

# New electoral arrangements for Runnymede Borough Council

## Final recommendations

September 2018

## Translations and other formats

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

© The Local Government Boundary Commission for England 2018

The mapping in this report is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Keeper of Public Records © Crown copyright and database right. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and database right.

Licence Number: GD 100049926 2018

## Table of Contents

Summary .....	1
Who we are and what we do .....	1
Electoral review .....	1
Why Runnymede? .....	1
Our proposals for Runnymede.....	1
What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England? .....	2
1 Introduction .....	3
What is an electoral review? .....	3
Consultation.....	3
How will the recommendations affect you?.....	4
2 Analysis and final recommendations.....	5
Submissions received.....	5
Electorate figures.....	5
Number of councillors .....	6
Ward boundaries consultation .....	7
Draft recommendations consultation .....	7
Final recommendations .....	7
Northern Runnymede .....	10
Central Runnymede.....	14
Southern Runnymede.....	16
Conclusions.....	18
Summary of electoral arrangements.....	18
3 What happens next? .....	19
Equalities.....	19
Appendix A.....	20
Final recommendations for Runnymede Borough Council.....	20
Appendix B.....	22
Outline map .....	22
Appendix C.....	23
Submissions received.....	23
Appendix D.....	24
Glossary and abbreviations .....	24

# Summary

## Who we are and what we do

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

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

## Electoral review

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

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

## Why Runnymede?

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

## Our proposals for Runnymede

- Runnymede should be represented by 41 councillors, one fewer than currently.
- Runnymede should have 14 wards, the same number as there are now.
- The boundaries of all wards should change, none will stay the same.

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

# What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

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

7 The members of the Commission are:

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

---

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

# 1 Introduction

8 This electoral review was carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Runnymede 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 borough.

## What is an electoral review?

9 Our three main considerations are to:

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

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

## Consultation

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

12 This review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
21 November 2017	Number of councillors decided
28 November 2017	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
12 February 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
8 May 2018	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
16 July 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
4 September 2018	Publication of final recommendations

## How will the recommendations affect you?

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

## 2 Analysis and final recommendations

14 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 wards.

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

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

	2017	2023
Electorate of Runnymede	61,164	65,141
Number of councillors	41	41
Average number of electors per councillor	1,492	1,589

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

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

### Submissions received

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

### Electorate figures

20 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2023, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2018. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 6.5% by 2023.

21 Councillor Fiona Dent, representing the Runnymede & Weybridge Labour Constituency Party, questioned the accuracy of the electoral forecasts provided by

---

<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.



the Council. Councillor Dent was particularly concerned about the low growth estimates in the north of the borough, given that the Council's Local Plan had identified the area for several planned developments. Councillor Dent also suggested the Council had not fully considered the effect that both Individual Electoral Registration and Houses in Multiple Occupation could have on elector numbers.

22 In response to this, we asked the Council to provide further evidence for their reasoning behind the electoral forecasts for the borough. The Council stated that a low increase in electors were predicted in the north of the borough because the north has areas of low population (Windsor Great Park and the Wentworth Estate) and areas of low registration numbers (Egham, Englefield Green and the Wentworth Estate). The Council stated that the 2023 electorate predictions across the borough were based on the most recent registration statistics prior to the commencement of the review.

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

## Number of councillors

24 Runnymede Borough Council currently has 42 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that keeping the number the same would ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 42 councillors. Legislation states that the Commission must have regard to the desirability of recommending ward patterns that reflect the electoral cycle of the authority under review. As such, the Commission starts with a presumption that, for example, local authorities like Runnymede that elect by thirds will have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards so that every elector has the same opportunity to vote whenever local elections take place. It should be noted that this is not a requirement. If the Commission is persuaded by the evidence received that a uniform pattern of wards will not reflect its statutory criteria, it is prepared to move away from this presumption.

26 We received several submissions about the number of councillors in response to our draft recommendations. These submissions suggested that we adopt a two-councillor ward for our proposed Egham Hill ward to help create a pattern of wards for the north of the borough which would better reflect community identities. As explained in detail in paragraphs 37–40, we have been persuaded to change our recommendations in this area. This will result in the number of councillors being reduced by one to 41. Therefore, our final recommendations are based on a 41-councillor council which is a reduction of one when compared to the current arrangements. We have been persuaded that a uniform pattern of wards will not reflect community identities in the north of the borough. Furthermore, this approach is consistent with our guidance where we explain that it may be necessary to make a small alteration to council size to secure more clearly identifiable boundaries that

better reflect local communities.

## Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received nine submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included a detailed borough-wide proposal from the Council based on 42 councillors. We also received localised submissions from residents, local councillors and local organisations, which predominantly related to the Council's proposals for the Egham area.

28 Our draft recommendations were based on the borough-wide proposal we received from the Council. In some areas, we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries. We also visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Runnymede helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

29 Our draft recommendations were for a uniform pattern of 14 three-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations provided for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

30 We received 118 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included a borough-wide response from Runnymede Borough Council. The rest of the submissions related to specific areas of the borough, where we received strong, well-evidenced objections to our draft recommendations for the north of the borough, specifically the Egham and Englefield Green areas.

31 We have therefore proposed significant changes to the ward boundaries in these areas as part of our final recommendations. As a consequence of these changes, we have moved away from a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards, creating a two-councillor ward for Englefield Green East. For the remainder of the borough, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

## Final recommendations

32 Pages 10–17 detail our final recommendations for each area of Runnymede. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>4</sup> criteria of:

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

---

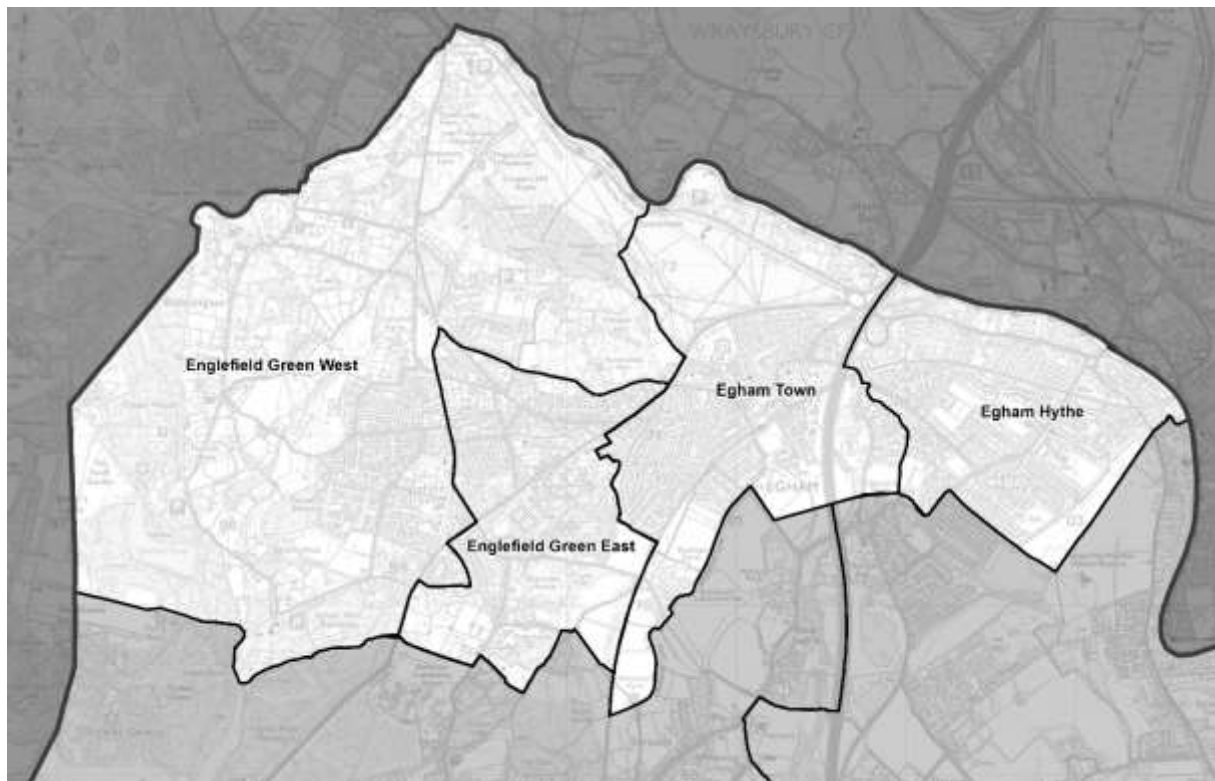
<sup>4</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

33 Our final recommendations are for 13 three-councillor wards and one two-councillor ward. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

34 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on pages 20-1 and on the large map accompanying this report.



## Northern Runnymede



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Egham Hythe	3	7%
Egham Town	3	7%
Englefield Green East	2	-10%
Englefield Green West	3	-10%

### *Egham Hythe*

35 We have made changes to our Egham Hythe ward as part of our final recommendations. We received strong opposition from Runnymede & Weybridge Constituency Labour Party and several local residents in regard to the area north of the railway line and east of the M25, as well as Mullens Road and its connected roads, being part of Egham Town ward. It was proposed that this area should be in Egham Hythe ward to better reflect community identities and interests. We were persuaded by the evidence received and have therefore adopted this proposed change as part of our final recommendations.

36 We have also decided to move the southern boundary of the proposed ward so that it follows Devil's Lane rather than Mead Lake Ditch. We have made this change to create good electoral equality for Egham Hythe ward, which would have had an electoral variance of 17% without this change. Under the final recommendations, our proposed Egham Hythe ward will have a variance of 7% by 2023.

### *Egham Town, Englefield Green East and Englefield Green West*

37 We received over 100 submissions that objected to our draft recommendations for the above wards. There was a preference amongst respondents for the residential area west of Egham town to remain part of an Egham Town ward, rather than it being placed in an Egham Hill ward as per our draft recommendations. The submissions strongly argued that our proposals did not reflect community identity. It was further argued that natural boundaries to communities, such as the M25 and the A30, had not been recognised when we formulated our draft recommendations.

38 Several submissions, which included those from local councillors and residents' associations, suggested that we adopt a two-councillor ward for our proposed Egham Hill ward to help create a pattern of wards for the north of the borough which would better reflect our statutory criteria. This proposal would allow the residential area west of Egham town to remain part of Egham Town ward, and keep the village of Englefield Green separate from any 'Egham-centric' ward.

39 As previously stated in this report, Runnymede elects a third of its councillors each year, so there is a presumption in law that it will have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. However, after carefully considering the submissions received, we are persuaded that compelling evidence has been received to move away from this presumption and that a two-councillor ward in the north of the borough is justified on the grounds of community identities and interests.

40 Therefore, as part of our final recommendations, we propose a two-councillor Englefield Green East ward. We consider that this warding arrangement would better reflect our statutory criteria than a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards.

41 We have changed the name of our proposed ward from Egham Hill to Englefield Green East based on submissions received. The submissions argued that the name Egham Hill was unsuitable, given that Egham Hill is the name of the road which acts a barrier between the Englefield Green and Egham communities. It was stated that the existing ward name better represented the Englefield Green community which resides within it.

42 The Egham Residents' Association supported our decision to place Whitehall Lane, Manor Way, Boshers Gardens and Vicarage Road within Egham Town ward. We have therefore kept these roads in our Egham Town ward under our final recommendations. We have also included Tinsey Close, Danehurst Close and Furzedown Close in our proposed Egham Town ward, to better reflect road access routes.

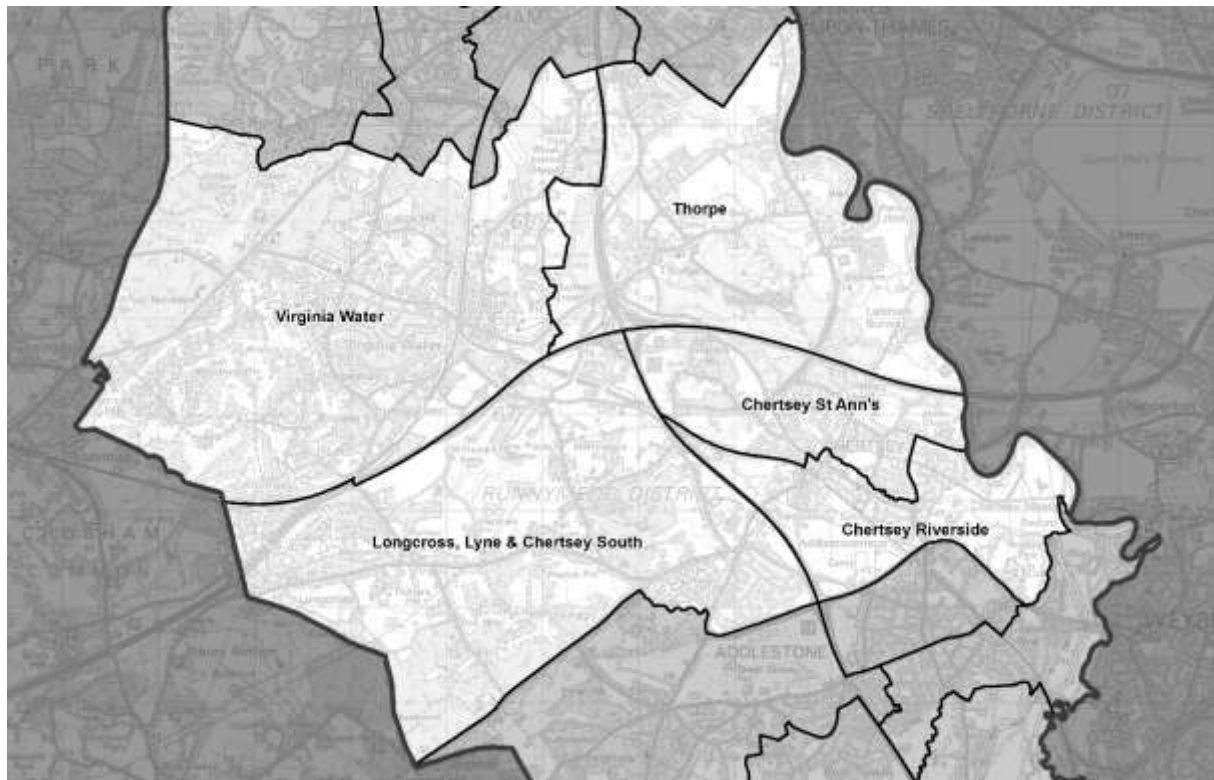
43 We have also adopted the Council's suggestion to follow the division boundary between our proposed Egham Town and Englefield Green East wards. The ward boundary will follow the railway line, rather than run to the rear of properties on Manor Way. We were persuaded by the evidence received that doing so would create a more identifiable boundary.

44 We have also amended the southern boundary of our proposed Englefield Green West ward so that it follows the existing ward boundary. This is to improve electoral equality for wards across the north of the borough. For similar reasons, we have amended the ward boundary in the north of the ward. We propose that the boundary follows Tite Hill so that electors north of this road, including future electors at the former Brunel University Runnymede Campus development, will be placed in Englefield Green West ward. Additionally, as part of our decision to create a two-councillor Englefield Green East ward, we have also decided to revert to the existing ward boundary along the A328 between the Englefield Green East and Englefield Green West wards.





## Central Runnymede



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Chertsey Riverside	3	-2%
Chertsey St Ann's	3	6%
Longcross, Lyne & Chertsey South	3	-6%
Thorpe	3	6%
Virginia Water	3	-7%

*Chertsey Riverside, Chertsey St Ann's and Longcross, Lyne & Chertsey South*

45 We received no submissions that related directly to these wards. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

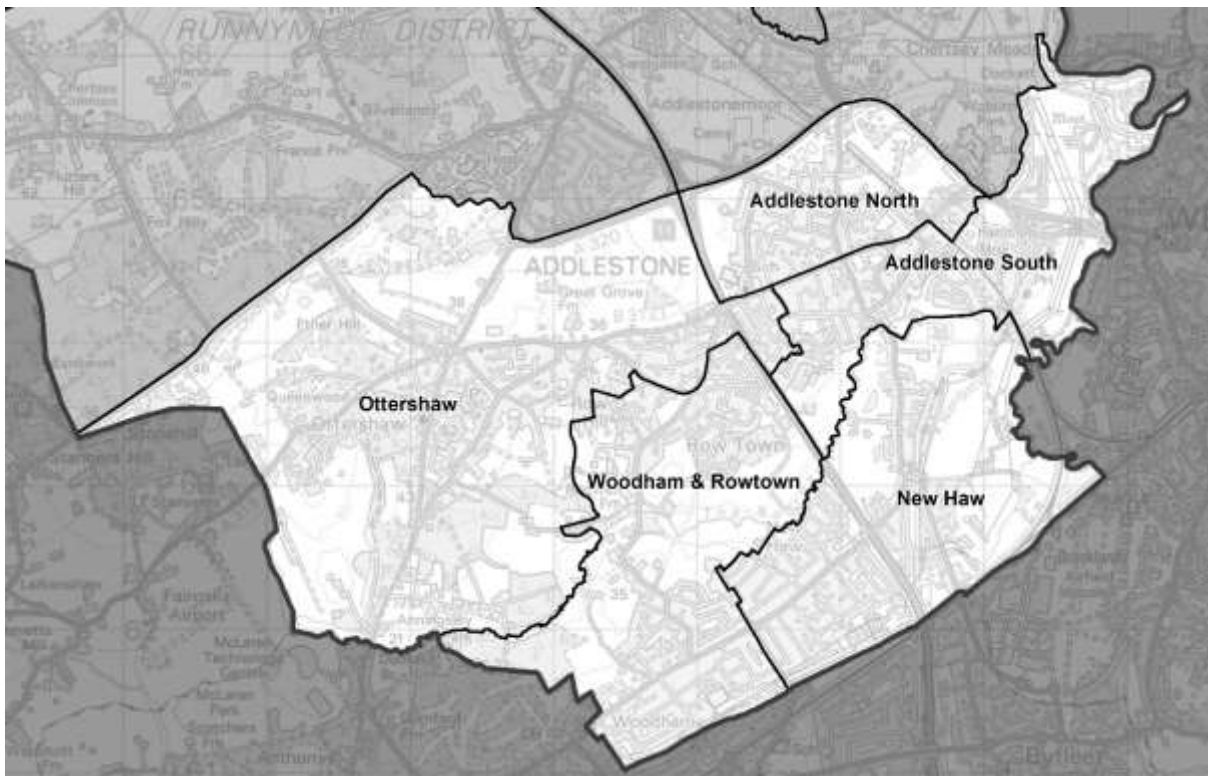
*Thorpe*

46 We have made a change to our proposed Thorpe ward to improve electoral equality and help aid effective and convenient local government. As stated in paragraph 36, we have moved the boundary of Thorpe ward from Mead Lake Ditch to Devil's Lane to improve electoral equality in our proposed Egham Hythe ward. We have also adopted the Council's suggestion to follow the county division boundary in the north-eastern part of the ward, rather than follow the railway line. We were persuaded that doing so would ensure effective and convenient local government and provide for better electoral equality given our proposed changes to the north of this ward. Our Thorpe ward will have a variance of 6% by 2023.

*Virginia Water*

47 As stated in paragraph 44, we have amended the northern boundary of Virginia Water ward to ensure improved electoral equality in Englefield Green West ward. Apart from this minor amendment, we are confirming our draft recommendations for this ward as final.

## Southern Runnymede



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Addlestone North	3	-6%
Addlestone South	3	0%
New Haw	3	4%
Ottershaw	3	6%
Woodham & Rowtown	3	3%

### *Addlestone North*

48 We received no submissions that related directly to Addlestone North ward. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

### *Addlestone South and New Haw*

49 We received one submission from the Council in relation to our Addlestone South and New Haw wards. The Council requested that the ward boundary between the two wards should follow the division boundary around Sayes Court Farm Kennels and Crockford Park Open Space to ensure effective and convenient local governance. However, having noted that there are no electors in these two areas, we are not persuaded that this change would aid effective and convenient local government and consider our proposed boundary, which follows the River Bourne, to be more identifiable. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these two wards as final.

### *Ottershaw and Woodham & Rowtown*

50 We received one submission from the Council in relation to our Ottershaw and Woodham & Rowtown wards. The Council requested that the ward boundaries for the two wards should follow their original warding proposal, arguing that doing so would represent the best balance of our statutory criteria. However, we were not persuaded by the evidence received. As noted in our draft recommendations report, we consider that placing The Ridings in Ottershaw ward will better reflect community identities given its road access, and that placing the ward boundary to the rear of properties on Katherine Close will provide a more identifiable ward boundary than the Council's proposal. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Ottershaw and Woodham & Rowtown wards as final.

## Conclusions

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

### Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2017	2023
Number of councillors	41	41
Number of electoral wards	14	14
Average number of electors per councillor	1,492	1,589
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	7	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

#### **Final recommendation**

Runnymede Borough Council should be made up of 41 councillors serving 14 wards representing one two-councillor ward and 13 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

#### **Mapping**

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

### 3 What happens next?

52 We have now completed our review of Runnymede Borough Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2019.

#### Equalities

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

## Appendix A

### Final recommendations for Runnymede Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Addlestone North	3	4,276	1,425	-4%	4,481	1,494	-6%
2	Addlestone South	3	4,901	1,634	10%	4,779	1,593	0%
3	Chertsey Riverside	3	4,125	1,375	-8%	4,663	1,554	-2%
4	Chertsey St Ann's	3	4,986	1,662	11%	5,042	1,681	6%
5	Egham Hythe	3	5,175	1,725	16%	5,079	1,693	7%
6	Egham Town	3	4,739	1,580	6%	5,102	1,701	7%
7	Englefield Green East	2	2,713	1,357	-9%	2,851	1,426	-10%
8	Englefield Green West	3	3,900	1,300	-13%	4,295	1,432	-10%
9	Longcross, Lyne & Chertsey South	3	2,573	858	-43%	4,476	1,492	-6%
10	New Haw	3	5,042	1,681	13%	4,965	1,655	4%
11	Ottershaw	3	4,985	1,662	11%	5,064	1,688	6%
12	Thorpe	3	4,436	1,479	-1%	5,034	1,678	6%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Virginia Water	3	4,296	1,432	-4%	4,422	1,474	-7%
14 Woodham & Rowtown	3	5,017	1,672	12%	4,888	1,629	3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>61,164</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>65,141</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,492</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Runnymede Borough Council.

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



## Appendix B

### Outline map



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

# Appendix C

## Submissions received

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

### Local Authority

- Runnymede Borough Council

### Political Group

- Runnymede & Weybridge Constituency Labour Party

### Councillors

- Councillors A. Alderson, J. Ashmore & D. Knight (Egham Town ward)

### Local Organisations

- Egham Residents' Association
- Englefield Green Village Residents' Association

### Local Residents

- 113 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

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.

Local Government Boundary Commission for  
England  
1st Floor, Windsor House  
50 Victoria Street, London  
SW1H 0TL

**Telephone:** 0330 500 1525  
**Email:** [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)  
**Online:** [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk) or  
[www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)  
**Twitter:** @LGBCE