New electoral arrangements for Dartford Borough Council

Draft recommendations

January 2018
Translations and other formats

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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 Dartford?

4 We are conducting a review of Dartford Borough Council as the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Dartford. 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 Dartford

- Dartford should be represented by 42 councillors, two fewer than there are now.
- Dartford should have 20 wards, three more than there are now.
- The boundaries of all wards should change.

Have your say

5 We are consulting on our draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 30 January 2018 to 9 April 2018. 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.

6 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.
You have until 9 April 2018 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 32 for how to send us your response.

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹

The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Sir Tony Redmond (Deputy Chair)
- Alison Lowton
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Steve Robinson
- Andrew Scallan CBE
- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

1 Introduction

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

- The wards in Dartford are in the best possible places to help Dartford Borough Council (‘the Council’) carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

What is an electoral review?

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 Dartford. We then held a period of consultation on warding patterns for the borough. 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>19 September 2017</td>
<td>Number of councillors decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 September 2017</td>
<td>Start of consultation seeking views on new wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 December 2017</td>
<td>End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 January 2018</td>
<td>Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 April 2018</td>
<td>End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 June 2018</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, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. 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>2017</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electorate of Dartford</td>
<td>77,884</td>
<td>88,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>1,854</td>
<td>2,119</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’. The majority of our proposed wards for Dartford will have good electoral equality by 2023.

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

Submissions received

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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

Electorate figures

21 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2023, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2018. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 14% by 2023.

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\(^3\) Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.
We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations.

**Number of councillors**

Dartford Borough Council currently has 44 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that reducing by two councillors will make sure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 42 councillors – for example, 21 two-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

We received six submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns. All of these submissions were in favour of a smaller council size of 42, therefore, we have based our draft recommendations on Dartford Borough Council being represented by 42 councillors.

**Ward boundaries consultation**

We received 19 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included three detailed borough-wide proposals from Dartford Borough Council, the Labour Group on the Council ('the Labour Group') and a local resident. The schemes each provided a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for the area. We also considered that they generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

The Council proposed 19 wards that we considered were generally based on communities and followed strong boundaries. Only one of its proposed wards would produce a variance of over 10%, and it was supported by strong evidence of community identity.

The Labour Group’s proposal largely supported the Council’s recommendations although in a few places it sought to break down some of the larger two- and three-councillor wards. However, this scheme proposed five wards that had variances over 10% and we have therefore not generally adopted the wards proposed by the Labour Group.

The local resident’s scheme was based on analysis of the Council’s proposal; he supported the majority of the wards that the Council proposed but he identified areas where boundaries could be altered to improve variances or where he considered community identities could be better reflected.

The submissions we received from Stone Parish Council, Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council and Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association focused on their respective areas, providing good evidence of community identity.
We also received a submission from a local resident who supported the views expressed by Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council. We received three submissions from local residents in relation to the Ebbsfleet Garden City development, one in reference to Dartford town centre and seven submissions that were either outside the scope of this review or did not provide proposals for warding patterns.

31 Our draft recommendations are based on a combination of the borough-wide proposals that we received. In some areas of the borough we have also recommended boundaries that reflect other submissions, which provided evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified our own alternative boundaries. We also visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Dartford helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

32 There were a number of areas in which proposals would result in the creation of unviable parish wards. The law requires us to create parish wards when we divide a parish between borough wards. We consider an unviable parish ward is one which would contain fewer than around 100 electors.

33 Our draft recommendations are for seven three-councillor wards, eight two-councillor wards and five 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.

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

35 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

Draft recommendations

36 The tables and maps on pages 9–28 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Dartford. 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

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## North-eastern area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenhithe &amp; Knockhall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebbsfleet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanscombe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Castle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone House</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ebbsfleet, Greenhithe & Knockhall and Swanscombe

37 The eight submissions we received for this area proposed significantly different boundaries. Our wards in this area are a combination of the ward proposals from the Council and the Labour Group, and in the area of Greenhithe and Knockhall we have created our own proposal based on evidence of community identity.

38 The Council proposed four separate wards for Ebbsfleet, Greenhithe, Knockhall and Swanscombe on the basis that these wards would reflect the different characteristics of the communities in the area. It proposed a three-councillor Greenhithe ward that would combine the area north of the A226 with the existing Castle ward, on the basis that these areas share strong community links as the residents in the Castle area look towards Greenhithe for their shopping and train services. This proposed ward would produce a variance of -3% by 2023.

39 Its proposed Knockhall ward would be a one-councillor ward that would cover a small geographic area and would produce a variance of 9% by 2023. Its proposed two-councillor Swanscombe ward would comprise the built-up area of Swanscombe which the Council states can be described ‘as a small town’ due to it having its own high street, community facilities and schools. This proposed ward would produce a variance of 10% by 2023.

40 The Council’s proposed Ebbsfleet ward would comprise the whole of the new Garden City development (with the boundary to the north following the cliff edge and the boundary to the south following the A296 and A2), the Bluewater Retail Park and the development area along the railway line surrounding the Ebbsfleet International train station. The Council acknowledges that initially this ward would have a poor variance, but believes that by 2023 the new development will have an established community and that as a three-councillor ward there is some future-proofing allowing all of the developments to take place within the same ward and preventing ward boundaries being drawn across developments not yet finalised. The Council’s proposed Ebbsfleet ward includes the existing development surrounding Black Eagle Drive and the Bluewater Retail Park. It noted that there will be several access points created between the Bluewater Retail Park and the Garden City development. This three-councillor Ebbsfleet ward would produce a variance of 0% by 2023.

41 The Labour Group proposed four wards in this area, similar to those proposed by the Council, with its proposed Ebbsfleet and Knockhall wards being identical. It proposed alterations to the Council’s proposed Greenhithe ward; it did not include the existing Castle ward and moved the southern boundary from London Road southward, onto the railway line. It considers that this ward reflects the established local community and ensures that any future development within the Thames Waterfront Priority Area is retained within the same ward. The Labour Group’s proposed two-councillor ward would be named ‘Ingress’ and would produce a variance of -9% by 2023.

42 The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor Swanscombe ward that largely reflects the ward outlined by the Council, with the small exception that the northern boundary runs along the railway line. The Labour Group believes that this ward represents the traditional, established and settled Swanscombe community. This two-councillor Swanscombe ward would produce a variance of 10% by 2023.
43 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposal to include the existing Castle ward within its proposed Greenhithe ward, along with the Swanscombe Marshes. He also provided support for the Council’s proposed Knockhall and Swanscombe wards, although he considered the area around Black Eagle Drive should be included with the Council’s proposed Ebbsfleet ward, as there is no direct connection between this area and the remainder of the ward, due to the railway line. He also opposed the Council’s proposal to include the Bluewater Retail Park within its Ebbsfleet ward, noting that St Clements Way would create a boundary between the retail park and the residential development.

44 We received separate submissions from Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council and the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association which proposed identical warding patterns with the same supporting evidence for the area. They recommended that the existing Swanscombe ward boundaries be retained as they reflect the community in the east of Dartford, which includes its own shopping centre, leisure facilities, schools and places of worship. This contains the same built-up area of Swanscombe contained within the Council’s proposed ward but also includes that area to the edge of the borough to the east. They recommended no changes to the external boundaries of the existing Greenhithe ward but proposed dividing it in two, creating a three-councillor Ebbsfleet ward in the south and a two-councillor Castle ward in the north. They considered that the area as a whole has a strong community identity and that in order to accommodate the Ebbsfleet Garden City development the area would need to be split into two separate wards. This would create a two-councillor Ebbsfleet ward and a three-councillor Greenhithe ward that would produce variances of 8% and -9% respectively by 2023.

45 They also requested that the boundary between Ebbsfleet and Greenhithe should run along Alkerden Lane until it meets with its proposed Swanscombe ward. They noted that the proposed division between the existing development in Greenhithe and the new Ebbsfleet ward was in its view the most appropriate place for a boundary and that to divide the area into smaller wards would be to the detriment of the local community. They provided evidence that there is a strong community working together in this area, with various community groups, sports teams and youth clubs supporting each other in local events.

46 We received a submission from Councillor Harman who provided support for wards proposed by the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association. He noted that the current arrangements provide good connectivity within the wards and effectively reflect the interests and identities of the local communities.

47 We received a submission from a local resident who requested that the Ebbsfleet development should be divided equally into the existing Swanscombe and Greenhithe wards.

48 We received a submission from a local resident who requested that the whole of Greenhithe be retained within one ward. However, this would create a three-councillor Greenhithe ward that would produce a variance of 63% by 2023.

49 The proposals from Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association and the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council recommend splitting the Garden City
development across two wards but, having toured the area, we are minded to keep all of the new development within one ward as we believe this will reflect the new community created in this area. We are adopting the Council’s proposed Ebbsfleet ward, with an alteration to the western boundary to remove the Bluewater Retail Park from this ward. There are no electors within this area and if we were to include it within the proposed Ebbsfleet ward, this would create an unviable parish ward as it would not contain any electors.

50 Our three-councillor Ebbsfleet ward will produce a variance of 0% by 2023. We acknowledge that this ward is expecting significant development and that the current variance expected for this ward will be -84%. However, we are satisfied that the projected electorate for this area will ensure that our proposed ward will produce a good variance by 2023.

51 In the area of Swanscombe we are proposing to adopt the Council’s recommendation on the basis that it follows strong boundaries. In the interest of keeping all of the new development within the same ward, it includes the development area around Alkerden Farm within the Ebbsfleet ward. In the north of this ward the Labour Group recommended that the boundary follow along the railway line; however, there is a ‘Swanscombe Business Centre’ off London Road and electors along All Saints Close that we believe would be better served by being included within a Swanscombe ward as they have better connectivity with this ward. The proposals from Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association and the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council created a much larger ward based on the existing ward. We consider that this area to the east of the built-up area of Swanscombe where significant development will take place should all be included in the new Ebbsfleet ward. Our two-councillor Swanscombe ward will have a variance of 10% by 2023.

52 In the remaining area of Greenhithe and Knockhall we have created our own warding arrangement. We were persuaded by the evidence of a shared community identity provided by the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association and the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council to keep the area of Knockhall and Greenhithe together within the same ward. We have also taken into consideration the evidence provided by Stone Parish Council that noted how the area of Castle should be retained within a Stone ward, on the basis that it shares more community interests with the parish of Stone than with Swanscombe and Greenhithe parish. We are therefore proposing a Greenhithe & Knockhall ward that combines the Labour Group’s proposed Knockhall and Ingress wards into a three-councillor Greenhithe & Knockhall ward. We believe that this ward will reflect the shared community identity of Greenhithe and Knockhall, while retaining all of the Thames Waterfront Priority Area within the same ward. This creates a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -3% by 2023.

Stone Castle and Stone House
53 The Council proposed a three-councillor Stone ward in this area that covers the majority of Stone parish and follows clear and identifiable boundaries. It notes that this area has a village community that all look towards the Stone Crossing station. Its proposed ward boundaries exclude the Bluewater Retail Park, instead including it within its proposed Ebbsfleet ward. It proposed to run the western boundary along
the full length of Cotton Lane, which would exclude the electors along Martin Drive and Chapel Drive, by including them within its proposed Hesketh ward to the west. It also amended the boundary in the south so that all of the properties along Watling Street are included within its proposed Stone ward, on the basis that the access for these properties is to the north and this would better link them within the St John’s area. This proposed Stone ward would produce a variance of 0% by 2023.

54 The Council proposed a three-councillor Hesketh ward that largely reflects the existing Newtown ward which straddles the M25 and relies on the A226 as the connecting road. It removed the properties along Lingfield Avenue, noting that the residents in this area shared a stronger identity with those in its proposed Stone ward to the east. It also proposed that the properties along Princes Road should be included within its proposed Hesketh ward to help improve the community links between Park Road, Pilgrims Way and Watling Street. Its third alteration is to extend the eastern boundary of the ward to include the Stone House Hospital redevelopment which it considered has more in common with its proposed Hesketh ward, rather than its proposed Stone ward. This would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -1% by 2023.

55 The Labour Group proposed a one-councillor St Clements ward that comprised the existing Castle ward and the northern part of Stone parish. This would create a one-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 11% by 2023.

56 The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor Stone Crossing ward next to a two-councillor Stone Central ward. However, these wards produced variances of -19% and 19% respectively. We are not persuaded by the evidence provided to adopt wards with such poor variances with little evidence of community identities to support them.

57 We received a submission from a local resident requesting that the development on the eastern side of Cotton Lane, which was included in the Council’s Stone ward, be included within the Council’s proposed Hesketh ward to the west. He noted that the development naturally looks towards Hesketh and that this inclusion would improve the variances of both wards.

58 Stone Parish Council proposed that the entirety of Stone parish plus additional electors from the unparished area to the east of the A282 should be made into two Stone wards that reflect the communities in the area. It recommended that the area be divided from north to south along Cotton Lane and then across fields. This would create a two-councillor Stone House ward in the west and a three-councillor Stone Castle ward in the east. These wards would produce variances of 4% and -3% by 2023 respectively.

59 Stone Parish Council provided good evidence of community identity for both wards; it noted that its proposed Stone Castle ward would combine well-established developments with newer developments. It also noted that this area has good internal connectivity via various footpaths and cycle routes. Its proposed Stone House ward would have strong boundaries and we were persuaded by evidence provided that this area shares local facilities such as schools, sports grounds and shops and that the ward proposed will reflect the local community identities.
60 We are adopting Stone Parish Council’s proposed wards in this area with one modification. We consider that they provide the best evidence of community identity in the area, provide for good variances and generally have strong boundaries. Because we have not adopted the Council’s proposals for Greenhithe we note that it would not be possible to adopt its proposals for this area. The Labour Group's proposals provide for poor variances and we are not persuaded by the evidence provided to adopt them.

61 We are recommending that the southern boundary of Stone Parish Council’s proposed Stone House ward be extended south onto Princes Road, as we consider the electors in the area between Watling Street and Princes Road are more likely to have a shared community identity with Stone parish than with the area within our proposed Brent ward.
### North-western area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newtown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Hill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bridge

62 Our ward in this area is identical to the proposals put forward by the Council, Labour Group and local resident and is expected to produce a variance of 15% by 2023.

63 The Council noted that in recent years the area to the north of the A206 and to the west of the M25 has undergone significant housing and business developments, which have resulted in the formation of a new community known as the ‘Bridge community’. Due to the physical barriers around this area, the Council proposed a one-councillor ward which would produce a variance of 15% by 2023. The Council proposed the ward name of ‘Bridge’ as this is what the community is locally referred to as it sits next to the QE2 crossing.

64 The Labour Group supported the Bridge ward proposed by the Council; it echoed the Council’s reasoning that this ward has strong physical boundaries and that the local residents would identify their community as ‘the Bridge’. It acknowledges that this would create a ward that would produce a high variance, but it supports the ward boundaries as any alternative proposal in this area could possibly fragment the local community.

65 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposed Bridge ward and requested that the ward be named ‘The Bridge’ to reflect the new development in the area.

66 Having toured the area it is clear that the community area known as ‘Bridge’ is a distinct area. It is bound by the A206 in the south, with only limited footpath access across the road. We considered making it a two-councillor ward by including other areas south of the A206 with it, in order to improve the level of electoral equality, but considered that this would be an entirely arbitrary division and would link areas with little in common on either side of the A206. We are satisfied that the community in this area should not be split across two wards, and we have chosen to adopt the one-councillor Bridge ward in this area, acknowledging it will have a 15% variance by 2023.

67 We acknowledge that the submission from the local resident requested that the ward name include the prefix ‘The’ to reflect the new development in the area. However, we have chosen to adopt the Council’s proposed ‘Bridge’ ward name as we believe it reflects how the community is known in the area.

Temple Hill

68 The three borough-wide proposals that we received for this area were broadly the same and provided good evidence of a strong community identity. We are proposing to adopt a three-councillor Temple Hill ward that reflects the wards proposed.

69 The Council proposed a three-councillor Temple Hill ward that comprised the Temple Hill estate. It noted that this ward brings together the Temple Hill community which is divided across two wards in the existing warding arrangements. It noted that Temple Hill Square acts as a central focus point for the ward, which includes shops, a community centre and a library. A housing development is expected in the area
between Central Road and Temple Hill; the Council proposed that this development be included within its proposed Town ward. Its western ward boundary would run along the centre of Temple Hill and then behind the properties along Trevithick Drive, keeping the new development outside of its proposed Temple Hill ward. The northern boundary would run along the A206, the western boundary would run along the M25 and the southern boundary would run along the railway line. This would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -5% by 2023.

70 The Labour Group proposed a three-councillor Temple Hill ward that largely reflects the Council’s proposed ward of the same name, with the exception that the south-western boundary extends onto the River Darenth along Mill Pond Road. It noted that this ward reflects the established community of Temple Hill and retains the whole of the area within the ward, whereas the existing ward boundaries divided the area cross two wards. The Labour Group also noted that this ward provides a clear boundary between the existing Temple Hill development and the expected ‘The Bridge’ and ‘Langley Square’ developments. This would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -5% by 2023.

71 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposed three-councillor Temple Hill ward.

72 We consider that the proposals to create a Temple Hill ward are likely to reflect the community of Temple Hill and that both proposals would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -5% by 2023. The ward boundaries alter slightly in the south where the Labour Group’s proposal extends a few more meters along Mill Pond Road to the River. In this area we have created our own boundary, running it between the Council’s and the Labour Group’s proposed boundaries until the road meets Overy Street as we believe this provides a clearer boundary in the area.

Newtown

73 Our proposed Newtown ward is based on the proposal we received from the Labour Group. This ward facilitates our proposals to the east around Stone parish and we consider has strong boundaries and a good level of electoral equality.

74 The Council proposed a three-councillor Hesketh ward that straddled the M25, including parts of Stone parish to the east of the M25. The Council’s ward would produce a variance of -1% by 2023.

75 The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor Newtown ward that was based on the existing Newtown ward, with an amendment to the eastern boundary, not extending it into Stone parish and instead running along the M25. It also proposed to extend the southern boundary to include the properties surrounding Hesketh Park to improve variances and to reflect the community links between Park Road, Pilgrims Way and Watling Street. The Labour Group opposed the Council’s proposed Hesketh ward on the basis that it does not reflect the community identity of Newtown and it believes that the Newtown community should be in a ward on its own. This proposed two-councillor ward would produce a variance of -1% by 2023.
76  We received a submission from a local resident who provided general support for the Council’s proposed three-councillor ward in this area, with the request to extend the eastern boundary to the east of the developments along Cotton Lane. He opposed the Council’s recommended ward name of ‘Hesketh’ on the basis that this was not reflective of the local community and he proposed that the ward name of ‘East Hill’ would provide more familiarity and reflect the West Hill ward name to the west.

77  We note that all of the wards proposed in this area would provide good levels of electoral equality. We do not consider we have received good evidence of community identity from any of the respondents for this area. However, as a result of our draft recommendations for a Stone House ward and Stone Castle ward in the east, we are using the M25 as a boundary in this area. The Labour Group’s proposed Newtown ward facilitates the use of this boundary and provides good electoral equality. Accordingly, we are proposing a two-councillor Newtown ward that would produce a variance of -1 by 2023.

78  We received three different ward names for this area; however, as we have chosen to adopt the Labour Group’s proposal, we are minded to adopt its proposed ward name as well. We welcome views on whether this ward should be known as Newtown or New Town.

Town

79  We received two conflicting schemes in this area. The Council proposed a large three-councillor ward that combined areas to the north and south of the town centre, with the centre of the ward being around Dartford train station. The Labour Group proposed three one-councillor wards which it considered allows the individual communities to be represented in separate wards. We found it difficult to determine which wards are more likely to reflect the statutory criteria. While we have determined that a single three-councillor ward in this area should form the draft recommendations we welcome further evidence of the communities in this area during the consultation.

80  The Council proposed a three-councillor Town ward, which is an expansion of the existing Town ward by including more of the new developments in the ward with the town centre and Dartford train station. In the north the ward extends across the River Darenth to include all of the new development sites north of the station along Central Road and Mill Pond Road within the same ward. Its northern boundary for this ward is altered slightly so that it runs along the A206. Its southern boundary for this proposed ward extends further south, down Lowfield Street and then along Princes Road to the east until it meets the River Darenth. This enables all the development along Lowfield Street to be included within the same ward. The Council noted that the reason for expanding the existing ward in this area is to create better linkage between the new housing developments north of the station with the existing housing communities closer to the High Street. This would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 1% by 2023.

81  We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposed three-councillor Town ward.
The Labour Group opposed the Council’s proposed three-councillor Town ward, considering that it is large and unwieldy. Instead it recommended that this area be divided into three one-councillor wards which it considered would reflect the three distinctly different community identities in the area. It proposed a Burnham ward, Burroughs ward and Dartford Central ward, which would all produce good variances by 2023. The Labour Group noted that these wards would reflect the different community identities in the area; however, there was very little explanation or description of the communities within these wards. Where possible the Commission will aim to keep communities together, rather than split them into smaller wards. In light of the lack of clear evidence about where the communities in this area are, we have chosen to adopt the Town ward proposed by the Council. We welcome representations during this consultation that describe the communities in this area.

Our proposed three-councillor Town ward will have a 0% variance by 2023.

Heath and West Hill

We received two schemes in this area, the Council and the Labour Group proposed the same Heath ward but proposed different wards for the West Hill area. The Council’s proposal provides better electoral equality than the Labour Group’s proposal and we are therefore adopting this proposal, especially in light of a lack of clear evidence about where communities are in the area.

The Council proposed a two-councillor Heath ward that includes the majority of Dartford Heath and largely reflects the existing ward boundaries. It proposed that Shepherds Lane and the roads leading off it be removed from this ward and be included in its proposed West Hill ward as this would better reflect the local community. This would create a two-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 7% by 2023.

The Council proposed a three-councillor West Hill ward that is largely based on the existing ward as it considers it reflects the community identity of the area. It proposed slight alterations to the ward boundaries in order to include only those roads that are better connected in terms of access and are also considered to share the community identity of the area. This would create a three-councillor ward that would produce a variance of -8% by 2023.

The Labour Group supported the Heath ward proposed by the Council. However, it opposed the Council’s three-councillor West Hill ward and recommended dividing it into two wards along the A226. In the north it proposed a two-councillor West Hill ward with an alteration in the north to include the area around Stanham Farm within the ward. In the south it proposed a one-councillor Shepherds ward. The Labour Group stated that these wards have distinct characters but did not provide any explanation of the communities. These proposed wards by the Labour Group would produce variances of -12% and -2% respectively by 2023.

We received a submission from a local resident who broadly supported the two wards proposed by the Council in this area.
As there is a strong consensus between the submissions in support of the Council’s proposed Heath ward, we have chosen to adopt this as part of our proposals. This will create a two-councillor Heath ward that would produce a variance of 7% by 2023.

We acknowledge the proposals recommended by the Labour Group and the local resident in the West Hill area, however, we are not persuaded by the evidence to adopt the Labour Group’s scheme with a poor variance or the local resident’s alteration as we believe these roads are better connected together. We welcome more evidence about communities in these areas during the consultation. We are adopting the Council’s proposed three-councillor West Hill that would produce a variance of -8% by 2023.

Princes

The Council and the Labour Group proposed similar wards in this area, using either Oakfield Road as the boundary, or running the boundary behind the properties on the road. We are adopting the Labour Group’s ward as we consider it has slightly better boundaries.

The Council proposed a two-councillor Brooklands ward that includes two housing estates that it refers to as ‘Big Tree’ and ‘Little Tree.’ It noted that both estates share similar characteristics and are identifiable as their own community, which includes local shopping facilities and a community centre. In the south-east, this ward is bound by the River Darenth and Hawley Road and the western boundary runs behind the properties on Oakfield Land, along the edge of the 6th form property and along the golf course boundary. The northern boundary includes the roads off Heath Lane and the eastern boundary runs along Lowfield Street and Princes Road.

The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor Princes ward that largely reflects the Council’s proposed two-councillor Brooklands ward, with the inclusion of Vaughan Close and the properties to the north of Oakfield Lane.

We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposed two-councillor Brooklands ward.

The two wards in this area deviate around the North Kent College. Having looked at the geography of the area on our tour, we noted that the Labour Group’s boundary along Oakfield Lane provided a strong boundary in the area, including those to the north of Oakfield Lane and the North Kent College within the Princes ward.

We are choosing to adopt the Labour Group’s proposal in this area as it uses a clear and identifiable boundary. We acknowledge that the Council recommended naming this ward ‘Brooklands’ to reflect the Brooklands lakes in the area. However, we are minded to adopt the Labour Group’s ward name of Princes as it reflects the existing ward name in this area, providing familiarity to the electors. We welcome further views on the ward name during the consultation.

Our two-councillor Princes ward will have a variance of -4% by 2023.
South-western area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joyden’s Wood</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maypole</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton-at-Hone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington &amp; Hawley</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wilmington & Hawley, Maypole and Sutton-at-Hone

98 We received three submissions for this area that all created different warding patterns. Our proposals draw on all three schemes.

99 The Council proposed a three-councillor Wilmington & Hawley ward that would comprise the four residential areas of Wilmington, Leyton Cross, Maypole and Hawley. Its proposed ward is an expansion of the existing ward. The Council considered that this ward merges well-established communities which are integrated and have more community links than the current arrangements. This would create a ward which would produce a 1% variance by 2023.

100 The Council proposed a one-councillor Sutton-at-Hone ward comprising Sutton-at-Hone village which is part of the parish of Sutton-at-Hone parish. The Council divided the parish along the M25 as it considers it provides a strong physical boundary in this area and that the remainder of the parish which is primarily Hawley village to the north of the M25, should be included in the same ward as Wilmington parish as it shares similar community interests.

101 The Labour Group opposed the three-councillor Wilmington & Hawley ward proposed by the Council. Instead it proposed that the area be divided into two smaller wards to reflect the community identity. It proposed a one-councillor Maypole ward in the north-west that comprised the area of Maypole and Heath Side. It noted that these areas share community facilities and that they should be represented in the same ward. This would create a one-councillor Maypole ward that would produce a variance of 5% by 2023.

102 In the rest of the area the Labour Group did support the Council’s recommendation to include the villages of Hawley and Wilmington together in the same ward, on the basis that Hawley village shares a stronger community link with the Wilmington area, rather than with the village of Sutton-at-Hone as outlined in the existing ward. This would create a two-councillor Wilmington and Hawley ward which would produce a variance of -1% by 2023.

103 The Labour Group supported the Council’s proposed one-councillor Sutton-at-Hone ward.

104 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s proposed three-councillor Wilmington & Hawley ward on the basis that it retained a larger proportion of Wilmington parish electors within a Wilmington ward, in comparison to the existing ward in the area. He did note that a better arrangement would be to include to all of Wilmington parish within its proposed Wilmington & Hawley ward.

105 The local resident also noted that while he would like to see the areas of Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley within the same ward, he did acknowledge that this would create a ward with poor variances. He proposed an amendment to the boundary proposed by the Council between the wards of Wilmington & Hawley and Sutton-at-Hone. He proposed that the properties on Royal Road and Hawley Road should be included in the Council’s proposed Wilmington & Hawley ward. He noted
that those living in this area are part of the Hawley village community and, despite
the M25 running between them, it does not act as boundary across the community.

106 Having toured the area we are minded to adopt the Labour Group’s proposals
to break down the Council’s proposed Wilmington & Hawley ward, to create a one-
councillor Maypole ward in the west. We noted on our tour that the area of Maypole
is primarily a new development and not reflective of the rural village of Wilmington
and therefore should be included in a separate ward.

107 We have taken into consideration the comments by the local resident to include
more of Wilmington parish within the proposed Wilmington & Hawley ward. However,
if we were to include the parished area within the proposed Princes ward this would
increase the variance of the Wilmington & Hawley ward to 8%, and increase the
variance of the Princes ward to -13% by 2023, and we are not persuaded by the
evidence to adopt this proposal.

108 We are adopting the Labour Group’s proposed two-councillor Wilmington &
Hawley ward and the Council’s one-councillor Sutton-at-Hone ward. We are
modifying these wards, however, to reflect the local resident’s request to amend
the boundary to include the properties along Royal Road and Hawley Road in the
Wilmington & Hawley ward, on the basis that this will better reflect the community
identity of Hawley.

109 We are proposing a two-councillor Wilmington & Hawley ward and a one-
councillor Sutton-at-Hone ward that would both produce variances of -1% by 2023.

Joyden’s Wood

110 The Council proposed a two-councillor Joyden’s Wood ward that largely
followed the existing ward boundaries, with the exception of the removal of the
Maypole area in the north. It noted that this alteration would better reflect the strong
local community identity of the Joyden’s Wood area, which has its own residents’
association, community centre, medical centre, children’s play area, library and
primary school.

111 The Labour Group and a local resident provided support for the Council’s
proposed two-councillor Joyden’s Wood ward.

112 We are satisfied that the Council’s proposed Joyden’s Wood ward meets our
statutory criteria and, as we received no alternatives for this area, we are happy to
adopt the Council’s proposal as part of our draft recommendations. This will create a
two-councillor Joyden’s Wood ward that would produce a variance of 1% by 2023.
## South-eastern area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of Cllrs</th>
<th>Variance 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bean &amp; Village Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darenth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longfield, New Barn &amp; Southfleet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brent

113 The Council and the Labour Group proposed different schemes in relation to this area. Both schemes created wards with good electoral variances, however, they also created parish wards with few electors which we have therefore not adopted. We have based our Brent ward on the Council’s proposed ward with a slight boundary alteration in the north-east.

114 The Council proposed a two-councillor Brent ward that is slightly smaller than the existing Brent ward. It proposed that the properties along Watling Street, Pilgrims Way and Park Road be removed from the existing ward and be included within wards to the north, as these properties have better access routes to the north. It proposed that the eastern boundary run behind the properties along Gore Road, including these properties within the ward to the east. This would create a two-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 5%.

115 The Labour Group proposed a one-councillor Fleetdown ward that is made up of an area known as the Fleet Estate. It noted that this estate has very distinct characteristics and is identified as having its own community, which includes its own school and shops. This would create a one-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 8% by 2023. It also proposed a one-councillor Powder Mills ward in this area that is bound by the River Darenth in the west, the M25 in the south-east and its north-eastern boundary runs behind the properties on Park Road and along East Hill. This one-councillor ward would produce a variance of 0% by 2023.

116 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the Council’s recommendation for a two-councillor Brent ward.

117 When we create a district ward that divides a parish between borough wards, the legislation says that we must create parish wards. We must also have regard for the division boundaries in an area when creating borough wards. Both proposals in this area recommend boundaries which are not coterminous with the county divisions and accordingly would result in parish wards with fewer than 100 electors.

118 We recognise that the proposals from the Council and the Labour Group aim to reflect the local community of the area, but we need to take into consideration the county divisions. As a result of the county divisions that cross the north-western part of the Labour Group’s proposed Bean ward, this would create a parish ward with only 85 electors. Where the Council’s proposed Brent ward’s eastern boundary runs behind the properties on Gore Road, this would require a parish ward to be created that would only contain 60 electors. Both proposals create parish wards with fewer than 100 electors and we are therefore not proposing to adopt them.

119 While both proposals create parish wards that we have chosen not to adopt, we are proposing to make slight alterations to the Council’s proposed Darenth ward as it largely uses strong boundaries. Our proposed alteration will be to the north-eastern boundary, so that it runs down the centre of Gore Road. This would avoid the creation of an unviable parish ward in the area and would create a two-councillor Brent ward that will produce a variance of 7% by 2023.
Bean & Village Park and Darenth

120 We received three submissions in this area. The Council proposed that the existing three-councillor ward be split into two one-councillor wards, with the remaining area being included in its proposed Longfield, New Barn & Southfleet ward to the east. This proposal was largely supported by the Labour Group, but was opposed by a local resident on the basis of community identities. We have based our Bean & Village Park and Darenth wards on a combination of the Council’s and the Labour Group’s proposals.

121 The Council proposed a Bean & Village Park ward, which removed the area known as Darenth Village and Lane End, and included the properties along Gore Road. This would create a one-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 3%.

122 It proposed a one-councillor Darenth ward that includes the residential area of Lane End and includes the Green Street Green Road. It noted that this ward will focus the long-established communities of Darenth and Lane End within the same ward. It removed the area of St Margarets Road, rather including it in its proposed Longfield, New Barn and Southfleet ward on the basis that this would improve electoral equality for both wards. This would create a one-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 4% by 2023.

123 The Labour Group supported the Council’s proposed wards in this area, making an alteration in the eastern boundary to run immediately behind the houses in Darenth Village and extending the northern boundary up onto its proposed Fleetdown ward.

124 We received a submission from a local resident who opposed the Council’s recommendation for two one-councillor wards in this area. He considered that Bean village is more closely linked with the area of Ladywood and Lane End rather than with Darenth Park. He recommended that a two-councillor ward be created in this area that broadly reflects the existing warding arrangement as this retains the connection between Darenth Park, Lane End and Ladywood within the same ward. This would create a two-councillor ward that would produce a variance of 1% by 2023.

125 All of the submissions we received for this area created wards with good variances. We note the request by the local resident to keep Bean village with the area of Ladywood and Lane End in the same ward. However, we note that these areas are separated geographically with poor transport links between them and we do not consider that the local resident proposed sufficient evidence that justifies linking them, especially in light of the alternative supported by both the Council and the Labour Group. However, we welcome further views on this during the consultation period. We have chosen to adopt the Labour Group’s boundary around the area of Lane End as we consider it is stronger. We have also amended the western boundary to run along the existing parish boundary between Bean parish and Longfield, New Barn and Southfleet.

126 The local resident also opposed the Council’s recommendation to name the ward ‘Bean & Village Park’ requesting that if the Council’s warding pattern in this
area was adopted, that this ward should be named ‘Bean and Darenth Park’ to reflect the locally named development of ‘Darenth Park’ near the hospital.

127 We acknowledge the different ward names that we have received for this area; however, we have chosen to adopt the name proposed by the Council as it reflects the geography of the area. We welcome further comments on ward names during the consultation.

Longfield, New Barn & Southfleet
128 We received two different proposals in this area and have based our ward on the Council’s recommendation. However, we welcome further evidence on community identities during the consultation.

129 The Council proposed a three-councillor Longfield, New Barn & Southfleet ward that combines the rural communities of Longfield, New Barn, Southfleet and Betsham. It based this ward on the existing ward, with the addition of extending the western boundary out to include the areas of Grubb Street, Green Street Green and St Margarets, on the basis that it will improve the electoral equality of the ward. The Council noted that this ward will include a shopping area with two local supermarkets, a post office, a library and a train station.

130 The Labour Group supported the Council’s proposed three-councillor Longfield, New Barn & Southfleet ward.

131 We received a submission from a local resident who supported the existing warding pattern in this area. He opposed the Council’s recommendation to include the area of Green Street Green within its proposed ward. He considered that while this would improve the variance of the ward, it would split the community ties shared between Green Street Green and Darenth.

132 We acknowledge the submission from the local resident that requests the existing ward in this area be retained; however, this proposal would create a ward that would produce a variance of -12% by 2023. We are not persuaded by the evidence supplied that a ward with a poor variance would provide the best option in this area. We would particularly welcome comments on the draft recommendations in this area, especially with regards to community identity and in which ward Darenth Community Primary School should be located within.

133 We consider that the Council’s recommendation creates a ward that best reflects our statutory criteria and we are adopting its proposed three-councillor Longfield, New Barn & Southfleet ward that will have a variance of -9% by 2023.
Conclusions

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

Summary of electoral arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendation</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of electoral wards</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>1,854</td>
<td>2,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parish electoral arrangements

136 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.
137 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, Dartford Borough 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.

138 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 Darenth Parish Council, Stone Parish Council, Sutton-at-Hone Parish Council, Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council and Wilmington Parish Council.

139 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 Darenth Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Darenth Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:</td>
<td>Parish ward</td>
<td>Number of parish councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darenth Park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleet Downs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Street Green</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane End</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

140 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 Stone Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:</td>
<td>Parish ward</td>
<td>Number of parish councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Castle</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone House</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

141 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 Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sutton-at-Hone &amp; Hawley Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards:</td>
<td>Parish ward</td>
<td>Number of parish councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton-at-Hone</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
142 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 Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council.

**Draft recommendation**
Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish ward</th>
<th>Number of parish councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ebbsfleet</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhithe &amp; Knockhall</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanscombe</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

143 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 Wilmington Parish Council.

**Draft recommendation**
Wilmington Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish ward</th>
<th>Number of parish councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birchwood</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maypole</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington Central</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Have your say

144 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 borough or just a part of it.

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

146 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

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

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

148 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Dartford Council 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

149 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

150 Electoral equality:

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

151 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?

152 Effective local government:

• Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
• Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
• Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

153 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.

154 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.

155 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.

156 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 the Dartford Borough Council in 2019.

Equalities

157 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

## Draft recommendations for Dartford Borough Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors</th>
<th>Electorate (2017)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2023)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bean &amp; Village Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2,089</td>
<td>2,089</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Brent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,333</td>
<td>2,167</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4,548</td>
<td>2,274</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bridge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,059</td>
<td>2,059</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2,429</td>
<td>2,429</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Darenth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,098</td>
<td>2,098</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2,199</td>
<td>2,199</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Ebbsfleet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>-84%</td>
<td>6,385</td>
<td>2,128</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Greenhithe &amp; Knockhall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,257</td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>-6%</td>
<td>6,163</td>
<td>2,054</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Heath</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,525</td>
<td>2,263</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4,551</td>
<td>2,276</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Joyden’s Wood</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,212</td>
<td>2,106</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4,285</td>
<td>2,143</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Longfield, New Barn &amp; Southfleet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,769</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>1,933</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Maypole</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,157</td>
<td>2,157</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Newtown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,175</td>
<td>2,088</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4,185</td>
<td>2,093</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Princes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,089</td>
<td>2,045</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4,089</td>
<td>2,045</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward name</td>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>Electorate (2017)</td>
<td>Number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>Variance from average %</td>
<td>Electorate (2023)</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>Stone Castle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,905</td>
<td>1,635</td>
<td>-12%</td>
<td>6,137</td>
<td>2,046</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone House</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,662</td>
<td>2,331</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4,662</td>
<td>2,331</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton-at-Hone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,134</td>
<td>2,134</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2,094</td>
<td>2,094</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanscombe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,734</td>
<td>2,367</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4,669</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Hill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6,077</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6,033</td>
<td>2,011</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,795</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>6,381</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,866</td>
<td>1,955</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5,866</td>
<td>1,955</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington &amp; Hawley</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,126</td>
<td>2,063</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4,206</td>
<td>2,103</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>77,884</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>88,995</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,854</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2,119</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

Outline map

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [https://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/kent/dartford](https://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/kent/dartford)
Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at https://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/kent/dartford

Local Authority

- Dartford Borough Council

Political Group

- Labour Group of Dartford Borough Councillors

Councillors

- Councillor P. Harman

Local Organisations

- Swanscombe & Greenhithe Residents’ Association

Parish and Town Councils

- Southfleet Parish Council
- Stone Parish Council
- Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council

Local Residents

- 10 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>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish</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>Parish council</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>Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements</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>Parish ward</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>Town council</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>Under-represented</td>
<td>Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance (or electoral variance)</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>
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government areas.

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Twitter: @LGBCE