

**Response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for
England's draft recommendations for boundaries for
Cambridgeshire County Council**

1. This document is the response of the Labour Group on Cambridgeshire County Council to the draft recommendations for divisional boundaries in Cambridgeshire published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on 12th May 2015.
2. The Labour Group previously made a submission to the LGBCE's initial consultation on boundaries in Cambridgeshire and we are pleased that the draft recommendations are largely based upon our suggestions in Cambridge, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. However, we are concerned by the LGBCE's proposed arrangements in both Fenland and East Cambridgeshire. These pay little heed to community identities; strong, identifiable boundaries; shared interests or transport links and several of the proposed divisions offend against simple common sense.
3. To some degree this stems from the LGBCE's decision, between the conclusion of the initial consultation and the publication of its draft recommendations, that Cambridgeshire should be represented by 61 councillors, rather than 63 as it had previously suggested. It did this because they 'found it particularly difficult to develop a pattern of divisions in Fenland that would have good electoral equality and represent community identities.'
4. We accept that it is easier to provide good electoral equality and represent community identities with 9 councillors for Fenland rather than 10, but we do not believe that the draft recommendations meet these benchmarks. In East Cambridgeshire, meanwhile, we believe the reduction from 9 to 8 councillors makes it considerably more difficult to provide electoral equality or represent community identities and we consider the draft recommendations here to be woefully unsatisfactory in almost every respect.
5. We accept that the LGBCE has the final say on council size and will not contest their decision to assign 61 county councillors to Cambridgeshire. However, we are disappointed that the LGBCE chose to make this decision at such a late stage, without giving any warning, since this has reduced the public's opportunities to make suggestions about divisional arrangements.
6. Our primary concern about the draft recommendations is the four two-member divisions that the LGBCE has proposed. As we have previously made clear, we object in principle to two-member divisions. In common with the other political groups on the County Council have made a separate submission setting out our objections in greater detail.
7. These objections are only strengthened by an assessment of the specific two-member divisions the LGBCE is proposing. If multi-member divisions were to be justified, this could only be done on the basis that this allowed natural communities to be kept together in a single division and minimised the splitting of parishes. None of the four proposed two-member divisions accomplishes this.
8. The commission's proposed two-member March North & Waldersey division meanders from March to the borders of Wisbech and shows little regard to transport links or

community identities. Given that the town of March itself would under a council size of 61 be entitled to two councillors on its own, this is simply bizarre.

9. The draft recommendations for Littleport are even more egregious. With a council size of 61, Littleport has a sufficiently large electorate to have a county council division to itself. Splitting the town in two is hence unnecessary. However, the specific divisional arrangements are more than unnecessary, they are simply perverse. The proposed Littleport West division takes half of Littleport and combines it with villages as far south as Stretham (about four miles to the south of Ely and around ten miles away from Littleport). The proposed Littleport East and Soham North combines parts of two different towns with poor transport connectivity, thus ensuring that neither can depend on dedicated representation. We note that the LGBCE assigned 9 councillors to Fenland largely to ensure that no division combined parts of two Fenland towns and it is thus markedly inconsistent not to follow the same practice in East Cambridgeshire.
10. In American political gerrymandering, the term ‘cracking’ refers to dividing a community between electoral units in order to dilute its voice. Whilst we accept that the draft recommendations have no partisan intent, the outcome is nevertheless the same – rather than uniting Littleport in a single division with one county councillor to serve it, the LGBCE are proposing that the town be divided between multiple divisions and should be the predominant element in none of these.
11. We note that the present two-member Soham and Fordham Villages division was originally justified because Soham is too large to be contained in a single-member division. However, the LGBCE’s proposed Soham South and Fordham Villages does not even provide this division and hence must be considered inferior to a pattern of single-member divisions in every respect.
12. Our objections to the proposed Castle & Newnham division are set out in detail in the separate response we have submitted for Cambridge. It will suffice to say here that there is no reason viable single-member divisions could not be drawn in this part of the city, that the draft recommendations pay little heed to local identities and that at no point in the history of Cambridgeshire County Council (or its predecessor, Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council) has any part of Cambridge ever been placed in a multi-member county division.
13. It is therefore clear to us that the use of two-member divisions is not merely unnecessary, but will actively impede effective local government. We believe our submissions will make it clear that it is possible to create a far superior pattern of divisions using only single-member divisions.
14. This document therefore proposes substantially different electoral arrangements for Fenland and East Cambridgeshire to those set out in the draft recommendations. In addition, we propose a series of relatively minor changes in South Cambridgeshire to improve co-terminosity with district wards and to ensure that built-up areas are not divided between divisions unnecessarily.
15. In Huntingdonshire, we endorse the LGBCE’s draft recommendations. We have made a separate submission for Cambridge, which endorses ten of the proposed divisions but argues for the restoration of separate Castle and Newnham divisions.

East Cambridgeshire

16. In general, we consider the LGBCE's draft recommendations for East Cambridgeshire to be woefully inappropriate. Towns are arbitrarily divided and combined with areas they do not share any common interest with; multi-member divisions are used despite widespread feeling that they are not appropriate for Cambridgeshire; and electoral equality between the proposed divisions is weak.
17. As a consequence, we are able to offer support to only two of their proposed divisions. The first, the **Woodditton** division is unchanged under the draft recommendations from its present boundaries. Since this provides good electoral equality and ensures co-terminosity with district boundaries, we endorse this proposal.
18. The second division in the draft recommendations that we are supporting is the proposed Ely East division, which reflects communities in the north and east of Ely. However, as it only includes half of the Ely East district ward and is the natural successor to the present Ely North & East division, we do not believe the name Ely East is appropriate and suggest that **Ely North East** would be a better alternative.
19. We do see merit to the proposed Ely West division and believe it would be entirely appropriate for a council size of 63. However, with a council size of 61, the proposed Ely West is projected to have an electoral variance of -7% by 2020. This is within the acceptable electoral variance, but it means that the remaining divisions for East Cambridgeshire will each have an electoral variance of 8% by 2020. To rectify their myriad defects and ensure an arrangement of councillors that provides good electoral equality, we believe it is necessary to expand Ely West. We propose that it should in addition take in the parish of Thetford. This parish has good connections to Ely along the A10 (and via the 9 bus service) and patients from the village use St. Mary's doctors surgery in Ely. Such a division would have a variance of -0% by 2020 and could be named **Ely South West**.
20. We have already had reason to criticise the other three divisions proposed by the LGBCE in outline, but to demonstrate how poorly the draft recommendations satisfy the statutory criteria, we will now go on to set out their shortcomings in more detail.
21. The town of Littleport in the north of the district is predicted by 2020 to have an electorate of 7740, which would be just sufficient for it to constitute a single-member division on its own, as is the situation at present. Instead the LGBCE has proposed dividing it in two. The dividing line is the existing ward boundary between Littleport East and Littleport West district wards. This is questionable, since new development in the Highfields Estate is predominantly located in West ward but has road access only via East ward.
22. However, the decision to combine the west of Littleport with areas as far distant as Stretham is more than questionable, it is absurd. We cannot conceive how anybody could seriously think that such an arrangement accords in any way with the statutory criteria for divisional boundaries. The parishes of Stretham, Haddenham, Little Thetford and Wilburton are situated to the south of Ely. Their strongest links are to Ely, or failing that to Cambridge. Local children attend Witchford Village College. They share no significant interests with Littleport and transport links are poor – there is no A-

or B-road link that does not pass through the city of Ely. The LGBCE's claim that 'our proposed division will reflect community identities' is thus baffling at best and actively misleading at worst.

23. The proposed Littleport East & Soham North division combines parts of two compact, self-contained towns, both of which ought by rights to be anchoring divisions of their own. Littleport and Soham are not linked by public transport and road links between them are poor. Whilst both have good links to Ely along the A10 and A142, respectively, only small country roads directly link Littleport and Soham. Whilst the rural areas between Ely, Littleport and Soham could justifiably be placed with any of the three towns, uniting the built-up area of two or more of these towns cannot be justified.
24. We have already mentioned that the existing Soham & Fordham Villages division was created solely because the inhabitants of Soham did not wish to be divided between divisions. If this wish is not to be granted, there is no reason why they should not have representation in single-member divisions, just like the rest of the county.
25. We therefore begin by proposing a new **Burwell & Fordham** division comprised solely of parishes that the draft recommendations place in Fordham Villages & Southam South. This division would be comprised of the parishes of Burwell; Fordham; Reach; Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior and would have a variance of 9% by 2020. This retains the core of the present Burwell division (which is co-terminous with the district wards of Burwell and The Swaffhams) and adds to it the large village of Fordham. These communities share interests relating to their proximity to Newmarket and the A14 and children throughout the division attend Soham Village College.
26. The remaining parishes to the east of the A142 (Chippenham; Islesham; Kennett and Snailwell) may then be combined with that part of Soham north of Soham Lode and south of Soham Fen and the A142 to form a division we suggest should be called **Soham North & Isleham**. Children in all these areas attend Soham Village College and patients attend the Staploe Medical Centre in Soham for GP services. By 2020 such a division would have an electoral variance of **X%**.
27. That part of Soham to the south of Slade Lode may then be combined with the parishes of Haddenham; Stretham; Wicken and Wilburton to create a new division of **Soham South and Haddenham**. There are good road links via the A1123 and the boundaries with neighbouring divisions are strong and clear. By 2020, this division would have an electoral variance of **X%**.
28. At present, the villages to the west of Ely comprise the **Sutton** division and our plan maintains this basic arrangement. In addition to the parishes already in the division (Coveney; Downham; Mepal; Sutton and Witcham, we argue that it should gain the parishes of Wentworth and Witchford. These parishes fit well with the rest of the division and already share a primary school (Rackham Primary) with another parish in the division, namely Coveney. By 2020 our proposed division would have an electoral variance of 3%.
29. Accordingly, we propose that the town of **Littleport** should, as at present, be united in a single division. In order to ensure electoral equality elsewhere in the district, we believe it should in addition include rural elements of the city of Ely (namely the

villages of Chettisham, Prickwillow, Queen Adelaide and Stuntney) and of the town of Soham (namely rural areas to the north of the A142 and Soham Fen). As fenland villages in close proximity to the River Ouse, these villages share common interests related to drainage and children in most of the division attend Ely College. This division would have an electoral variance of X% by 2020.

30. We accept that some of the variances in our proposed rearrangement are close to the permitted limit, but the LGBCE's draft recommendations do not perform noticeably better in this regard. However, our alternatives are a vast improvement on the draft recommendations in terms of respecting community identities and respecting the interests of towns and we commend them to the LGBCE on that basis.

Fenland

31. The LGBCE justified its decision to assign ten rather than nine county councillors to Fenland on the basis that this would allow good levels of electoral equality to be maintained whilst reflecting community identities. We accept that the ten divisions provide good electoral equality, but we do not accept that they reflect community identities. Several of the proposed divisions split parishes unnecessarily, create unacceptably small parish wards and provide a needlessly complicated pattern of divisions, ignoring obvious and simpler arrangements.
32. Anyone consulting the submissions made at the initial stage will be in no doubt that the residents of the four Fenland towns (Chatteris; March; Whittlesey and Wisbech) do not wish there to be any divisions containing parts of two or more towns. We accept that the Fenland towns have different interests to one another and that it would be difficult for a councillor to effectively represent two or more of these communities at the same time. We are therefore disappointed that the LGBCE proposes that the Whittlesey South division should include parts of March. It is no excuse that the parts of March included are designated as 'rural'. They nevertheless look to March rather than to Whittlesey. Children in these areas attend March schools, resident access services in March rather than Whittlesey and district representation is provided by councillors representing March wards, not Whittlesey wards. Rural voters have as much right as urban voters to have their interests represented and we are disappointed that the LGBCE has chosen to ignore the public submissions here.
33. The LGBCE also ignores the interests of rural voters with its proposed March North & Waldersey and March South & Rural divisions. Voters living in isolated rural communities have very different needs than those living in the centre of towns, but rather than acknowledging the right of rural Fenland electors to their own representation, the LGBCE's proposals ensure that every single division contains part of at least one Fenland town. This is entirely unnecessary, as we will go on to demonstrate.
34. More broadly, we are concerned at the cavalier attitude the LGBCE has demonstrated towards parish wards. At present the town of March has three parish wards, each of which returns four parish councillors and the electorate in each parish ward is relatively even. The draft recommendations propose that March should have four single-member

wards, one two-member ward and two three-member wards. The number of electors a parish council represents ranges from **x** in **A** to **y** in **B**. Such broad variances make a mockery of the principle of electoral equality and amply demonstrate that more care is required in dividing parishes.

35. However, we do support parts of the LGBCE's draft recommendations for Fenland. We support the proposal that the **Chatteris** division should be co-extensive with the town of the same name and we acknowledge that a council size of 61 makes it easier to do this whilst ensuring electoral equality elsewhere in the district.
36. In Wisbech, we support the principle of two divisions covering those parts of the town east of the River Nene. However, we disagree with the inclusion of Clarkson ward in Wisbech South and Staithe ward in Wisbech North. At present Clarkson is in Wisbech North and Staithe is in Wisbech South and maintaining this arrangement would provide good electoral equality (North would have a variance of -5% and South a variance of 2% by 2020).
37. There is an obvious benefit to avoiding unnecessary changes to local government boundaries, but in addition we would argue that the present arrangement provides for stronger divisional boundaries, along Churchill Road, Norwich Road, Kirkgate Street and Church Road. We consider this to be a marked improvement upon the rather jagged boundary in the LGBCE's draft recommendations. We therefore argue that **Wisbech North** should be comprised of the district wards of Clarkson; Kirkgate and Waterlees Village, whilst **Wisbech South** should be comprised of the district wards of Medworth; Octavia Hill and Staithe.
38. We also support the principle of the proposed **Roman Bank & Peckover** division, made up of parts of Wisbech west of the Nene and villages which primarily look to Wisbech for services. However, we oppose the LGBCE's suggestion that the parish of Wisbech St. Mary should be split, since this is not necessary to secure electoral equality. Thus we believe that the division should not include the village of Murrow, but should instead be made up of the Peckover district ward of Wisbech, along with the parishes of Gorefield; Leverington; Newton and Tydd St. Giles. The division would then have a variance of -1% by 2020.
39. In Whittlesey, the LGBCE proposed that the Whittlesey North division should comprise the entirety of the district wards of Bassenhally and Stonald, together with the entirety of the St. Andrews parish ward and the northern part of the present St. Mary's parish ward. The LGBCE seem to have failed to notice that with a council size of 61, there is no need to split any district wards in Whittlesey, let alone parish wards. We propose that **Whittlesey North** should instead be comprised of the entirety of the district wards of Bassenhally; Stonald and St. Andrews. The resulting division would have good electoral equality (with a variance of 5% by 2020) and would have a strong boundary along Inhams Road (the B1093) and Eastrea Road (the A605).
40. Similarly, the proposed Whittlesey South division is needlessly overcomplicated. It is not necessary for the division to contain parts of March and with only small changes it can be made perfectly co-terminous with Fenland district wards. The LGBCE merely needs to take heed of the submission of Whittlesey Town Council, who objected to any proposals combining parts of March and Whittlesey and expressed support for a division combining parts of Whittlesey with Benwick and Doddington. A similar submission from Doddington Parish Council expressed a wish to be in the same

division as Wimblington and Benwick. This can be accomplished with a **Whittlesey South** division made up of the parishes of Benwick; Doddington and Wimblington; together with the Lattersey and Coates & Eastrea parish wards of Whittlesey. Such a division would be co-terminous with the district wards of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea; Doddington & Wimblington and Lattersey. The division would have an electoral variance of 3% by 2020 and thus provides good electoral equality. It should be noted that around half the division's electorate would reside outside Whittlesey and an alternative name that acknowledged these communities might therefore be appropriate.

41. In March, we consider the LGBCE's draft recommendations to be a poor representation of community identities. The LGBCE notes in its recommendations that a town councillor suggested March should be represented by two divisions which did not contain parts of any other town. With a council size of 61, March has a theoretical entitlement to 2.16 councillors and could in fact be represented by two divisions contained entirely within March. Instead the LGBCE have chosen to place the south-west of March with rural areas as far distant as Manea and the rest of the town in a two-member division extending almost to Wisbech. This is not only inelegant, it is entirely unnecessary.
42. We hence propose a pattern of two divisions for March, neither of which includes any areas outside the town. One, **March North**, would be made up of the entirety of the town north of the river Nene, along with rural areas to the west of the A141. It would have an electoral variance of **X%** by 2020. The other, **March South**, would comprise parts of the town south of the river and east of the A141. It would have an electoral variance of **Y%** by 2020. These divisions would have strong natural boundaries, provide adequate levels of electoral equality and would conform to primary school catchment areas within the town. As a consequence, the tiny parish wards of Eastwood and Rural North could then be eliminated, which would make parish governance more effective.
43. The parishes of Christchurch; Elm; Manea and Wisbech St. Mary would then form a new **Waldersey & Manea** division, representing villages and agricultural communities in the centre and east of the district. This would ensure that there is at least one division in Fenland that does not contain parts of a town and would help to ensure rural interests have their opinion represented in the county council.
44. We believe these modifications would ensure that divisions in Fenland better comply with the statutory criteria and with submissions received from parish councils. Unlike the draft recommendations, our proposals do not contain any division that contains parts of two Fenland towns, nor do we divide any parish which is too small to have a division of its own. Whereas the LGBCE secured co-terminosity for 18 out of 24 district wards, the Labour proposal ensures that 21 out of 24 district wards are maintained intact within a single county division.

South Cambridgeshire

45. In general we are supportive of the LGBCE's proposals for South Cambridgeshire. We support five of the proposed divisions in their entirety and most of the other modifications we propose are minor. However, we have concerns in two regards.
46. Our first concern is that the LGBCE has not given sufficient consideration to ensuring co-terminosity with district wards when developing its draft recommendations. Wherever possible, our modifications therefore aim to promote co-terminosity.
47. Our second and more serious concern is that the LGBCE has chosen to divide the compact community of Shelford and that this change was wholly unnecessary. The parishes of Great Shelford and Stapleford constitute a single built-up area and the line dividing the two parishes follows neither roads nor obvious natural features.
48. It is hence unsurprising that Great Shelford Parish Council, Little Shelford Parish Council and Stapleford Parish Council all expressed a wish to be in the same division. The LGBCE rejected this, claiming that it was not possible to accomplish this whilst ensuring electoral equality, but this is not the case. The LGBCE only struggled because they insisted on also including the parish of Haslingfield in the Shelford division. As this submission will demonstrate, this is neither necessary nor desirable and there is an alternative arrangement that better reflects local identities, conforms reasonably closely to district ward boundaries and ensures adequate levels of electoral equality.
49. The parish of Haslingfield lies to the west of the River Rhee, children in the parish attend Comberton Village College and it is part of the district ward of Haslingfield & The Eversdens. All the other parishes in the Shelford division lie to the east of the Rhee, children attend Sawston Village College or Melbourn Village College and for district council purposes they are part of the Harston & Hauxton or The Shelfords wards. It therefore seems clear that Haslingfield should not be part of the Shelford division, but should instead be placed with parishes to its west.
50. If Haslingfield is not part of the Shelford division, Stapleford can take its place, reuniting the built-up area of Shelford and ensuring that proper recognition is made of the importance of co-terminosity. We hence propose that the **Shelford** division should consist of the parishes of Great Shelford; Harston; Hauxton; Little Shelford and Stapleford. By 2020 this division would have an electoral variance of -4%. It would contain the entirety of the Harston & Hauxton district ward and around 95% of The Shelfords district ward.
51. The LGBCE's proposals for Duxford are largely based upon our submission to the initial consultation. However, with a council size of 61 the boundaries we originally proposed for a council size of 63 no longer provide electoral equality and the LGBCE has therefore chosen to additionally include the parish of Hinxton in the proposed division. However, Hinxton is separated from the rest of the division by the River Cam and the Cambridge-London Liverpool Street railway line. We believe a superior solution would be to place Hinxton in a division with Sawston and to replace it with the parish of Newton, which has good road links to Whittlesford, Thriplow and Fowlmere. This would create a **Duxford** division made up of the parishes of Duxford; Fowlmere; Foxton; Great & Little Chishill; Heydon; Ickleton; Newton; Shepreth; Thriplow and Whittlesford. The revised division would have an electoral variance of -7% by 2020.
52. Our initial submission proposed a **Sawston** division comprised of the six parishes making up the present Sawston and The Abingtons wards, namely Babraham; Great

Abington; Hinxton; Little Abington; Pampisford and Sawston. We note that the same arrangement was also proposed by Councillor Tony Orgee, who advanced evidence relating to employment, schools and use of medical services to support his arguments. There is thus clear evidence that this arrangement reflects community identities and would provide effective and convenient local government by improving co-terminosity with district wards.

53. Whilst the LGBCE claimed that these arrangements would provide poor electoral equality, this is only true if you remove the parishes of Great Abington and Little Abington, something which was suggested by neither submission. If the LGBCE had instead considered the division as actually proposed in the initial consultation, it would have found that it would have an electoral variance of -9% by 2020, which is within the permitted deviation. We therefore suggest that it is simply not necessary to choose between community identities and electoral equality, and call upon the LGBCE to think again and adopt the division proposed by ourselves and Councillor Orgee.
54. In the east of the district, the LGBCE propose a Linton division made up of thirteen parishes east of the A11. However, co-terminosity can be improved if rather than including the parishes of Great Abington and Little Abington, the division takes in the parishes of Great Wilbraham and Little Wilbraham. Although they lie on the other side of the A11, this can hardly be said to serve as an insurmountable barrier, since it is crossed by both Mill Road and Wilbraham Road. Moreover, as rural parishes separated from the Cambridge Urban Area, the Wilbrahams share common interests with the region east of the A11 which they do not share with the parishes of Fulbourn and Teversham. Our proposed **Linton** division, comprised of the parishes of Balsham; Bartlow; Carlton; Castle Camps; Great Wilbraham; Hildersham; Linton; Little Wilbraham; Shudy Camps; West Wickham; West Wrating and Weston Colville would by 2020 have an electoral variance of -4%.
55. This in turn allows the creation of a compact **Fulbourn** division comprised of the parishes of Fulbourn and Teversham, together with that portion of the parish of Fen Ditton south of the High Ditch Road. These parishes are part of the Cambridge Urban Area and will see significant development in future years as part of the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans. Cambridge Airport occupies a central place in this division and the jobs sustained by its operation constitute an important shared interest between each part of the division. This proposed division therefore takes account of the distinctive challenges faced by those on the edge of Cambridge due to development and employment pressures. By 2020, this division would have an electoral variance of -8%.
56. Whilst we are generally opposed to the splitting of any parish with an electorate smaller than the average size for a division, we do see merit in the LGBCE's proposals for **Waterbeach**, which divide the parish of Fen Ditton in two. Significant housing development is planned between Newmarket Road and High Ditch Road and this housing will function as an extension of Cambridge. It thus stands in contrast to the village of Fen Ditton, which despite its proximity to the city remains distinct in character. In view of the differing trajectories of different parts of the parish, dividing the parish between two divisions may actually reflect emerging identities better than keeping it intact.
57. However, if parts of Fen Ditton parish are included in the Waterbeach division, this would leave the parish of Stow cum Quy (to the north of the A14) isolated in a division

that is otherwise entirely made up of communities south of the A14. Given that the electorate of Stow cum Quy is numbered in the low hundreds, it too could easily be placed into the Waterbeach division without adversely affecting electoral equality – indeed, our proposed changes would improve it, so that by 2020 the division would have an electoral variance of **-1%**. We therefore propose a **Waterbeach** division made up of all of the parishes of Horningsea; Landbeach; Milton; Stow cum Quy; and Waterbeach and of that part of the parish of Fen Ditton to the north of High Ditch Road and the A1303. This division would have good internal connections and would be made up of communities situated in close proximity to the A14.

58. In the north of the district, the LGBCE's proposals closely follow our initial submission and it is therefore unsurprising that we support in their entirety the divisions of **Histon & Impington; Cottenham & Willingham** and **Northstowe & Over**. In each case we feel the divisions reflect local transport and community links and pay good heed to district ward boundaries, economic links and planned housing development.
59. We understand the reasons why the LGBCE has proposed its Bar Hill division with the boundaries it has. Whilst our initial submission followed district ward boundaries, it has to be admitted that the current boundaries of the Bar Hill district ward are somewhat arbitrary. The LGBCE's draft recommendation here does form a cohesive shape on a map and has much to recommend it. However, we do not believe it is necessary to include the parish of Madingley in this division. At district level, it is placed in a ward with parishes to the south of the A428 and if co-terminosity was respected here, slightly improved electoral equality would be obtainable. We therefore propose a **Girton & Bar Hill** division comprised of the parishes of Bar Hill; Dry Drayton; and Girton, which would have an electoral variance of 1% by 2020. We continue to believe that Girton, as the largest settlement in the division, should be mentioned in the division's name.
60. We support the principle of a division based in the rural west of the district, but are concerned that internal connectivity within the proposed **Papworth & Swavesey** division is poor. This could be improved if the parishes of Knapwell, Boxworth and Lolworth were added to the division. The LGBCE has proposed to place these parishes with Cambourne, which is a poor fit. As small, long-standing villages in agricultural settings, they have very different interests to the relatively new and relatively densely settled village of Cambourne. Both Boxworth and Lolworth are primarily accessed via the A14, whereas Cambourne's interests are closely tied to the A428. Pupils in all three parishes attend Elsworth Primary School and Swavesey Village College, both of which are located in the Papworth & Swavesey division. It is thus clear that the three parishes ought to be part of Papworth & Swavesey division and we propose a revised division consisting of the parishes of Boxworth; Caxton; Conington; Croxton; Elsworth; Eltisley; Fen Drayton; Graveley; Knapwell; Lolworth; Papworth Everard; Papworth St. Andrews; and Swavesey. This shifts slightly fewer than 500 electors and should be 2020 have an electoral variance of 5%.
61. Accordingly, we propose changes to the proposed Cambourne division. We note the objections of Caxton Parish Council to being included in a division with Cambourne. In the long-term, we do not feel that electoral separation of the two communities is a feasible objective, since the Cambourne West development (which will be largely completed by 2020) spans the parish boundary between Cambourne and Caxton.

However, we acknowledge the strength of the parish council's feeling and hence will not propose a division that includes both Caxton and Cambourne.

62. Nevertheless, Cambourne's identity, as a recently built village largely populated by households working in Cambridge, is distinct and does deserve to be taken into consideration when devising divisional arrangements. Aside from Cambourne West, the other significant development planned in this part of the district is the new village on Bourn Airfield, which will create a belt of development along the A428 stretching from Cambourne to Highfields. Although the new village will not have been completed by 2020, issues relating to it will be of significant concern to local residents and it hence functions as a clear common interest for residents from Cambourne to Caldecote.
63. We therefore propose a new **Cambourne** division comprised of the parishes of Bourn; Caldecote; Cambourne; Childerley; Kingston; and Toft. This division would have an electoral variance of 10% by 2020. Although this is a relatively high variance, it nevertheless remains within the acceptable range and it allows the entirety of the Caldecote district ward to be placed in the same division. If the LGBCE feels that this variance is too high, we note that the Gamlingay division to the south will have a relatively low electorate by 2020 and believe it would easily be possible to improve electoral equality by exchanging parishes between Gamlingay, Hardwick and Cambourne divisions, at a slight cost to co-terminosity.
64. We then propose modifications to the proposed **Hardwick** division to removed the parishes of Caldecote; Kingston and Toft and add the parishes of Haslingfield and Madingley. This would make the division co-extensive with the district wards of Barton; Comberton; Hardwick and Haslingfield & The Eversdens. Children in all these areas attend Comberton Village College and there are strong internal connections via the A428 and A603. By 2020 the district would have an electoral variance of 4%.
65. We support in full the recommendations for **Gamlingay** and **Melbourn & Bassingbourn** divisions. These divisions reflect local identities and community links and pay heed to the wishes of parish councils in these areas.
66. Few of these changes are significant in scope. Only sixteen parishes are moved from one division to another by our proposed modifications and only three of these have an electorate of above 1000. However, in each case where a parish of significant size is moved, the effect is beneficial. By moving Stapleford from Sawston to Shelford, the built-up area of Shelford is unified in a single division. By moving Haslingfield from Shelford to Hardwick, a stronger border is created along the River Rhee. By moving Caldecote from Hardwick to Cambourne, the status of Cambourne as a division representing new commuter settlements is enhanced. In each case, co-terminosity with district wards is also improved. Under our proposals, only nine out of thirty-four district wards are split between divisions, whereas the LGBCE draft proposals split fourteen district wards. Our proposals also pay greater heed to school catchment areas and natural topographical boundaries and we therefore commend them to the Commission as a good representation of the statutory criteria.

Cambridgeshire Labour Group Response to the LGBCE for Cambridge District

The Labour Group on Cambridgeshire County Council is broadly supportive of the recommendations for new boundaries provided by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for the district of Cambridge. In particular, the recommendations for Cambridge were largely based on Labour's own submission to the review with several minor amendments. We believe the recommendations for Cambridge broadly balance the priorities of improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors in each division, reflecting community identity, and providing for effective and convenient local government.

However, we seek to make one major objection to the current recommendations. We are opposed in principle to dual-member divisions and we understand that the LGBCE had agreed to this principled objection from all political groups on the Council at the start of the review. Further, we are opposed to the introduction of dual-member divisions in Cambridge district where no such form of representation on the County Council has ever existed. During the submission process, both major political groups on Cambridge City Council resolved at a meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee to support the principle of co-terminosity between divisions and ward boundaries. We believe electors in Cambridge agree that co-terminosity benefits effective and convenient local government by minimising confusion. However, a two-member division would render this proposal impossible when the City Council comes to review its own boundaries over coming years.

In particular, we are opposed to the proposal to create a dual-member division by uniting the revised Castle and Newnham divisions. We believe the proposed seat would be unwieldy and impractical because it would unite two distinct and distant communities lying at extreme geographical distance from each other. The centre of the community in Newnham lies around Newnham Croft, in the far south west of the proposed division, whereas the centre of the community in Castle lies east of Huntingdon Road, in the far north east.

We believe that the recommendations neglect the importance of Madingley Road as a clear community distinguisher between the two areas. The LGBCE stated that 'Grange Road provides access between the Newnham area in the south and communities north of Madingley Road'. This appears to imply that Grange Road extends both sides of Madingley Road, which is not the case, and that both distinct communities can be easily accessed. But to access the community in Castle from Newnham, it is necessary to pass along Madingley Road from Grange Road in the direction of the city centre before passing along Northampton Street and turning up Huntingdon Road.

Madingley Road provides an ideal boundary for local government divisions and wards. It has provided the boundary since 1976 and residents continue to recognise its role in this regard. It also provides a boundary between catchment areas for two separate primary schools. There are surprisingly few properties on Madingley Road because, for much of its length, it is screened by fields, university laboratories, and it abutted by the grounds of Colleges at the University of Cambridge. Residents in the Colleges at the University of Cambridge feel that they belong neither to the Castle nor Newnham areas and the central community focus lies with the University.

We suggest that the LGBCE should create two single-member divisions for Castle and Newnham. The boundary between the proposed divisions would run down Madingley Road.

We believe this proposal would maintain the principle of electoral equality because, in our original submission, we predicted that by 2020 Castle would have a variance from the average number of electors in each division of only +5 per cent and Newnham's variance would be 0 per cent. The table below shows the electoral figures for our original submission to the review.

	Proposed division	Proposed 2014 voters	% variance from 2014 average	Predicted growth/shrinkage by 2020	Predicted 2020 total	% variance from predicted 2020 average
1	Arbury	7899	+2	+134	8033	-5
2	Barnwell	8431	+8	+263	8694	+3
3	Castle	7844	+1	+1016	8860	+5
4	Cherry Hinton	8162	+5	+80	8242	-3
5	Chesterton	8583	+11	+269	8852	+4
6	King's Hedges	9012	+14	-40	8972	+5.9
7	Newnham	5973	-23	+2464	8437	0
8	Queen Edith's	7897	+2	+310	8207	-3
9	Romsey	8481	+9	+140	8621	+2
10	St Matthew's	8094	+4	+125	8219	-3
11	St Paul's	8447	+9	+392	8839	+4
12	Trumpington	4262	-45	+3510	7772	-8.3
	Total	93,085	7757	8663*	101,748*	8478

* Note that these two totals amount to 10 voters more than the County Council's predicted growth figures, the source of which we cannot locate.

The LGBCE's current proposals for a dual-member seat in Castle and Newnham are not sufficiently different from Labour's original submission as to imply breaking the rule about electoral equality. We do not, in short, accept that a variance of more than +/- 10% would plausibly be the result of two single-member divisions in Castle and Newnham.

For reasons listed above, we believe a boundary along Madingley Road best reflects community identity. In particular, a single-member division for Newnham would respect the historic village identity of the area west of the River Cam and south of Madingley Road and it would conform exactly to the catchment area of Newnham Croft Primary School. Finally, maintaining two single-member divisions provides for effective and convenient local government by providing continuity with current electoral arrangements and allowing the possibility of coterminous boundaries with the City Council.

