

Norwich Conservatives Boundary Submission

Norwich Conservative Federation¹ welcome the opportunity to feed into the warding arrangements of the Norwich City Council Boundary Review. Within our submission our underlying goal has been to facilitate the creation of thirteen wards that enable effective community representation by three councillors.

The Norwich City Council area has many distinct and identifiable communities, the majority of which are defined by strong boundaries, either natural or human. Due to this we have prioritised keeping within these natural boundaries over seeking exact electoral equality, whilst staying within the legal (10%) tolerance.

For the purposes of clarity, we have subdivided the Norwich City Council area into four zones. Whilst not all of the proposed changes are within each zone, we will seek to avoid repetition of our arguments where possible. Before we comment in detail, below is a summary of the electoral variance and boundary changes of our proposed wards, using the existing wards as foundation blocks:

Ward	Approximate Proposed Electorate for 2021	Approximate Variance for 2021 (%)	Changes
Bowthorpe	7731	-9.3	The area of BO4 (West Earlham) to the south of the West Earlham Woods and Enfield Rd transferred to University and Earlham.
Catton Grove	8640	1.4	No Change
Crome	9122	7.1	The area of Thorpe Hamlet to the north of the A147 and Ketts Hill transferred in.
Eaton	7842	-8.0	No Change
Lakenham	8805	3.3	The area of Town Close to the east of Brazengate and the Lakenham Way Cycle Path transferred in.
Mancroft	9211	8.1	Everything to the west of Grapes Hill and to the south of Dereham Road (MA1) transferred to Nelson. The area to the west of Heigham Street and Old Palace Road transferred to Wensum. The area of Thorpe Hamlet west of the Palace St-Tombland-King St line transferred in.
Mile Cross	8564	0.5	The area of Wensum to the north of the river transferred in.
Nelson	8483	-0.4	Everything in Mancroft to the west of Grapes Hill and to the south of Dereham Road (MA1) transferred in.
Sewell	8251	-3.2	No Change
Thorpe Hamlet	9171	7.6	The area to the north of the A147 and Ketts Hill transferred to Crome. The area to the west of the Palace St-Tombland-King St line transferred to Mancroft.

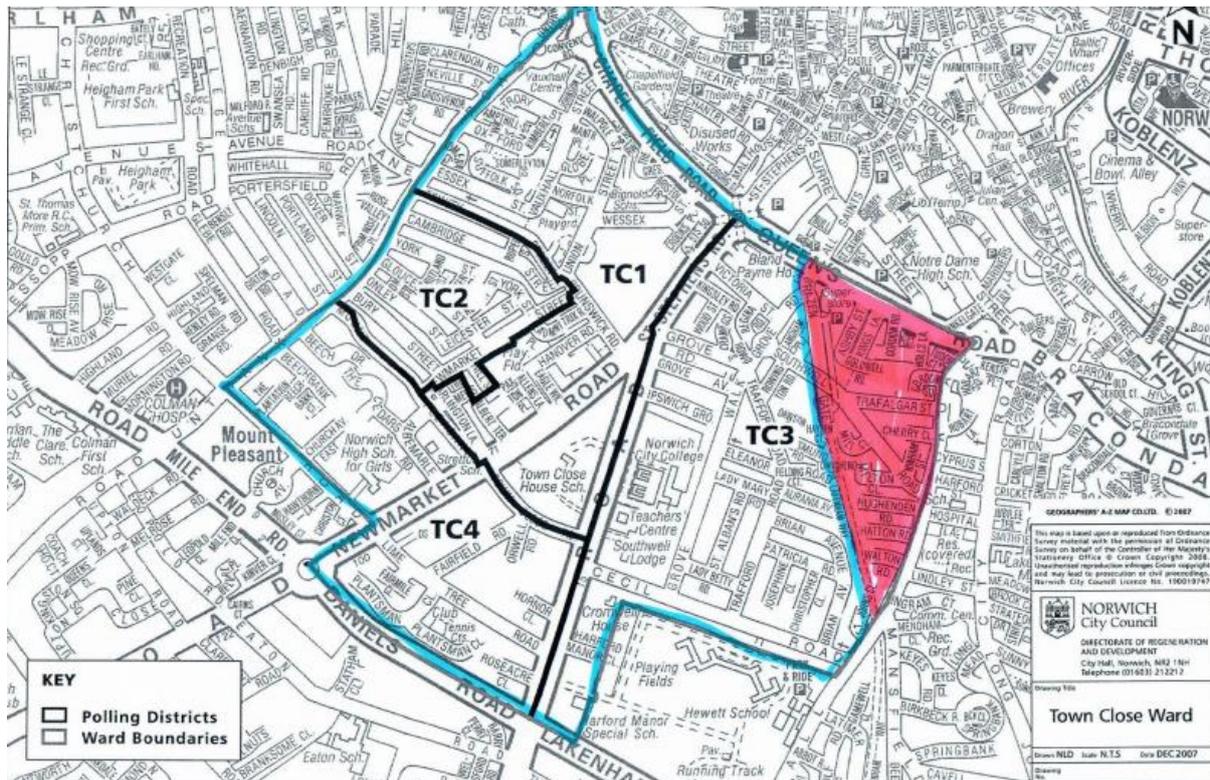
¹ Norwich Conservative Federation is a union of Norwich North Conservative Association and Norwich South Conservative Association.

Town Close	7966	-6.5	The area to the east of Brazengate and the Lakenham Way Cycle Path transferred to Lakenham.
University and Earlham	7978	-6.4	The area of BO4 (West Earlham) to the south of the West Earlham Woods and Enfield Rd transferred in. The area of Wensum south of Bowthorpe Rd to be transferred in. The name of the ward to be changed to 'University and Earlham'.
Wensum	9013	5.8	Area of Mancroft to the West of Heigham Street and Old Palace Road transferred in. The area to the north of the river transferred to Mile Cross. The area south of Bowthorpe Rd to be transferred to University and Earlham.

South (Eaton, Lakenham and Town Close)

Norwich Conservatives propose no change to Eaton Ward. Currently no changes are required to bring Eaton into electoral equivalence. Eaton currently covers a number of clearly identifiable communities (such as Eaton Village and Eaton Rise) in their entirety, which have strong traditional links. As the Boundary Commission may recall, there was considerable support from Residents Associations for the retention of the current boundaries in 2004 (most notably from the Eaton Rise Residents Association). Although Eaton is a comparatively large and spaced out ward, it has a number of service and community hubs, which currently allow for effective community representation. Due to its size, we would oppose making the Eaton Ward geographically any larger or increasing the number of self-defined community groups within it. The Ward, which already includes communities ranging from the South Park area through to Eaton Rise and Mile End Road would not get effective councillor representation should the ward be expanded.

We are proposing increasing the electorate of Lakenham and reducing the electorate of Town Close by reuniting the traditional 'Lakenham Estate', moving the area of TC3 to the east of Brazengate and the old railway line into Lakenham. This proposal not only provides electoral equivalence but also creates a more logical and cohesive ward for councillors to represent. The new boundary between Lakenham and Town Close will be along the traditional "Lakenham Way" footpath and would mean that the residents around Southwell Road and Hall Road would be in the Ward most closely aligned with their cultural, housing and shopping habits. It would also mean that the new Town Close, which would now fall within the acceptable range, would be centred on the traditional Town Close Estate in Norwich.



West (Bowthorpe, University² and Wensum)

Our proposals for these three wards are routed in three underlining goals, reflecting the changing face of this part of Norwich and the increasing importance of the University of East Anglia as a local community economic and cultural hub; the need to ensure the effective representation for Bowthorpe; and the creation of a more consistent Wensum ward focused on the Dereham Road.

Bowthorpe ward currently presents a number of challenges to the Boundary Commission, firstly the ward, already large, is anticipated to expand significantly and arguably already is less than ideal for community representation. Currently, the ward of Bowthorpe contains three clearly identifiable communities, the eponymous Bowthorpe, West Earlham and North Earlham. Our proposals, which move West Earlham south of the West Earlham Woods and Enfield Rd into University Ward, retain the historic community links between Bowthorpe and North Earlham, whilst enabling the re-unification of the West Earlham estate within a single ward, rather than the current unsatisfactory arrangement which divides it between Bowthorpe and University wards.

Ideally, Bowthorpe, itself a combination of three communities, sharing strong community links through the Bowthorpe centre, which provides shared retail, medical and community services, would be a standalone ward. However, we appreciate that currently numbers do not allow this proposal, however we deliberately sought to make Bowthorpe as small as possible to facilitate anticipated growth in Three Score, not currently reflected in the commissions' figures.

As such our proposals will retain a community link with North Earlham, using the Dereham Road and Larkman Lane as strong physical boundaries to the north and east of the ward, with the Bunkers Hill wood and associated tree line providing a natural southern boundary.

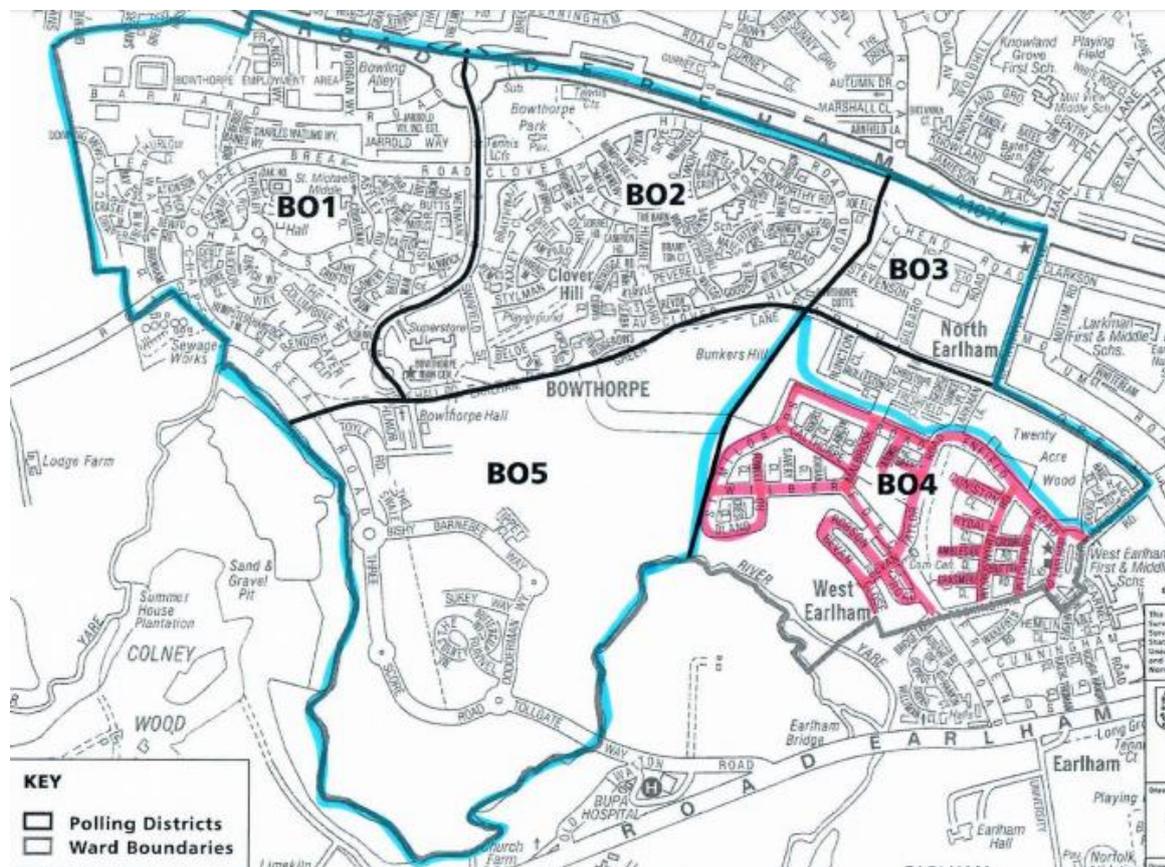
² Please not we propose changing this Ward name to University and Earlham.

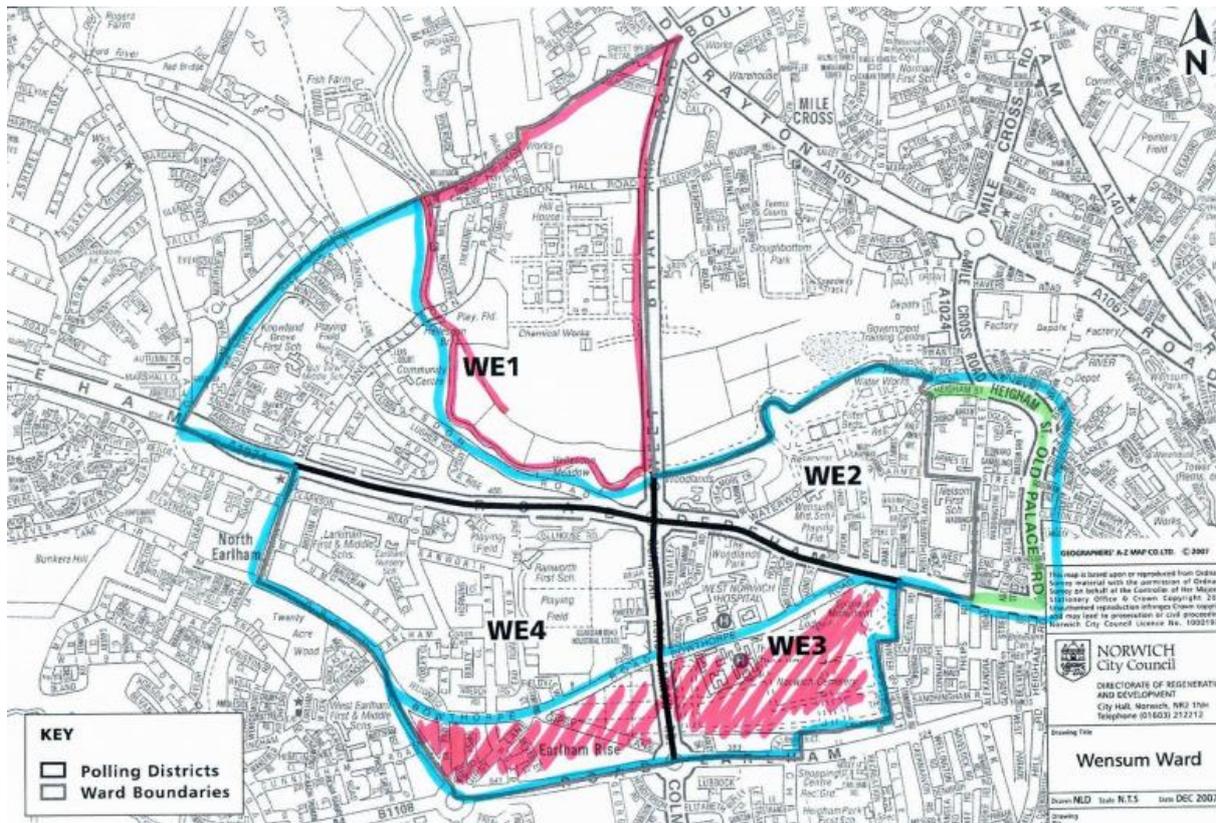
North Earlham has a strong association with Clover Hill, and many North Earlham residents look to the Bowthorpe Centre as natural local retail hub, with considerable existing interplay between the community resources provided within the Clover Hill Village Hall, and the Fourways Community Centre in North Earlham. Like Bowthorpe a significant number of parents within North Earlham send their children to primary and secondary schools within Bowthorpe proper and Ormiston Victory Academy.

In contrast West Earlham, like Earlham Rise, looks firmly towards the wider Earlham estate and the University of East Anglia, and although serviced by the 21\22 bus route, residents regularly use the faster and more direct 25\26 which travel through University Ward towards the city centre. Likewise the majority of parents within West Earlham send their children to City Academy within University Ward. In addition, increasingly over the year, West Earlham has been even more closely aligned with the University, with many local residents studying at the University, and typically exclusively seeing the Campus and the shops on the Fiveways rounds as their hubs for socialising and convenience retail. The presence of the bus gate on Earlham Green Lane also means that travel by car between West Earlham and rest of Bowthorpe requires a highly circuitous route, for example Bridge Farm Lane to the Clover Hill Village Hall requires at least a three mile drive to travel 0.75 miles as the bird flies.

These changes to Bowthorpe, taken in conjunction to our proposals for the further growth of University ward into Wensum, which moves Earlham Rise south of Bowthorpe Rd into University Ward, will create a logical ward, covering the majority of the Earlham Community and also the University with a clear boundary of Bowthorpe Road, the inner ring road and Eaton Park. On the basis on the new boundaries of University Ward, we are proposing changing the name to 'University and Earlham'.

Likewise our proposal to Wensum, create logical ward also clearly bound by easily identifiable and definable boundaries, the full of which will discussed in the 'East' section.





North (Catton Grove, Crome, Sewell and Mile Cross)

As both wards are already at electoral equivalence, we are proposing no changes to the Sewell and Catton Grove wards.

In Crome we are proposing the inclusion of the parts of Thorpe Hamlet north of the A147, making this and Ketts Hill the clear Southern boundary of the Ward. For more detail on this see the Eastern Section.

In Mile Cross, we are proposing the inclusion of the area of Wensum to the north of the River Wensum, known as ‘Lower Hellesdon’. This helps bring the proposed Wensum ward to electoral equivalence and establishes the River Wensum as a clear geographical boundary between the two wards. Lower Hellesdon is also within the catchment areas of the Sewell Park and OPEN academies, both to the north, along with Mile Cross.

East (Thorpe Hamlet, Mancroft and Nelson)

Thorpe Hamlet requires a significant reduction in size to bring it to electoral equivalence. To this end, we are proposing the movement of the area to the north of Ketts Hill and the A147 into Crome ward, improving electoral equivalence there. This also unites the Heathgate area with the Pilling Park estate in Crome, which have historical connections and have previously shared wards together. This seeks to return to previous electoral arrangements for the ward which accepted the natural ties between these two communities.

We are also proposing the movement of the area to the west of a line covering Palace Street, Tombland and King Street into Mancroft. This would allow the vast majority of the City Centre (within the Ring Road) to be electorally represented in the same ward. The area remaining in Thorpe Hamlet is the Historic area of Norwich which is much more focused on residential than commercial properties and would therefore sit better within the new Thorpe Hamlet Ward.

We are not proposing any changes to the eastern half of Thorpe Hamlet Ward as we believe the natural symbiotic relationship between Thorpe Hamlet and Thorpe St Andrew should be maintained at the current boundary along Harvey Lane.

We are proposing the Poll District that is currently MA1 be moved into Nelson, creating a natural 'Golden Triangle' ward bounded by Dereham Road, Unthank Road and Grapes Hill, giving it clear boundaries. This will also improve the electoral equivalence of Nelson ward.

Finally, to bring Wensum and Mancroft to electoral equivalence, we are proposing the area west of Old Palace Street and Heigham Road will be moved to the Wensum ward, again creating a cleanly defined boundary.

These changes collectively will also create a Mancroft ward that will serve much more cleanly as a 'City Centre Ward' having a much higher percentage of its area within the historical walls of the city.

