Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for South Norfolk Council

Electoral review

November 2016
Translations and other formats

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Licence Number: GD 100049926 2016
Table of Contents

Summary .......................................................................................................................... 5
Who we are and what we do ......................................................................................... 5
Electoral review ............................................................................................................. 5
Why South Norfolk? ...................................................................................................... 5
Our proposals for South Norfolk .................................................................................. 5
Have your say ................................................................................................................. 5

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England? ................. 7
1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 9
What is an electoral review? .......................................................................................... 9
Consultation ..................................................................................................................... 9

How will the recommendations affect you? ............................................................... 10

2 Analysis and draft recommendations ....................................................................... 11
Submissions received ..................................................................................................... 11
Electorate figures .......................................................................................................... 11
Number of councillors .................................................................................................. 12
Ward boundaries consultation ...................................................................................... 12

Draft recommendations ............................................................................................... 13
North-west South Norfolk ............................................................................................... 14
Central South Norfolk .................................................................................................... 18
East South Norfolk .......................................................................................................... 22
South-west South Norfolk .............................................................................................. 26

Conclusions ....................................................................................................................... 28
Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements .............................................................. 28
Parish electoral arrangements ....................................................................................... 28

3 Have your say ............................................................................................................... 31
Equalities .......................................................................................................................... 32
Appendix A ....................................................................................................................... 33

Table A1: Draft recommendations for South Norfolk District Council ................. 33

Appendix B ....................................................................................................................... 36
Outline map ...................................................................................................................... 36

Appendix C ....................................................................................................................... 38
Submissions received ..................................................................................................... 38

Appendix D ....................................................................................................................... 39
Glossary and abbreviations ............................................................................................ 39
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 South Norfolk?

4 We are conducting a review of South Norfolk as the value of each vote in district council elections varies depending on where you live in South Norfolk. 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 South Norfolk

- South Norfolk District Council should be represented by 46 councillors; the same as now.
- South Norfolk District Council should have 27 wards, nine fewer than now.
- The boundaries of all but one ward should change.

Have your say

5 We are consulting on our draft recommendations for a nine-week period, from 8 November 2016 to 9 January 2017. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to contribute to the design of the new wards – the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be when analysing all the views we received.
We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this Draft recommendations report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

You have until 9 January 2017 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 31 for how to send us your response.
What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

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

8 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)
- Peter Knight CBE, DL
- Alison Lowton
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Sir Tony Redmond
- Paul Wiles

- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

---

1 Introduction

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

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

What is an electoral review?

10 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

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

Consultation

12 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for South Norfolk. We then held a period of consultation on warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

13 This review is being conducted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage starts</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 June 2016</td>
<td>Number of councillors decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June 2016</td>
<td>Start of consultation seeking views on new wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 September 2016</td>
<td>End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 November 2016</td>
<td>Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 January 2017</td>
<td>End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 March 2017</td>
<td>Publication of final recommendations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How will the recommendations affect you?

14 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in and which other communities are in that ward. Your ward name may also change.
2 Analysis and draft recommendations

15 Legislation\(^2\) states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors\(^3\) 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.

16 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.

17 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electorate of South Norfolk</td>
<td>99,573</td>
<td>117,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>2,165</td>
<td>2,556</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 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’. Twenty-six of our proposed 27 wards for South Norfolk will have electoral equality by 2022. However, it is proposed that Diss will have a variance of 11%.

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

Submissions received

20 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices by appointment, or on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

21 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2022, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2017. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 18% by 2022.

---


\(^3\) Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.
We considered the information provided by the Council and raised a number of questions about the scale of housing development; however, we are now satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations. It should be noted that as a result of the scale of growth a number of wards will initially have poor electoral equality. However, this is expected to improve as the growth is completed, as shown in tables 1 and A1, below.

**Number of councillors**

South Norfolk District Council currently has 46 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 46 councillors.

We received no submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns and have therefore based our draft recommendations on a 46-member council.

**Ward boundaries consultation**

We received 24 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included a detailed district-wide proposal from South Norfolk District Council, which proposed a mixed pattern of 31 wards, represented by 46 elected members. The remaining submissions put forward comments on specific areas, or commented on the proposals put forward by the Council.

We carefully considered the proposals received, noting that the Council’s proposals secured good levels of electoral equality, with no ward having a variance of over 10% by 2022. We have used the Council’s proposals as the basis for the draft recommendations, but have moved away from them in a number of areas where either we received persuasive evidence for alternative arrangements, or where we did not consider that the Council’s proposals provided the best balance between the statutory criteria. As part of the process, we visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of South Norfolk helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

Our draft recommendations are for four three-councillor wards, 11 two-councillor wards and 12 one-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in Table A1 in Appendix A (on page 33) and on the large map accompanying this report.
30 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed ward.

**Draft recommendations**

31 The tables and maps on pages 14–24 detail our draft recommendations for each area of South Norfolk District Council. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory criteria of:

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

---

## North-west South Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward Name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hethersett</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hingham &amp; Deopham</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Costessey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Costessey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicklewood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Hethersett, New Costessey and Old Costessey wards**

32 The Council proposed a two-councillor New Costessey, three-councillor Old Costessey and three-member Hethersett warding pattern for this area.

33 Costessey Town Council and a local resident argued that Lodge Farm and the surrounding development site in Bawburgh parish should be included in Old Costessey ward. Costessey Town Council argued that this area will not have direct access into Bawburgh parish and will instead access into Costessey and will have a more urban character than the neighbouring village of Bawburgh. The Town Council proposed that there should be no change to the existing boundary between New Costessey and Old Costessey wards, but that there should be a minor amendment to its boundary with Norwich. This amendment would transfer a number of roads around Woodhill Rise that only have road access directly into South Norfolk district.

34 Following our visit to the area, we are persuaded that the Lodge Farm development site would be better placed in the Old Costessey ward, although we have not heard directly from Bawburgh Parish Council on the matter. We are therefore making this alteration to the boundary as part of our draft recommendations.

35 Our visit to the area also raised a concern about the Council's boundary between its proposed New Costessey and Old Costessey wards. We note that while using the centre of Richmond Road and Middleton Crescent may provide a clear boundary, it actually divides the residents on either side of these roads. We are of the view that these properties would be better placed in a single ward. We therefore propose a minor amendment to the boundary to take these properties, together with Costessey High School, into the proposed New Costessey ward.

36 Finally, we note Costessey Town Council’s proposed amendments to the boundary between South Norfolk and Norwich City councils around Woodhill Rise. Whilst we concur that these properties only have direct access into South Norfolk, the legislation does not give us the remit to alter the external boundary of the local authorities as part of this review. Therefore, we are unable to recommend this amendment as part of our draft recommendations.

**Wymondham**

37 The Council proposed three two-councillor wards covering Wymondham: Central Wymondham, North Wymondham and South Wymondham. A local resident argued for the creation of a single-councillor Cromwells ward comprising the southern area of Wymondham. It was argued that this more rural area has different needs to the more urban areas of Wymondham. However, we were not persuaded by the evidence received and note that it would not secure electoral equality for the area. Therefore, we are not proposing this alteration as part of our draft recommendations.

38 The Council’s proposed boundary between its Central Wymondham and South Wymondham wards results in an unviable parish ward, with just 25 electors, between the railway line and Cavick Road. We are therefore proposing to retain the existing boundary, along the railway line, as part of our draft recommendations. This also reflects the county division boundary at this point.
We propose a further minor amendment around Vimy Drive to secure better electoral equality between Central Wymondham and North Wymondham wards.

_Easton, Hingham & Deopham and Wicklewood wards_

The Council proposed three single-councillor wards for this area: Easton, Hingham & Deopham and Wicklewood. Marlingford & Colton Parish Council requested the retention of the existing Easton ward, citing established community links between the parishes within it. We have examined these proposals and note that it isn’t possible to retain the existing Easton ward as it has poor electoral equality with 19% more electors than the average for the district. We consider that in this case, the Council’s proposals provide for the best balance between the statutory criteria and are adopting them as part of our draft recommendations without amendment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bunwell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cringleford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fornacett</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hempnall</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulbarton</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton Flotman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poringland, Framingham &amp; Trowse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke Holy Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratton</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cringleford and Poringland, Framinghams & Trowse
41 The Council put forward proposals for two two-councillor wards – Cringleford and Poringland – and a single-councillor Trowse ward covering this area.

42 Poringland Parish Council requested the retention of the existing two-councillor ward, maintaining the established community links with Framingham Earl and Framingham Pigot parishes. Councillors Neal and Overton also objected to the proposal to separate Poringland from Framingham Earl, arguing that the proposed boundary splits a number of roads, leaving them no direct access into the proposed wards. Kirby Bedon Parish Council objected to its inclusion in the Trowse ward, stating that it had better links with the more rural Rockland ward. Finally, Cringleford Parish Council argued that the size of its electorate entitled it to be a two-councillor ward, but that if this wasn’t possible then it shared community links with Colney parish.

43 Our visit to the area confirmed that the Council’s proposal to split Poringland parish along its boundary with Framingham Earl parish would not appear to represent local communities in the area as the proposed boundary cuts straight through a number of roads that are clearly linked. However, we note that the existing two-councillor Poringland with the Framinghams ward would, if maintained, have 22% more electors than the district average by 2022. We do not consider there to be the justification for such poor electoral equality in this area.

44 Given the size of electorate of Poringland, the only options are to either add electors to the Poringland ward, creating a three-councillor ward, or transfer electors out of the ward to retain a two-councillor Poringland ward. We do not consider there to be any compelling evidence to split Poringland, so we are therefore combining it with the Council’s proposed Trowse ward, to create a three-member Poringland, Framinghams & Trowse ward. It is also proposed that Kirby Bedon parish is transferred to the Rockland ward, as we concur with the Kirby Bedon Parish Council that it has better links with Rockland than Poringland, Framinghams & Trowse.

45 Finally, we note the comments from Cringleford Parish Council and while the parish would be entitled to two district councillors in its own right, we must have regard for the area as a whole. We are of the view that Colney parish would be best placed in Cringleford ward. We also consider that Keswick & Intwood parish should be in Cringleford ward as it has limited links to anywhere else in South Norfolk and is bounded by the A47 to the south and Norwich City to the north. We are therefore adopting the Council’s Cringleford ward as part of our draft recommendations without amendment.

Mulbarton and Stoke Holy Cross
46 The Council put forward proposals for a single-councillor Stoke Holy Cross ward and two-councillor Mulbarton ward. Swardeston Parish Council objected to its inclusion in a ward with Stoke Holy Cross, citing its community links south toward Mulbarton.

47 Our visit to the area confirmed Swardeston’s links to Mulbarton, but also that it does have road links to Stoke Holy Cross parish although we acknowledge this requires crossing the A140. We acknowledge the concerns about the proposed
Stoke Holy Cross ward, but note that whilst the size of the electorate here makes it impossible to place Stoke Holy Cross parish in its entirety in a neighbouring ward, it does not have sufficient electors to be entitled to a single councillor itself. We have not received the evidence to justify splitting it between wards. Therefore, the only option we considered to be potentially viable is to combine the Council’s proposed two-councillor Mulbarton and single-councillor Stoke Holy Cross wards into a three-councillor ward. Although this would address Swardeston’s concerns about its established links to Mulbarton, we do not have similar evidence from the other parishes in these wards. On balance we are retaining the Council’s proposals, but would welcome views on the creation of a three-member ward in this area.

Bunwell, Forncett, Hempnall, Newton Flotman and Stratton
48 The Council put forward proposals for four single-councillor wards – Bunwell, Forncett, Hempnall and Newton Flotman – and a two-councillor Stratton ward. We received limited comments on these wards although Councillor Worsley argued that growth in Stratton means it should be given an additional third councillor. A local resident argued that the Tharston area of Tharston & Hapton parish should be included in the Stratton ward because it has stronger links to Stratton than to Hapton, which is more rural in nature.

49 We note Councillor Worsley’s submission regarding the electoral growth in Stratton, and while the electorate may continue to grow beyond the 2022 forecast period, we cannot consider growth beyond this point as part of this review. Allocating Stratton a third councillor would result in very poor electoral equality for the ward, with 35% fewer electors than the average for the district by 2022. Therefore, we are not adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

50 The proposal to remove the Tharston area of Tharston & Hapton parish would worsen electoral equality in the Forncett ward, resulting in 22% fewer electors than the average for the district by 2022. We do not consider that the evidence provided justifies such a high level of electoral inequality for these wards. We are therefore adopting the Council’s proposals in this area without amendment, as part of our draft recommendations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooke</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditchingham &amp; Earsham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loddon &amp; Chedgrave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurlton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ditchingham & Earsham, Loddon & Chedgrave and Thurlton

51 The Council put forward proposals for five single-councillor wards: Chedgrave, Ditchingham, Earsham, Loddon and Thurlton. Councillor Bernard argued for the inclusion of Hedenham parish in the Ditchingham ward, proposing that Thwaite parish could be transferred out to balance the electoral equality. Geldeston parish argued for the retention of the existing ward, citing its community links to Kirby Cane, Ellingham and Gillingham parishes.

52 The submissions received and our visit to the area has raised a number of concerns with the Council’s proposals for this area. We note the argument that Hedenham parish should be in a ward with Ditchingham, and note that along with Thwaite and Broome parishes, these four parishes share a single website. Our visit confirmed that Geldeston parish has stronger east-west links, than north towards Chedgrave. The River Chet separates the Chedgrave and Langley with Hardley parishes from the southern parishes in the Council’s Chedgrave ward and the most direct north-to-south access is via the centre of the proposed Loddon ward.

53 Finally, a local resident argued that the boundary between Alburgh and Wortwell parishes divides their property and requested an amendment. However, the legislation does not allow the Commission to alter external parish boundaries as part of this review.

54 We have examined options to address the issues outlined above, but the size of the electorate of the constituent parishes makes alternatives hard to determine. In addition, we note that a number of parishes, for example Kirby Cane & Ellingham are grouped and should not be split, further limiting the options.

55 We therefore propose transferring Geldeston parish from the Council’s proposed Chedgrave ward to a modified Ditchingham ward, but also combining Ditchingham ward with the proposed Earsham ward to create a new two-councillor Ditchingham & Earsham ward. It is proposed that Wortwell parish is transferred from our Ditchingham & Earsham ward to the Harleston ward to improve electoral equality in both wards. We note that that Wortwell parish has direct road links to Harleston. To address the worsening of electoral equality that results from moving Geldeston parish from Chedgrave ward, and to address the lack of internal access within Chedgrave ward, we are combining Chedgrave and Loddon wards to create a two-councillor Loddon & Chedgrave ward. We note that while Chedgrave and Loddon are separate parishes they are contiguous and have direct links across the River Chet via Bridge Street. In addition, for the purposes of the local Joint Core Strategy we note that Loddon and Chedgrave are defined together as a key service centre. Finally, we are adopting the Council’s Thurlton ward as part of our draft recommendations without amendment.

56 We acknowledge that the creation of two-councillor wards may not be wholly popular, but in seeking to address the issues raised above we consider the creation of two-councillor Ditchingham & Earsham and Loddon & Chedgrave wards provides the best solution while trying to balance all the statutory criteria. We welcome comments on these proposals and ask that any alternatives also seek to balance the statutory criteria.
Brooke and Rockland
57 The Council put forward proposals for single-councillor Brooke and Rockland wards. As described in paragraph 42 above, Kirby Bedon Parish Council objected to its inclusion in the Trowse ward, stating that it has better links with the more rural Rockland ward. Our visit to the area supported this proposal and we are therefore transferring Kirby Bedon parish from our Poringland, Framinghams & Trowse ward to Rockland ward. We are adopting the Council's Brooke ward, as part of our draft recommendations, without amendment.
South-west South Norfolk

Bressingham & Burston, Dickleburgh & Scole, Diss and Harleston

58 The Council put forward proposals for four single-councillor wards – Burston, Bressingham & Roydon, Dickleburgh, Harleston – and a three-councillor Diss ward in this area. Diss Town Council and Councillor Palmer objected to the Council’s proposal to link Diss with Scole, arguing that it has much stronger links to Roydon. They argued that many Diss sports facilities are in Roydon and that the boundary between the two areas has become more blurred following recent housing developments. Diss Town Council acknowledged that a three-councillor ward combining Diss and Roydon would have a variance over 10%, but that this could be justified based on evidence of the strong community ties between the two areas. Councillor Palmer argued that Diss is separated from Scole by the A140 and the Frenze Beck nature reserve. He also argued that Heywood parish should be placed in the Diss ward.

59 Starston Parish Council stated that it wished to remain in a ward with other rural parishes, such as Pulham St Mary and Pulham Market, rather than be placed in a ward with the market town of Harleston. Pulham St Mary Parish Council argued to remain in a ward with a similar make-up to the existing ward and that if expansion
was required then Dickleburgh & Rushall should be added. They argued that the village primary school also serves Pulham Market, whilst secondary education is provided in either Harleston or Diss.

60 We note the arguments put forward for the inclusion of Diss and Roydon in a single ward and our visit to the area confirmed that these two areas have good links, which appear stronger than the links between Diss and Scole. Combining Diss and Roydon would result in a ward with 11% more electors than the average by 2022 and require consequential changes to the surrounding warding pattern.

61 We also note the comments from Starston and Pulham St Mary parishes. Our visit to the area confirmed the links between Dickleburgh & Rushall, Pulham St Mary, Pulham Market and Starston parishes. However, we also note that these parishes also have links into Harleston, with Starston being very close.

62 We propose that the Council’s Burston ward is modified to include Bressingham parish. We also propose that the Council’s Dickleburgh ward become a two-councillor ward including the parishes of Tivetshall St Margaret, Tivetshall St Mary, Brockdish, Starston and Scole. Finally, the Council’s proposed Harleston ward would be modified to include Wortwell parish, but exclude Brockdish and Starston parishes, which are to be transferred to the Dickleburgh ward. We have been unable to identify a pattern of single-member wards for this area that meets the statutory criteria.

63 On balance, we consider that these amendments have a number of advantages. Although combining Diss and Roydon into a three-councillor Diss ward with a variance of 11%, we consider this to be acceptable given the improvement in community links. We consider the modifications that this requires to the Council’s proposed Burston ward are also acceptable, as it results in a ward with both good internal links and good electoral equality. We propose calling this ward Bressingham & Burston. We note that transferring Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary parishes to a two-member ward including Dickleburgh parish retains the established links these parishes currently have. Although the A140 runs through this ward, it is possible to cross and indeed it provides a north–south link within the ward. In addition, this enables us to retain Starston in a ward with its neighbouring rural parishes. We propose naming this ward Dickleburgh & Scole. Finally, our modified Harleston ward has local road links, in addition to links along the A143.
Conclusions

Table 1 below shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2015 and 2022 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendations</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of electoral wards</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>2,165</td>
<td>2,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Draft recommendation**
The South Norfolk District Council should be made up of 46 councillors serving 27 wards representing 12 single-councillor wards, 11 two-councillor wards and four three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Table A1 in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

**Mapping**
Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for the South Norfolk District Council. You can also view our draft recommendations for South Norfolk District Council on our interactive maps at [http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

**Parish electoral arrangements**

As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.
66 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, South Norfolk District Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

67 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 Bawburgh, Costessey and Wymondham.

68 As 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 Bawburgh parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish ward</th>
<th>Number of parish councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bawburgh</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodge Farm</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69 As 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 Costessey parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish ward</th>
<th>Number of parish councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Costessey</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Costessey</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s Hill</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70 As 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 Wymondham parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish ward</th>
<th>Number of parish councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cromwells</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketts Park</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rustens</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Have your say

71 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole district or just a part of it.

72 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don’t think our recommendations are right for South Norfolk District Council, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

73 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at consultation.lgbce.org.uk

74 Submissions can also be made by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to:

Review Officer (South Norfolk)  
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
14th Floor, Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London SW1P 4QP

75 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for South Norfolk which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively

76 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government

77 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

78 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents’ association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?
Effective local government:
- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the ward appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?

Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices in Millbank (London) and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for South Norfolk in 2019.

Equalities

This report has been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.
Appendix A

Table A1: Draft recommendations for South Norfolk District Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors</th>
<th>Electorate (2015)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2022)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bressingham &amp; Burston</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,620</td>
<td>2,620</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2,666</td>
<td>2,666</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Brooke</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2,707</td>
<td>2,707</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bunwell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,404</td>
<td>2,404</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2,546</td>
<td>2,546</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Central Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,712</td>
<td>2,356</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4,802</td>
<td>2,401</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Cringleford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,260</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td>-25%</td>
<td>5,414</td>
<td>2,707</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dickleburgh &amp; Scole</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5,021</td>
<td>2,511</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5,186</td>
<td>2,593</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Diss</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,815</td>
<td>2,605</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8,481</td>
<td>2,827</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Ditchingham &amp; Earsham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,957</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5,228</td>
<td>2,614</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Easton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>-29%</td>
<td>2,505</td>
<td>2,505</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Forncett</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,451</td>
<td>2,451</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2,754</td>
<td>2,754</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Harleston</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,440</td>
<td>2,220</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4,864</td>
<td>2,432</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward name</td>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>Electorate (2015)</td>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>Variance from average %</td>
<td>Electorate (2022)</td>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>Variance from average %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hempnall</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,608</td>
<td>2,608</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2,699</td>
<td>2,699</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hethersett</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,612</td>
<td>1,871</td>
<td>-14%</td>
<td>7,203</td>
<td>2,401</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hingham &amp; Deopham</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,316</td>
<td>2,316</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2,491</td>
<td>2,491</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loddon &amp; Chedgrave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,280</td>
<td>2,140</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>4,801</td>
<td>2,401</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulbarton</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,443</td>
<td>2,222</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4,915</td>
<td>2,458</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Costessey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,930</td>
<td>2,465</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4,962</td>
<td>2,481</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton Flotman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,463</td>
<td>2,463</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,554</td>
<td>1,777</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>4,957</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Costessey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>-12%</td>
<td>6,946</td>
<td>2,315</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poringland, Framinghams &amp; Trowse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,037</td>
<td>1,679</td>
<td>-22%</td>
<td>7,768</td>
<td>2,589</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,692</td>
<td>2,692</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2,779</td>
<td>2,779</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Wymondham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,403</td>
<td>1,702</td>
<td>-21%</td>
<td>5,475</td>
<td>2,738</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke Holy Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,261</td>
<td>2,261</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2,555</td>
<td>2,555</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratton</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,361</td>
<td>1,681</td>
<td>-22%</td>
<td>5,001</td>
<td>2,501</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward name</td>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>Electorate (2015)</td>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>Variance from average %</td>
<td>Electorate (2022)</td>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>Variance from average %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Thurlton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,521</td>
<td>2,521</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2,606</td>
<td>2,606</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Wicklewood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,592</td>
<td>2,592</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>99,573</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>117,566</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by the South Norfolk District Council.

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

Outline map

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the A1 sheet accompanying this report, or on our website: http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/norfolk/south-norfolk
Key

1. Bressingham & Burston
2. Brooke
3. Bunwell
4. Central Wymondham
5. Cringleford
6. Dickleburgh & Scole
7. Diss
8. Ditchingham & Earsham
9. Easton
10. Forncett
11. Harleston
12. Hempnall
13. Hethersett
14. Hingham & Deopham
15. Loddon & Chedgrave
16. Mulbarton
17. New Costessey
18. Newton Flotman
19. North Wymondham
20. Old Costessey
21. Poringland, Framinghams & Trowse
22. Rockland
23. South Wymondham
24. Stoke Holy Cross
25. Stratton
26. Thurlton
27. Wicklewood
Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/norfolk/south-norfolk

Local authority

- South Norfolk District Council

Councillors

- Councillors Neal & Overton
- Councillor Bernard
- Councillor Hudson
- Councillor Palmer
- Councillor Savage
- Councillor Wilby
- Councillor Worsley

Parish and town councils

- Costessey Town Council
- Cringleford Parish Council
- Diss Town Council
- Ditchingham Parish Council
- Geldeston Parish Council
- Kirby Bedon Parish Council
- Marlingford & Colton Parish Council
- Poringland Parish Council
- Pulham St Mary Parish Council
- Starston Parish Council
- Swardeston Parish Council

Local organisations

- Broads Authority

Residents

- Four local residents
## Appendix D

### Glossary and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council size</td>
<td>The number of councillors elected to serve on a council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Change Order (or Order)</td>
<td>A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral fairness</td>
<td>When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral inequality</td>
<td>Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electorate</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-represented</td>
<td>Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish council</strong></td>
<td>A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also ‘Town council’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish ward</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town council</strong></td>
<td>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></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under-represented</strong></td>
<td>Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variance (or electoral variance)</strong></td>
<td>How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>