden together in the same division. These parishes would remain together under both the draft recommendations and further draft recommendations.

96 We acknowledge that the further draft recommendations for this area result in the creation of parish wards in Melton, a parish that is currently unwarded. The Commission is able to create parish wards where doing so provides for division arrangements that reflect the best balance of our statutory criteria. In this particular circumstance, we must be mindful of ensuring a good balance in our criteria across the wider area of East Suffolk, as well as in Woodbridge and Melton, and consider that dividing Melton parish between divisions would facilitate a better division pattern for East Suffolk. We note that there were significant objections, arguing that the further draft recommendation has divided the Melton community, although this must be offset against the evidence that argued that the area to the north of Pytches Road has good links with Woodbridge. We note the argument that the further draft recommendations reduced coterminosity with Melton ward, but this must be balanced against an improvement in coterminosity in Carlford division with Carlford & Fynn Valley ward.

97 We note that there was some suggestion that whole of Melton parish could be placed in Woodbridge division, acknowledging the links between the areas. However, this would leave Woodbridge division with 22% more electors than the county average by 2026, while Wilford would have 28% fewer. We do not consider there to be the evidence to support such a poor level of electoral equality.

98 In addition to the contradictory evidence about Melton, on balance, we remain of the view that the further draft recommendations, which avoid linking Woodbridge with rural divisions on the other side of the A12 and Ufford parish, provide a stronger division pattern. We are therefore broadly confirming our further draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

99 However, we do note a number of the specific concerns about the boundary between Wilford and Woodbridge divisions and the suggestions for how this could be improved. We acknowledge the concerns about Woods Lane (A1152) and the fact it would be better if this was represented by a single councillor. In addition, we note that our further draft proposals transferred Melton Primary School away from Melton, along with the dock and recreational facilities. We are therefore proposing an amendment to our further draft recommendations. Under our final recommendation, the boundary will run along the south side of Woods Lane, but also take in the north end of Melton Lane, which will include Melton Primary School and the recreation and dock facilities in Wilford division. This will strengthen the boundary, but also improve electoral equality in Wilford division to 6% fewer electors by 2026, while Woodbridge would have 1% fewer.

100 Finally, we note the suggestion from a resident for renaming Woodbridge division, but do not consider there to be sufficient evidence or support from other respondents. Therefore, we are retaining the Woodbridge name as part of our final recommendations.

#### *Framlingham & Wickham Market and Saxmundham & District*

101 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Framlingham & Wickham Market and Saxmundham & District divisions.

102 In response to the further draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections, as well as some suggested amendments.

103 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group expressed general objections to the proposals for this area, requesting the retention of the draft recommendations. It argued that the Saxmundham & District division name was not clear and it should be renamed Saxmundham division.

104 Suffolk Coastal Labour Party, Woodbridge Branch Labour Party, East Suffolk Liberal Democrats and Ufford Parish Council expressed general support for the further draft recommendations for these divisions. The Green, Independent & Liberal Democrat Group on East Suffolk Council expressed support for Saxmundham & District division.

105 Dan Poulter MP, Councillor Nicoll and Councillor Poulter were broadly supportive of the further draft recommendations, but proposed an amendment to transfer Campsea Ashe, Little Glemham and Marlesford parishes from Saxmundham & District division to Framlingham & Wickham Market division. Respondents cited a range of links between these parishes and Framlingham and Wickham Market, including schools, GP services and social activities. Marlesford Parish Council also

argued that it should be in Framlingham & Wickham Market division, putting forward similar evidence.

106 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the objections from Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, but do not consider that it provided strong evidence for moving away from the further draft recommendations.

107 We also note the argument that Campsea Ashe, Little Glemham and Marlesford parishes should be transferred from Saxmundham & District division to Framlingham & Wickham Market division. This proposal would alter electoral equality in Framlingham & Wickham Market from 4% fewer electors than the county average by 2026 to 4% more, but worsen electoral equality in Saxmundham & District from 2% fewer to 10% fewer. This is at the upper end of what we generally consider good electoral equality. However, respondents put forward good evidence of community links and the options for addressing electoral equality in Saxmundham & District are limited by its position at the edge of the district. Therefore, on balance, we have been persuaded to adopt these amendments.

108 Finally, we note Suffolk County Council Conservative Group's suggestion for modifying the name; however, we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence or support from other respondents. Therefore, we are retaining the Saxmundham & District name as part of our final recommendations.

#### *Martlesham and Rushmere St Andrew*

109 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Martlesham and Rushmere St Andrew divisions.

110 In response to the further draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections. Suffolk County Council Conservative Group expressed support for retaining the grouped parishes of Brightwell, Foxhall and Purdis Farm in a single division, but argued for the retention of the draft recommendations. It also argued that the Rushmere St Andrew division name does not make sense as the division does not contain Rushmere St Andrew village itself. Suffolk Coastal Conservative Association put forward similar arguments, but added that Rushmere St Andrew village should be added back into Rushmere St Andrew division, rather than Carlford division.

111 The Green, Independent & Liberal Democrat Group on East Suffolk Council also expressed support for retaining the grouped parishes of Brightwell, Foxhall and Purdis Farm in a single division, but stated they should be in Martlesham division.

112 Martlesham Parish Council reiterated earlier objections to the inclusion of Deben Avenue in Kesgrave division, arguing that it should remain in Martlesham

division. It also argued that whole of the Brightwell Lakes development should be included in Martlesham division.

113 Woodbridge Branch Labour Party and East Suffolk Liberal Democrats expressed general support for the further draft recommendations.

114 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the support for including the grouped parishes of Brightwell, Foxhall and Purdis Farm in a Rushmere St Andrew division. We also note the argument that they should be in Martlesham division, but as stated in our further draft recommendations, this would worsen electoral equality there to 14% more electors than the county average by 2026. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify this poor level of electoral equality.

115 We also note the argument that Rushmere St Andrew village should be included in Rushmere St Andrew division. However, this would worsen electoral equality in Rushmere St Andrew division from 5% fewer electors than the county average by 2026 to 7% more and Carlford from equal to the average to 12% fewer. In addition, it worsens coterminosity by transferring the Rushmere St Andrew area of Carlford & Fynn ward to Rushmere St Andrew division. Given the worsening of electoral equality and coterminosity, we have not been persuaded to move away from our further draft recommendations.

116 In addition, we note the concerns over the division name, and while Rushmere St Andrew village is not in the division, we note that the larger part of Rushmere St Andrew parish is included. Indeed, this remains the largest part of the proposed division and we are therefore retaining it as the division name as part of our final recommendations.

117 We also note the concerns of Martlesham Parish Council about the inclusion of the Deben Avenue area in Kesgrave division, but do not consider that it has provided sufficient new evidence to persuade us to move away from our further draft recommendations. As stated in our draft recommendations, we note that the Deben Avenue area was transferred to a ward with Kesgrave as part of the East Suffolk Council review and we remain of the view that links from the area to Kesgrave are stronger. We are therefore including it in a Kesgrave division, not Martlesham division, as part of our final recommendations.

118 Finally, we note its argument that the whole of the Brightwell Lakes development should be included in Martlesham division. However, this would require us to transfer areas of Brightwell and Waldringfield parishes to Martlesham division, necessitating the creation of parish wards in these parishes. These areas contain only a handful of electors, which we do not consider sufficient for a viable parish

ward. Therefore, we are not amending this boundary. Concerns over this boundary would be better resolved as part of a community governance review.

119 We are therefore confirming our further draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

#### *Kesgrave*

120 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for our Kesgrave ward. Kesgrave Town Council objected to the draft recommendation to place the west area of the parish in our proposed Rushmere St Andrew division. The town council argued that it sought to retain the town as a single area, and that it should be divided between the newer eastern area and the original area to the west.

121 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the concerns of Kesgrave Town Council. However, our draft proposal for Kesgrave division contained 7% more electors than the county average by 2026 and adding the western area would give it 25% more electors than the county average. We do not consider that the evidence received justifies this level of electoral inequality. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Kesgrave as final.

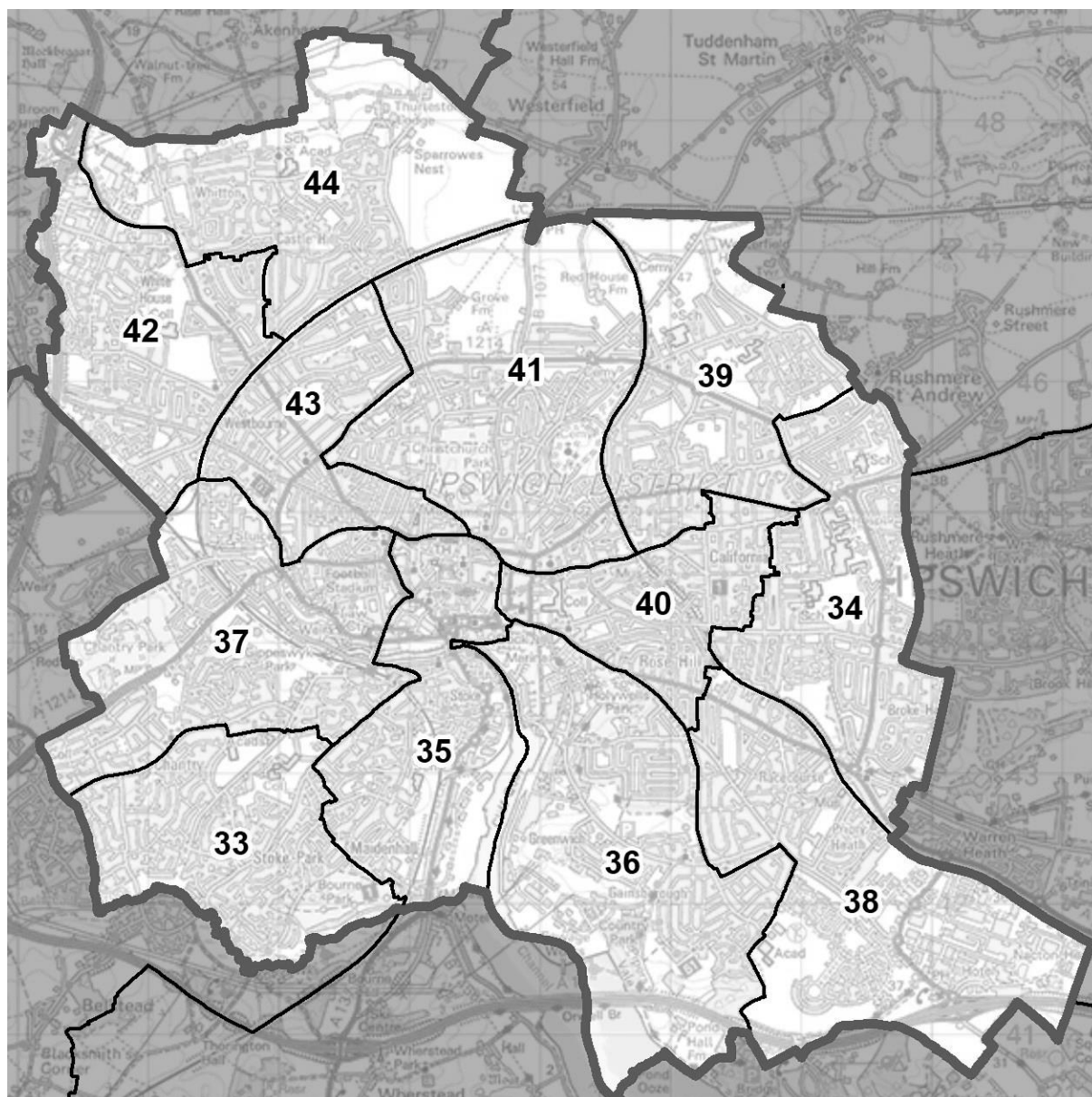
#### *Felixstowe Clifflands, Felixstowe Maritime and Walton & Trimleys*

122 In response to the draft recommendations, Felixstowe Town Council expressed support for our proposals for this area. We received some other limited support.

123 We noted during an audit that our proposed Felixstowe Clifflands and Felixstowe Maritime divisions would actually have 6% fewer and 5% more electors than the county average by 2026, respectively. This is slightly worse than the previously published figures of 2% more and 2% fewer, but well within the range we consider to be good electoral equality. In light of the evidence received and the good level of electoral equality, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.



## Ipswich



Division number	Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
33	Belstead Hills	1	3%
34	Bixley	1	2%
35	Bridge	1	-2%
36	Gainsborough	1	-4%
37	Gipping	1	5%
38	Priory Heath	1	2%
39	Rushmere	1	1%
40	St Clement's	1	4%
41	St Margaret's	1	5%
42	Westbourne	1	-1%

43	Westgate	1	5%
44	Whitton	1	-6%

#### *Belstead Hills, Bridge and Gipping*

124 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. A resident proposed a number of changes to the boundaries, but only provided very limited evidence to support them. We have not been persuaded that the evidence provided justifies the suggested changes and, in light of the support we have received, we are therefore confirming the boundaries for these divisions as final.

125 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group and Councillor Gowrley proposed that Chantry division should be called Belstead Hills. They argued that our Chantry division does not contain the whole Chantry area, with part of it falling in our Gipping division, adding that this would create confusion. The respondents therefore argued that the name Belstead Hills reflects a smaller area more aligned with the proposed division. On balance, we have been persuaded that the name Belstead Hills provides a more accurate reflection of the area included with the boundaries of our proposed division. Therefore, we have adopted this name as part of our final recommendations.

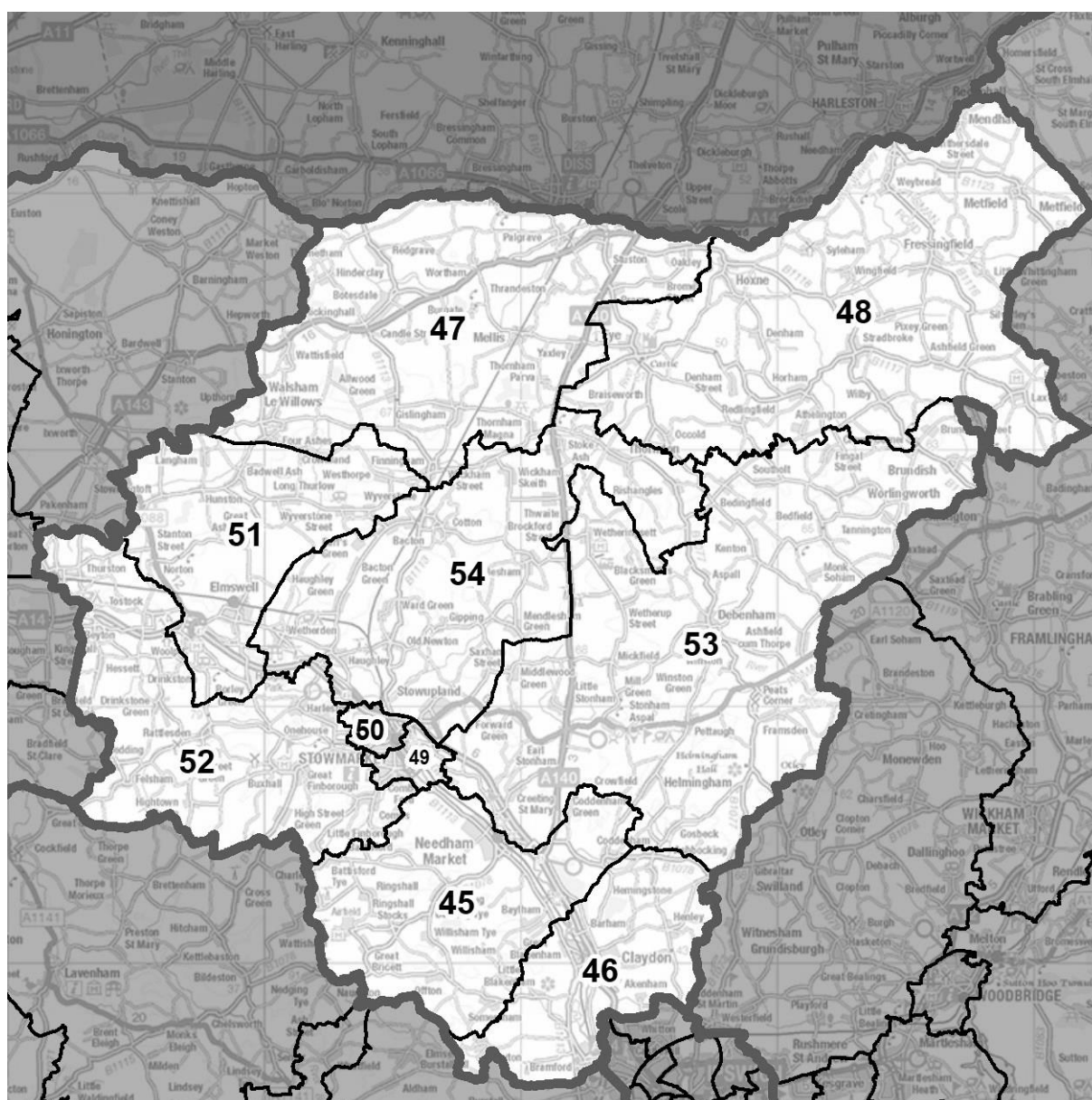
#### *St Margaret's, Rushmere, Westbourne, Westgate and Whitton*

126 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. A resident proposed a number of changes to the boundaries, but only provided very limited evidence to support them. We have not been persuaded that the evidence provided justifies the suggested changes and, in light of the support we have received, we are therefore confirming the boundaries for these divisions as final.

#### *Bixley, Gainsborough, Priory Heath and St Clement's*

127 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some support for divisions in this area and no other comments. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final.

## Mid Suffolk



Division number	Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
45	Bosmere	1	-3%
46	Gipping Valley	1	1%
47	Hartismere	1	4%
48	Hoxne & Eye	1	1%
49	Stowmarket East	1	4%
50	Stowmarket West	1	-4%
51	Thedwastre North	1	1%
52	Thedwastre South	1	2%
53	Thredling	1	0%
54	Upper Gipping	1	5%



### *Hartismere, Hoxne & Eye and Upper Gipping*

128 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. However, the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group argued for the inclusion of Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish in the Upper Gipping division, stating that it should not be separated from Mendlesham parish, which it is linked to at district level. Mendlesham Parish Council also stated that its link to Wetheringsett cum Brockford at district level should be reflected in the division pattern.

129 We note the support for these divisions and have also examined the concerns around Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish. Moving this parish to Upper Gipping division would result in Upper Gipping division having 12% more electors than the county average by 2026. Although we note the comments about links at district level, we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to accept a division with relatively poor electoral equality of 12% more electors than the county average. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendation for these divisions as final.

### *Bosmere, Gipping Valley and Thredling*

130 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. However, the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group suggested the inclusion of Creting St Mary and Creting St Peter parishes in Bosmere division, arguing this would reflect community ties and district wards. The Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group also argued that Little Finborough parish should be in Bosmere division, citing links to Battisford parish. Kenton Parish Meeting expressed support for its inclusion in Thredling division.

131 We note the suggestion that Creting St Mary and Creting St Peter parishes should be transferred to Bosmere division to reflect district wards. However, this would worsen electoral equality in Thredling division to 10% fewer electors than the county average by 2026. In addition, the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group did not provide strong evidence of community ties, and we note that there was no other support for this amendment. We have therefore not incorporated this proposal into our final recommendations. We also note the comment from the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group that Little Finborough parish should be transferred to Bosmere division. However, the parish does not have a direct link to the Bosmere division, being cut off by the southern tip of Combs parish. In addition, there was no other support for this proposal. We are therefore are not adopting it as part of our final recommendations.

132 Having considered the evidence, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

### *Thedwastre North and Thedwastre South*

133 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. However, the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group argued that Combs parish should be in a Stowmarket division, citing links to the town.

134 Battsford Parish Council proposed a small amendment to the external boundary of the parish and subsequently the division boundary. However, we are unable to alter the external boundaries of parishes as part of this review.

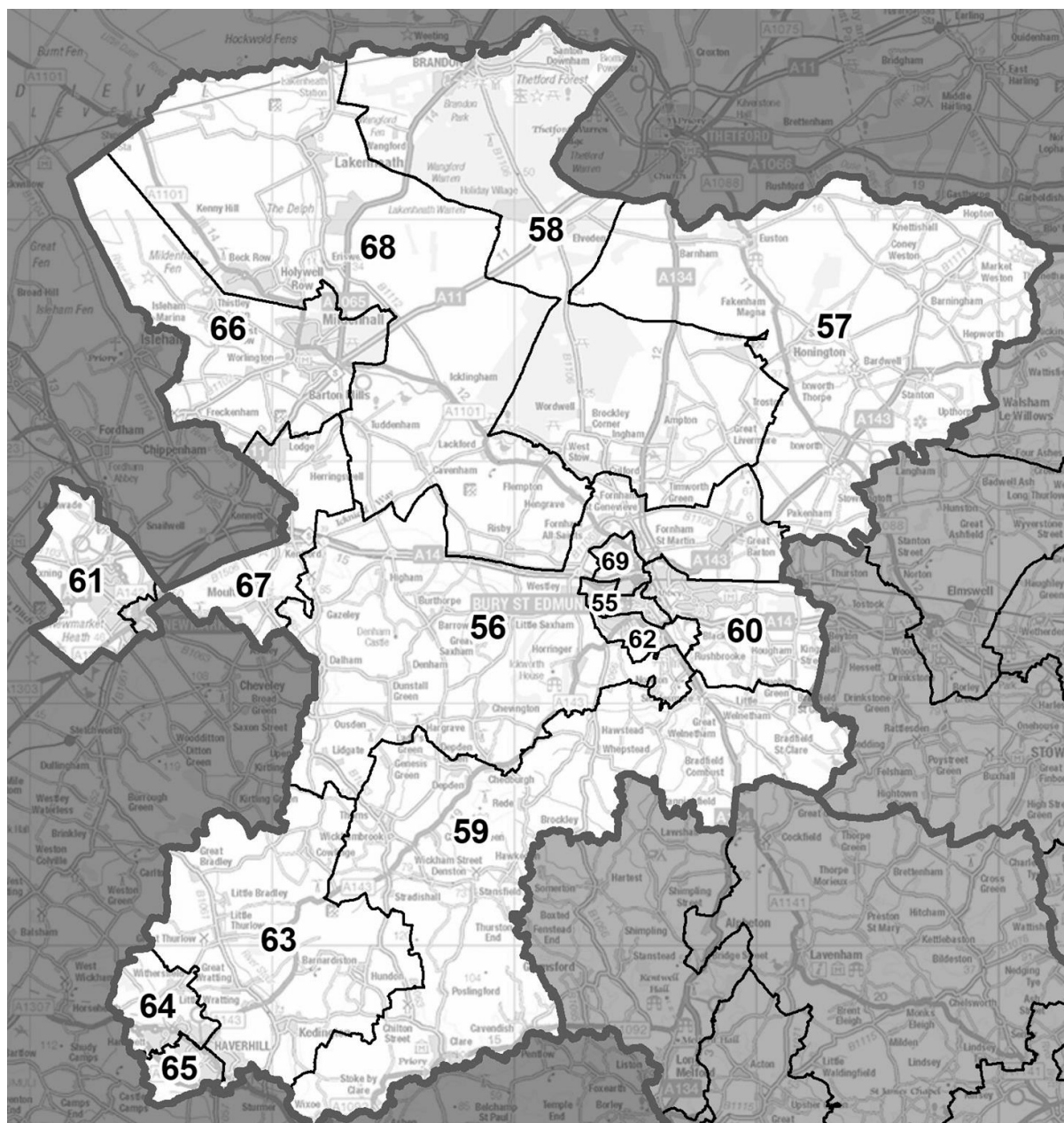
135 We have given careful consideration to the evidence from the Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group. We note that there is no other support for its proposal to transfer Combs parish to a Stowmarket division and are of the view that it did not provide compelling evidence of community links. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for these divisions as final.

### *Stowmarket East and Stowmarket West*

136 In response to the draft recommendations, we received some general support for these divisions. However, the Conservative Group also stated that it acknowledged the concerns of Stowmarket Town Council, which favoured divisions with a north-south orientation. Stowmarket Town Council put forward alternative proposals based on coterminosity with the district wards, arguing that this would avoid splitting Stow Thorney district ward across divisions. The town council provided some community identity evidence and also argued its proposed arrangement would avoid the creation of parish wards.

137 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. However, we note that the proposal from Stowmarket Town Council does not address the concerns we raised about a similar proposal made by the Conservative Group at the previous stage of the review. In particular, we were concerned about a lack of links between the Chilton Way and Mortimer Road areas in the town council's proposed Stowmarket North division. In addition, by using ward boundaries, its proposals secure worse electoral equality than the original Conservative Group proposal. Stowmarket Town Council's proposals would result in Stowmarket North and Stowmarket South divisions having 13% more and 13% fewer electors than the county average by 2026, respectively. Given our concerns over the internal links and the poor levels of electoral equality, we are not adopting the proposals from Stowmarket Town Council as part of our final recommendations and are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final.

## West Suffolk



Division number	Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
55	Abbeygate & Minden	1	-4%
56	Barrow & Thingoe	1	7%
57	Blackbourn	1	8%
58	Brandon	1	7%
59	Clare	1	-2%
60	Eastgate & Moreton Hall	1	2%
61	Exning & Newmarket	1	9%
62	Hardwick	1	-8%
63	Haverhill East & Rural	1	10%

64	Haverhill North West & Withersfield	1	-7%
65	Haverhill South	1	-6%
66	Mildenhall	1	3%
67	Newmarket & Red Lodge	1	6%
68	Row Heath	1	-1%
69	St Olaves & Tollgate	1	0%

#### *Haverhill North West & Withersfield and Haverhill South*

138 In response to the draft recommendations, Haverhill Town Council expressed support for the draft proposals for these divisions. It did, however, ask for amendments to the parish wards. West Suffolk Council suggested that the whole of Haverhill West district ward be included in Haverhill North West & Withersfield division rather than Haverhill South, as this would improve coterminosity. We received limited other support for our draft proposals for these divisions.

139 We have given consideration to the evidence received, noting the support for our draft recommendations. We note the comments about parish wards, but this is beyond the scope of this review and would need to be subject to a Community Governance Review carried out by West Suffolk Council.

140 We also note the comments from West Suffolk Council. However, including the entirety of Haverhill West ward in Haverhill North West & Withersfield division would worsen electoral equality in Haverhill South division to 19% fewer electors than the county average by 2026. We do not consider that this poor level of electoral equality can be justified by the evidence provided. We are therefore not adopting this amendment as part of our final recommendations and are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

#### *Clare, Eastgate & Moreton Hall and Haverhill East & Rural*

141 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Clare, Eastgate & Moreton Hall and Haverhill East & Rural divisions.

142 In response to the further draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections. Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, West Suffolk Conservative Association, Councillor Bennett, Clare Town Council and number of residents objected to the further draft recommendations, arguing that Clare division lacked community cohesion in many ways, including culturally, historically, socially, educationally and commercially. They argued that the division was too large, covering five district wards.

143 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, West Suffolk Conservative Association and a local resident also expressed concern about that the level electoral equality in Haverhill East & Rural division. They argued that there was more growth to come, beyond the forecast period until 2031, and that with 10% more electors than the average by 2026, this could not be accommodated. They added that this had been worsened by the addition of Cowlinge parish under the further draft recommendations and that the division should have a variance closer to zero to accommodate the growth. Haverhill Town Council expressed general support for Haverhill East & Rural division.

144 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group expressed support to return to the initial draft recommendations, but argued that if the further draft recommendations were retained, they should be modified to include the whole of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish in Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, rather than having South parish ward in Clare division. It argued that growth in the Moreton Hall area of Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, and the services there, create a link for the residents of the Rougham village area in South parish ward. It also argued that this would provide improved electoral equality, while reducing the area covered by Clare division. Finally, it argued this amendment would mean that Cowlinge parish would not need to be added to Haverhill East & Rural division.

145 Councillor Thompson expressed support for the initial draft recommendations. He argued that the further draft recommendation provided poorer levels of electoral equality for the Bury St Edmunds divisions. He also rejected some of the rationale for the Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, arguing that while the A14 divides Moreton Hall from the Rougham village area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish, there are a number of crossing points. He argued that the A14 also divides Eastgate & Moreton Hall division. He added that Eastgate & Moreton Hall division contains areas of very different character, rejecting the idea that they are one community, adding that many areas of Bury St Edmunds have links with other areas within the town. He restated the argument that Moreton Hall has links to the surrounding rural area, including Rougham and Great Barton. Finally, he argued that it should be possible to mix rural and urban areas and that a councillor should be able to reflect the needs of all residents.

146 West Suffolk Conservative Association argued that Cowlinge and Hundon parishes should be removed from Haverhill East & Rural division to reduce the number of electors there. A local resident argued that Cowlinge parish has links to Newmarket, but also a number of parishes within our Clare division. He argued that while Hundon parish has links to Keddington parish, which is in our Haverhill East & Rural division, it also has links to Stradishall parish in Clare division.

147 West Suffolk Conservative Association, Councillor Bennett and a number residents argued that the parishes within Horringer and Rougham district wards



should be removed from Clare division given their proximity to Bury St Edmunds, with West Suffolk Conservative Association suggesting they are added to Barrow & Thingoe division. They proposed a Clare division comprising the parishes in Chedburgh & Chevington and Whepstead & Wickhambrook wards.

148 Councillor Soons rejected any suggestion that Rougham village area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish should be included in Eastgate & Moreton Hall division. She stated that during the West Suffolk District review, links between the North and South parish wards were rejected, despite opposition from the parish council, and they should not therefore be recognised now. She added that the South parish ward is centred around Rougham village, which is distinct from areas of Eastgate & Moreton Hall division that stretch as far as the centre of Bury St Edmunds. She stated that South parish ward should remain in Thingoe division.

149 Moreton Hall Residents' Association, Councillor Beckwith, Eastgate Ward Community Association and a number of residents expressed support for the further draft recommendations for Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, reiterating links between the Moreton Hall area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish and Eastgate, and also rejecting links to Rougham village area in South parish ward of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish. They also rejected links to Great Barton parish.

150 Councillor Nettleton proposed a broad range of amendments, but these would require changes to a large number of the divisions. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence for this scale of change, so we are not adopting his proposals. A local resident proposed a number of alternative names for Clare division, providing some evidence. However, he did not specify a favoured name. Given this, and no evidence of support from other respondents, we are not adopting these proposed name changes.

151 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the support and objections for the further draft recommendations. We note the arguments about the size of Clare division and the range of suggestions for addressing this. However, while respondents provided evidence of their concerns relating to our proposed Clare division, they provided less evidence to support their alternative proposals. In addition, many of these proposals have significant knock-on effects to the surrounding divisions, or do not appear to provide a complete division pattern for the whole district. On balance, at this stage of the review, we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to make significant changes that have not been the subject of consultation.

152 We note the support for the Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, but also the reiteration of evidence opposing it. On balance, we remain persuaded that this division reflects the links between the Eastgate and Moreton Hall areas. We note that there was conflicting evidence for links to the rural areas, particularly Great

Barton parish and the rural area of Rushbrooke with Rougham. As stated in the Barrow & Thingoe section (below), there is good evidence for retaining Great Barton in Barrow & Thingoe division and we therefore do not propose to amend this proposal. However, we are persuaded that links remain between the rural area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish and the Moreton Hall area of the parish. As suggested by Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, we are transferring this area to Eastgate & Moreton Hall division as part of our final recommendations. This improves electoral equality in Clare and Eastgate & Moreton Hall divisions from 9% more and 9% fewer electors than the county average by 2026, respectively, to 2% fewer and 2% more. This is a substantial improvement in electoral equality and reduces the area covered by Clare division.

153 We acknowledge that during the district review we separated the two areas of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish. However, by nature of their scale, county divisions combine larger areas and in this instance we believe there is evidence of some links. It should be noted that we examined whether all the parishes in Rougham district ward could be transferred from Clare division to Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, but this would worsen electoral equality to 13% fewer and 14% more, respectively. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify these poor levels of electoral equality.

154 We also note the concerns about the level of electoral equality in Haverhill East & Rural division. We acknowledge that this area will have 10% more electors than the county average by 2026, but the respondents refer to growth beyond the 2026 forecast period which cannot be considered as part of this review. In light of our decision to transfer all of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish from Clare division to Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, which improved electoral equality in Clare division, we did consider transferring Cowlinge parish to Clare division. However, while this would improve electoral equality in Haverhill East & Rural division to 8% more, it would add another parish to a Clare division, which we acknowledge covers a large area. This would offset our decision to transfer the whole of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish to Eastgate & Moreton Hall division. We acknowledge that moving Cowlinge parish would marginally improve electoral equality in Haverhill East & Rural division, but consider the arguments relating to the size of Clare division outweigh those marginal improvements in this case. We consider that retaining Cowlinge parish in Haverhill East & Rural division would better provide for effective and convenient government, and so are confirming this arrangement as part of our final recommendations.

155 Subject to the transfer of the whole of Rusbrooke with Rougham parish from Clare division to Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, we are confirming our further draft recommendation for these divisions as final.

### *Exning & Newmarket, Mildenhall and Newmarket & Red Lodge*

156 We received some general support for our draft recommendations for these divisions. A local resident put forward a number of amendments primarily to improve electoral equality in the area. The residents proposed transferring Herringswell parish from Newmarket & Red Lodge division to Row Heath division, acknowledging that Red Lodge parish would be detached from the rest of the Newmarket & Red Lodge division by this proposal, but arguing that electors use the A11 to get to Newmarket, rather than travelling via Herringswell. The resident also suggested warding West Row parish and transferring part from Mildenhall division Row Heath to improve electoral equality.

157 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the proposals from the resident. As they identify, their proposals for Herringswell parish would create a detached area in Newmarket & Red Lodge division. The Commission is clear that it seeks to avoid such division arrangements. In addition, although the resident's proposal to split West Row parish would give a small improvement in electoral equality, we do not consider it would reflect communities and can see no other clear reason why the parish should be divided. Given these concerns, we are not adopting these amendments as part of our final recommendations.

158 In light of no other significant comments, we are confirming our draft recommendation for these divisions as final.

### *Barrow & Thingoe*

159 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed a revised single-councillor Barrow & Thingoe division.

160 In response to the further draft recommendations, we received a mixture of support and objections. Suffolk County Council Conservative Group expressed support for the draft recommendations in this area. West Suffolk Conservative Association objected to the further draft recommendations, putting forward a different division, based on district wards, but with limited supporting evidence. Councillor Nettleton proposed transferring the Fornhams parishes to a revised Bury St Edmunds division, arguing this provided better electoral equality between the rural and urban areas.

161 Councillor R. Hopfensperger, Great Barton Parish Council and Fornham St Martin cum Genevieve Parish Council expressed support for the further draft recommendations, particularly in relation to Great Barton parish and the Fornhams parishes, which they argued share common interests and work well together. The respondents also supported the fact that the division proposals would keep them separate from Bury St Edmunds.

162 Councillor Nettleton proposed a broad range of amendments, but these would require changes to a large number of the divisions. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence for this scale of change and are therefore not adopting these proposals. A local resident argued that the division should be renamed Thingoe, as while Barrow is a large village in the division, Great Barton is larger. He also suggested a number of alternative names for the division.

163 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received, noting the support for the further draft recommendations. As noted in the Clare, Eastgate & Morton Hall and Haverhill East & Rural section above, there were some arguments supporting the initial draft recommendations which linked Great Barton with part of Bury St Edmunds. However, we are not persuaded to revert back to our initial draft recommendations, particularly given the evidence for links between Great Barton and the Fornham parishes. In addition, we note the comments from Councillor Nettleton, but due to the evidence for keeping these parishes separate from Bury St Edmunds, and also the knock-on effect any changes would have on surrounding divisions, we are not adopting them as part of our final recommendations.

164 As also discussed in the Clare, Eastgate & Morton Hall and Haverhill East & Rural section above, we note the arguments for transferring parishes from our Clare division into a division to the north. We rejected this proposal, as it would worsen electoral equality in Barrow & Thingoe to significantly over 10% more electors than the county average by 2026. We did not consider there to be sufficient evidence for this poor level of electoral equality. Finally, we note the suggestion of an alternative division name. While some evidence was provided, there was no other significant support and we are therefore retaining the name as part of our final recommendations. We are confirming Barrow & Thingoe division as final.

#### *Abbeygate & Minden, Hardwick and St Olaves & Tollgate*

165 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Abbeygate & Tollgate, Hardwick and Minden & St Olaves divisions.

166 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group expressed general objections, stating that the only reason for the changes was coterminosity. They expressed support for the initial draft recommendations. Councillor Thompson also expressed support for the initial draft recommendations, arguing that the further draft recommendations worsened electoral equality for the wards in Bury St Edmunds. Councillor Nettleton argued that electoral equality could be improved by transferring the Fornham parishes to a Bury St Edmunds division. Bury St Edmunds Town Council asked that we revert to the draft recommendations, arguing that they provided better electoral equality and better reflected community links.

167 Councillor P. Hopfensperger objected to the further draft recommendations arguing that there should be a single-councillor Minden & Abbeygate division and single-councillor Tollgate & St Olaves division. Two residents also argued for a Tollgate & St Olaves division, highlighting links between the Howard and Mildenhall estates. A resident objected to the proposal to combine Minden and St Olaves, arguing they are distinct areas. Another resident objected to the proposals to combine Abbeygate & Tollgate.

168 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the concerns about the levels of electoral equality in the Bury St Edmunds divisions. However, the Abbeygate & Tollgate and Minden & St Olaves divisions would have 1% fewer and 3% fewer electors than the county average by 2026. This compares well with the initial draft proposals for Bury St Edmunds North Western and Bury St Edmunds Cathedral divisions, which would have 2% more and 3% more electors by 2026. Hardwick division would have 8% fewer electors than the county by 2026 under our further draft recommendations, compared with the initial draft recommendations for a Bury St Edmunds Hardwick division that would have 5% more. We consider this level of electoral equality acceptable, particularly given the improved coterminosity.

169 As discussed in the Clare, Eastgate & Moreton Hall and Haverhill East & Rural section, we propose an amendment that improves electoral equality in Eastgate & Moreton Hall division from 9% fewer electors than the county average to 2026, to 2% more.

170 Therefore, in light of the good levels of electoral equality, we do not propose transferring any other rural areas to Bury St Edmunds divisions to improve electoral equality.

171 However, we do note the comments about the configuration of our Abbeygate & Tollgate and Minden & St Olaves divisions. We proposed these divisions in response to our further draft proposals for an Eastgate & Moreton Hall division, noting that it was possible to create a division coterminous with the district wards in Bury St Edmunds. However, these were not based on local comments and we welcome the evidence provided. Although the evidence is limited, it points to an alternative configuration. We note that it is possible to create fully coterminous Abbeygate & Minden and St Olaves & Tollgate divisions. These would have 4% fewer and equal to the average electors by 2026, which also appear to use clearer boundaries, with St Olaves & Tollgate division using a stretch of the A14.

172 We are confirming our proposed Hardwick division as final, with revised Abbeygate & Minden and St Olaves & Tollgate divisions as described above.

### *Blackbourn, Brandon and Row Heath*

173 As set out in our further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on the draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence received, we proposed revised single-councillor Blackbourn, Brandon and Row Heath divisions.

174 Suffolk County Council Conservative Group objected to the further draft recommendations, arguing for the retention of the initial draft recommendation. The Group stated that the Blackbourn division within the initial draft recommendations was less sprawling than the one proposed under the further draft recommendations, although it did acknowledge that there was some support for the revised Blackbourn division proposed under our further draft recommendations. The Group argued that the Brandon division proposed within the initial draft recommendations linked Brandon with the Elveden and Euston estates, which have much in common, creating a cohesive division.

175 Councillor R. Hopfensperger objected to the inclusion of Troston, Livermere, Ampton, Culford, Wordwell, West Stow, Ingham and Timworth parishes in a Brandon division, arguing that they have limited links to Brandon, instead looking to Bury St Edmunds for services. She also expressed concern that the divisions are not coterminous with the wards. She did, however, welcome the inclusion of Troston and the Livermere parishes in a single division. Great Livermere and Troston parish councils expressed support for being linked in a division with each other, but objected to being included in a division with Brandon, arguing that they have little connection there. They argued that they should be in Blackbourn division, stating that they look to Ixworth parish for services.

176 Barnham and Fakenham Magna parish councils and Euston Parish Meeting and the Euston Estate all expressed strong support for the further draft recommendations for Blackbourn division. They reiterated earlier evidence of their community links.

177 Councillor Nettleton proposed a broad range of amendments, but these would require changes to a large number of the divisions. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence for this scale of change and are therefore not adopting these as part of our final recommendations. A local resident proposed a number of alternative names for Brandon division, providing some evidence. However, he did not specify a favoured name. Given this, and no evidence of support from other respondents, we are not adopting these name changes.

178 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the support for Blackbourn division from Barnham, Euston and Fakenham Magna parish councils. We also note objections from Suffolk County Council Conservative Group, and its preference for the initial draft recommendations, although it only provided

limited evidence. In addition, reverting to the initial draft recommendations would have a significant knock-on effect on neighbouring divisions, particularly to Barrow & Thingoe division.

179 We also note the objection to the inclusion of rural parishes, including Great Livermere and Troston, in a division with Brandon. However, this must be considered in conjunction with the evidence of links between Barnham, Fakenham Magna and Euston parishes and the Blackbourn division. It is not possible to place all the rural parishes in the area in Blackbourn division and secure electoral equality. Therefore, on balance, we are confirming the further draft recommendations as final.

## Conclusions

180 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Suffolk, referencing the 2019 and 2026

electorate figures. A full list of divisions, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

## Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2019	2026
Number of councillors	70	70
Number of electoral divisions	70	69
Average number of electors per councillor	8,054	8,455
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	6	0
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

### Final recommendations

Suffolk County Council should be made up of 70 councillors serving 69 divisions. 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 divisions for Suffolk.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Suffolk on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

## Parish electoral arrangements

181 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 divisions it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

182 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, Suffolk County 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.

183 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Felixstowe Town Council, Haverhill Town Council, Kesgrave Town Council, Lowestoft Town Council, Melton Parish Council, Oulton Broad Parish Council and Stowmarket Town Council.

184 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Felixstowe Town Council.

#### Final recommendations

Felixstowe Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Central	3
East	3
Port	5
South	2
Walton	3

185 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Haverhill Town Council.

#### Final recommendations

Haverhill Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing eight wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Central	1
East	3
Mount Road	1
North	3
North West	2
South	3
South East	2
West	1

186 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Kesgrave Town Council.

#### Final recommendations

Kesgrave Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
East	7
Central	6
West	3

187 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Lowestoft Town Council.

#### Final recommendations

Lowestoft Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing 11 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Elmtree	2
Gunton	1
Harbour	5
Kirkley	3
Normanston	1
Pakefield	2
Pakefield Park	1
St Margaret's East	2
St Margaret's West	1
Tom Crisp	1
Uplands	1

188 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Melton Parish Council.

#### Final recommendations

Melton Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
North	8
South	7

189 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Oulton Broad Parish Council.

#### Final recommendations

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

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Oulton Broad North	6
Oulton Broad North East	1
Oulton Broad South East	3
Oulton Broad South West	2

190 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Stowmarket Town Council.

#### Final recommendations

Stowmarket Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing seven 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 North	1
Stow Thorney South	3

## What happens next?

191 We have completed our review of 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 2026.



## Equalities

192 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.

Unproofed Draft

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Final recommendations for Suffolk County Council

Division name		Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
<b>Babergh</b>								
1	Brook	1	7,139	7,139	-11%	7,770	7,770	-8%
2	Constable	1	8,595	8,595	7%	9,122	9,122	8%
3	Cornard & Sudbury East	1	7,711	7,711	-4%	8,175	8,175	-3%
4	Cosford	1	7,918	7,918	-2%	8,277	8,277	-2%
5	Hadleigh	1	8,028	8,028	0%	8,495	8,495	0%
6	Melford	1	7,811	7,811	-3%	8,271	8,271	-2%
7	Peninsula	1	8,234	8,234	2%	8,459	8,459	0%
8	Stour Valley	1	8,109	8,109	1%	8,536	8,536	1%
9	Sudbury West	1	7,600	7,600	-6%	8,047	8,047	-5%



Division name		Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
<b>East Suffolk</b>								
10	Aldeburgh & Leiston	1	7,795	7,795	-3%	8,068	8,068	-5%
11	Beccles & Kessingland	2	16,420	8,210	2%	17,020	8,510	1%
12	Blyth Estuary	1	7,874	7,874	-2%	8,133	8,133	-4%
13	Bungay	1	7,549	7,549	-6%	7,897	7,897	-7%
14	Carlford	1	8,077	8,077	0%	8,452	8,452	0%
15	Carlton & Whitton	1	8,235	8,235	2%	8,786	8,786	4%
16	Carlton Colville	1	7,794	7,794	-3%	7,981	7,981	-6%
17	Felixstowe Clifflands	1	7,418	7,418	-8%	7,969	7,969	-6%
18	Felixstowe Maritime	1	8,592	8,592	7%	8,907	8,907	5%
19	Framlingham & Wickham Market	1	8,252	8,252	2%	8,796	8,796	4%
20	Gunton	1	7,808	7,808	-3%	8,022	8,022	-5%
21	Halesworth	1	7,485	7,485	-7%	7,731	7,731	-9%
22	Harbour	1	8,780	8,780	9%	9,001	9,001	6%

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23	Kesgrave	1	8,699	8,699	8%	9,077	9,077	7%
24	Kirkley & Pakefield	1	9,047	9,047	12%	9,252	9,252	9%
25	Martlesham	1	7,431	7,431	-8%	7,664	7,664	-9%
26	Oulton	1	7,694	7,694	-4%	8,520	8,520	1%
27	Oulton Broad & Normanston	1	8,253	8,253	2%	8,471	8,471	0%
28	Rushmere St Andrew	1	7,820	7,820	-3%	8,065	8,065	-5%
29	Saxmundham & District	1	7,407	7,407	-8%	7,647	7,647	-10%
30	Walton & Trimleys	1	7,576	7,576	-6%	7,836	7,836	-7%
31	Wilford	1	7,604	7,604	-6%	7,976	7,976	-6%
32	Woodbridge	1	8,004	8,004	-1%	8,364	8,364	-1%
<b>Ipswich</b>								
33	Belstead Hills	1	8,325	8,325	3%	8,685	8,685	3%
34	Bixley	1	8,200	8,200	2%	8,583	8,583	2%
35	Bridge	1	7,963	7,963	-1%	8,279	8,279	-2%

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
36 Gainsborough	1	7,855	7,855	-2%	8,150	8,150	-4%
37 Gipping	1	8,419	8,419	5%	8,899	8,899	5%
38 Priors Heath	1	8,276	8,276	3%	8,632	8,632	2%
39 Rushmere	1	8,274	8,274	3%	8,541	8,541	1%
40 St Clement's	1	8,540	8,540	6%	8,809	8,809	4%
41 St Margaret's	1	8,672	8,672	8%	8,904	8,904	5%
42 Westbourne	1	7,969	7,969	-1%	8,349	8,349	-1%
43 Westgate	1	8,575	8,575	6%	8,896	8,896	5%
44 Whitton	1	7,635	7,635	-5%	7,931	7,931	-6%
<b>Mid Suffolk</b>							
45 Bosmere	1	7,590	7,590	-6%	8,189	8,189	-3%
46 Gipping Valley	1	7,561	7,561	-6%	8,575	8,575	1%
47 Hartismere	1	8,358	8,358	4%	8,809	8,809	4%
48 Hoxne & Eye	1	8,102	8,102	1%	8,512	8,512	1%
49 Stowmarket East	1	8,474	8,474	5%	8,806	8,806	4%

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
50	Stowmarket West	1	7,486	7,486	-7%	8,117	8,117	-4%
51	Thedwastre North	1	7,522	7,522	-7%	8,521	8,521	1%
52	Thedwastre South	1	8,270	8,270	3%	8,623	8,623	2%
53	Thredling	1	8,061	8,061	0%	8,432	8,432	0%
54	Upper Gipping	1	8,247	8,247	2%	8,884	8,884	5%
<b>West Suffolk</b>								
55	Abbeygate & Minden	1	8,095	8,095	1%	8,147	8,147	-4%
56	Barrow & Thingoe	1	8,814	8,814	9%	9,033	9,033	7%
57	Blackbourn	1	8,880	8,880	10%	9,109	9,109	8%
58	Brandon	1	8,974	8,974	11%	9,025	9,025	7%
59	Clare	1	7,948	7,948	-1%	8,261	8,261	-2%
60	Eastgate & Moreton Hall	1	8,337	8,337	4%	8,657	8,657	2%
61	Exning & Newmarket	1	8,914	8,914	11%	9,243	9,243	9%
62	Hardwick	1	7,192	7,192	-11%	7,788	7,788	-8%

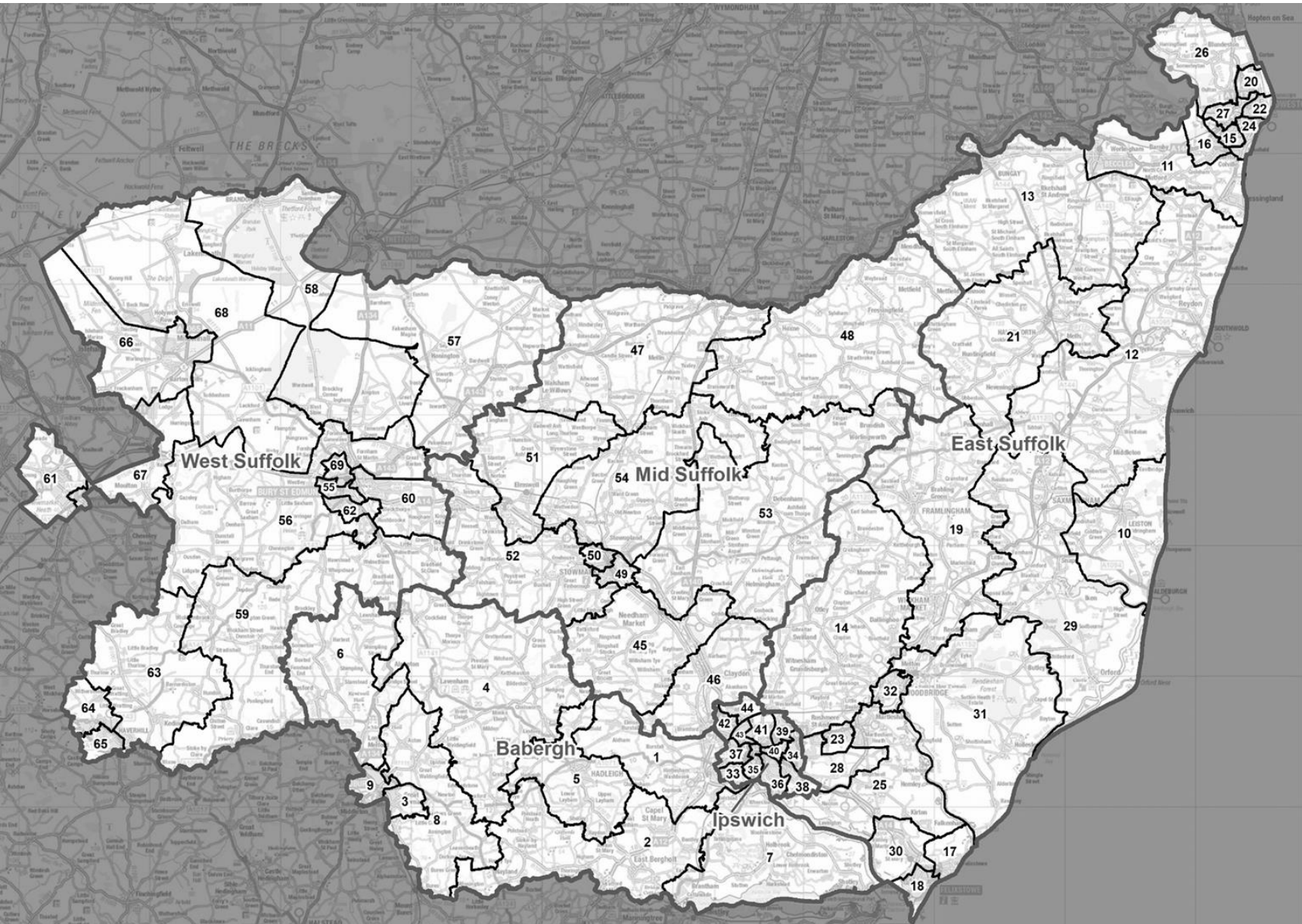
	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
63	Haverhill East & Rural	1	8,464	8,464	5%	9,334	9,334	10%
64	Haverhill North West & Withersfield	1	7,017	7,017	-13%	7,895	7,895	-7%
65	Haverhill South	1	7,810	7,810	-3%	7,948	7,948	-6%
66	Mildenhall	1	8,392	8,392	4%	8,706	8,706	3%
67	Newmarket & Red Lodge	1	8,662	8,662	8%	8,978	8,978	6%
68	Row Heath	1	7,824	7,824	-3%	8,343	8,343	-1%
69	St Olaves & Tollgate	1	7,304	7,304	-9%	8,462	8,462	0%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>8,054</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>8,455</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Averages</b>		<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>563,760</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>591,842</b>	<b>–</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Suffolk County Council.

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

Appendix B

Outline map





Division Number	Division name	Division Number	Division name
<b>Babergh</b>		35	Bridge
1	Brook	36	Gainsborough
2	Constable	37	Gipping
3	Cornard & Sudbury East	38	Priory Heath
4	Cosford	39	Rushmere
5	Hadleigh	40	St Clement's
6	Melford	41	St Margaret's
7	Peninsula	42	Westbourne
8	Stour Valley	43	Westgate
9	Sudbury West	44	Whitton
<b>East Suffolk</b>		<b>Mid Suffolk</b>	
10	Aldeburgh & Leiston	45	Bosmere
11	Beccles & Kessingland	46	Gipping Valley
12	Blyth Estuary	47	Hartismere
13	Bungay	48	Hoxne & Eye
14	Carlford	49	Stowmarket East
15	Carlton & Whitton	50	Stowmarket West
16	Carlton Colville	51	Thedwastre North
17	Felixstowe Clifflands	52	Thedwastre South
18	Felixstowe Maritime	53	Thredling
19	Framlingham & Wickham Market	54	Upper Gipping
20	Gunton	<b>West Suffolk</b>	
21	Halesworth	55	Abbeygate & Minden
22	Harbour	56	Barrow & Thingoe
23	Kesgrave	57	Blackbourn
24	Kirkley & Pakefield	58	Brandon
25	Martlesham	59	Clare
26	Oulton	60	Eastgate & Moreton Hall
27	Oulton Broad & Normanston	61	Exning & Newmarket
28	Rushmere St Andrew	62	Hardwick
29	Saxmundham & District	63	Haverhill East & Rural
30	Walton & Trimleys	64	Haverhill North West & Withersfield
31	Wilford	65	Haverhill South
32	Woodbridge	66	Mildenhall
<b>Ipswich</b>		67	Newmarket & Red Lodge
33	Belstead Hills	68	Row Heath
34	Bixley	69	St Olaves & Tollgate

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council)

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council)

#### *Local Authorities*

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
- East Suffolk Council
- West Suffolk Council

#### *Political Groups*

- East Suffolk Liberal Democrats
- South Suffolk Conservatives
- Suffolk Coastal Constituency Labour Party
- Suffolk County Council Conservative Group
- Suffolk County Council Liberal Democrat, Green & Independent Group
- Woodbridge Branch Labour Party
- Woodbridge Liberal Democrat Action Group

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor D. Beavan (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor T. Beckwith (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor D. Busby (Babergh District Council)
- Councillor N. Gowrley (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor C. Hedgley (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor N. Hiley (Saxmundham Parish Council)
- Councillor C. Page (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor J. Raybould (Worlingham Parish Council)
- Councillor R. Smith-Lyte (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor K. Soons (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor J. Spicer (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor C. Topping (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor K. Yule (East Suffolk Council)

#### *Town & Parish Councils*

- Aldham Parish Council
- Barnby Parish Council x2
- Barnham Parish Council
- Battisford Parish Council
- Beccles Town Council
- Bramfield and Thornington Parish Council x2
- Bredfield Parish Council
- Brightwell, Foxhall & Purdis Farm Group Parish Council
- Elmsett Parish Council



- Euston Parish Meeting
- Fakenham Magna Parish Council
- Felixstowe Town Council
- Great Barton Parish Council
- Great Bealings Parish Council
- Great Livermere Parish Council
- Hasketon Parish Council
- Haverhill Town Council
- Honington & Sapiston Parish Council
- Kenton Parish Meeting
- Kersey Parish Council
- Kesgrave Town Council
- Little Bealings Parish Council
- Lowestoft Town Council
- Market Weston and Barningham Parish Councils
- Martlesham Parish Council
- Mendlesham Parish Council
- Newton Parish Council
- North Cove Parish Council
- Playford Parish Council
- Polstead Parish Council
- Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council
- Stowmarket Town Council
- Troston Parish Council
- Westerfield Parish Council
- Worlingham Parish Council

#### *Local Organisations*

- Beccles Parish & Villages
- Eastgate Ward Community Association
- Euston Estate
- Moreton Hall Residents' Association
- Woven Theatre Company

#### *Local Residents*

- 144 local residents

### Submissions received in response to the further draft recommendations

#### *Political Groups*

- East Suffolk Liberal Democrats
- East Suffolk Council Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group
- Suffolk Coastal Conservative Association
- Suffolk Coastal Constituency Labour Party

- Suffolk County Council Conservative Group
- West Suffolk Conservative Association
- Woodbridge Branch Labour Party
- Woodbridge Liberal Democrat Action Group

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor T. Beckwith (West Suffolk Council)
- Councillor B. Bennett (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillors Byatt, Gooch & Pitchers (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor C. Hedgley (Great Bealings Parish Council)
- Councillor M. Hicks (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor P. Hopfensperger (West Suffolk Council)
- Councillor R. Hopfensperger (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor D. Nettleton (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor A. Nicoll (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor C. Page (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor A. Porter (Melton Parish Council)
- Councillor C. Poulter (East Suffolk Council)
- Councillor R. Sanders (Woodbridge Town Council)
- Councillor K. Soons (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor P. Thompson (Suffolk County Council)
- Councillor K. Yule (East Suffolk Council)

#### *Member of parliament*

- Dan Poulter MP (Central Suffolk & North Ipswich)

#### *Town & Parish Councils*

- Barnby Parish Council
- Barnham and Fakenham Magna parish councils and Euston Parish Meeting
- Beccles Town Council
- Bury St Edmunds Town Council
- Clare Town Council
- Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council
- Great Barton Parish Council
- Great Bealings Parish Council
- Great Livermere Parish Council
- Haverhill Town Council
- Marlesford Parish Council
- Martlesham Parish Council
- Melton Parish Council
- Troston Parish Council
- Ufford Parish Council
- Woodbridge Town Council

#### *Local Organisations*

- Euston Estate
- Eastgate Ward Community Association x2
- Moreton Hall Residents' Association

#### *Local Residents*

- 72 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 <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">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 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 (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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