

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Electoral Review

September 2016

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 the Council of the Isles of Scilly?

4. We are conducting a review of the Council of the Isles of Scilly (CIOS) as the value of each vote in council elections varies depending on where you live in Scilly. 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 the Council of the Isles of Scilly

- The Council of the Isles of Scilly should be represented by 16 councillors, this is five fewer seats than at present
- The Council of the Isles of Scilly should have five wards, as at present
- The boundaries of all wards will stay the same

Have your say

5. We are consulting on our draft recommendations for an 8-week period, from **27 September 2016 to 25 November 2016**. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on the proposed electoral arrangements for the CIOS – 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 *Draft recommendations* report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us. **See page 14 for how to send us your response.**

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

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

8. The members of the Commission are:

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

Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Introduction

9. This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:
- The wards in the Isles of Scilly are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively
 - The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

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 the Council of the Isles of Scilly.
13. This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
20 September 2016	Number of councillors decided
27 September 2016	Publication of draft recommendations, start of public consultation
25 November 2016	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
23 December 2016	Publication of final recommendations

Figure 1 - Review Timetable

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

Analysis and draft recommendations

15. Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ 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.

	2016	2022
Electorate of CIOS	1,795	1,832
Number of councillors	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	112	115

Figure 2 - Electoral Data Summary

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'. All of our proposed wards for Scilly will have an improved electoral variance by 2022.

19. Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the CIOS 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.

Electorate figures

20. The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2022, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations at the end of 2016. These forecasts were broken down by island and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 2% by 2022.

21. 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.

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Number of councillors

22. The CIOS has, at present, 21 seats available for elected members; however, there are, at present three vacant seats. This means that the current number of elected members stands at 18 rather than 21. We have looked at evidence provided by the Democratic Processes Panel on the Council and Councillor Daly's (Councillor for St Martin's) submission and concluded that reducing the number of elected seats by five to 16 will allow the Council to continue carrying out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

Draft recommendations

23. The tables and maps on pages 8–12 detail our draft recommendations for each area of the CIOS. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

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

24. Our draft recommendations are for four single-member wards, and one twelve-member ward. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for better electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

25. Evidence received during earlier phases of the review has indicated that the communities that exist upon each of the inhabited islands are quite distinct from each other as a consequence of the islands' fractured geography.

26. This island geography provides for a set of strong, permanent and clearly identifiable boundaries between each of the wards. The Commission are of the opinion that attempting to over-ride these natural boundaries for the sake of total electoral equality across Scilly would go against our own statutory criteria and create weak ward boundaries that have little meaning for the local electorate.

27. The Commission are aware that as a consequence of these draft recommendations the electoral equality for the COIS, whilst significantly better than at the commencement of the review, is not perfect. There will still be electoral inequality within the Council.

28. However, they are of the opinion that the uniqueness of this archipelago geography together with the associated considerations of island living in general, such as transport and service provision, plus the additional pressures the CIOS faces as the smallest unitary authority in England must be taken into consideration in formulating these recommendations.

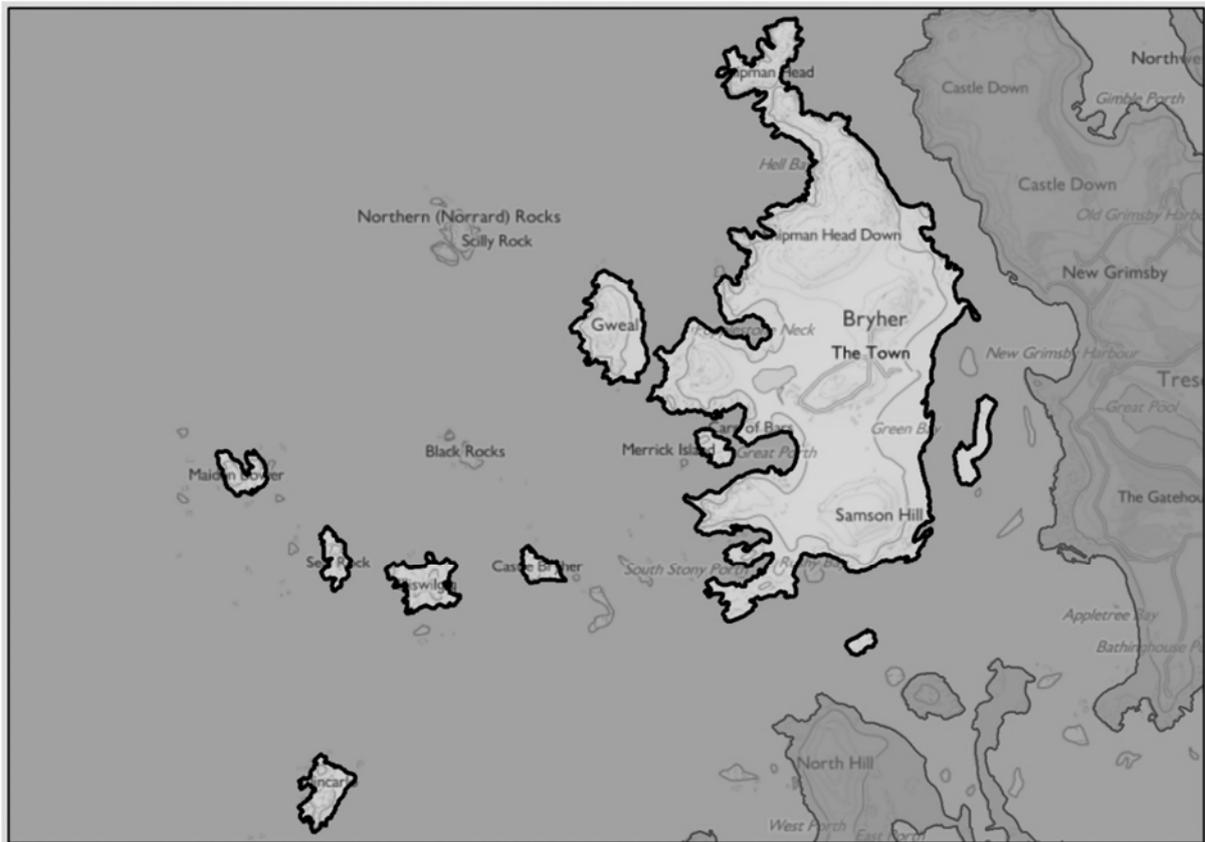
29. Therefore, the Commission does not, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, intend to alter any of the existing warding patterns. The inhabited islands of Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's, St Mary's and Tresco, and their associated uninhabited islets, will each continue to represent individual wards as at present.

30. A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements are set out in Figure 8 (on page 13) and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Bryher



Map 1 - Bryher

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Bryher	1	-30%

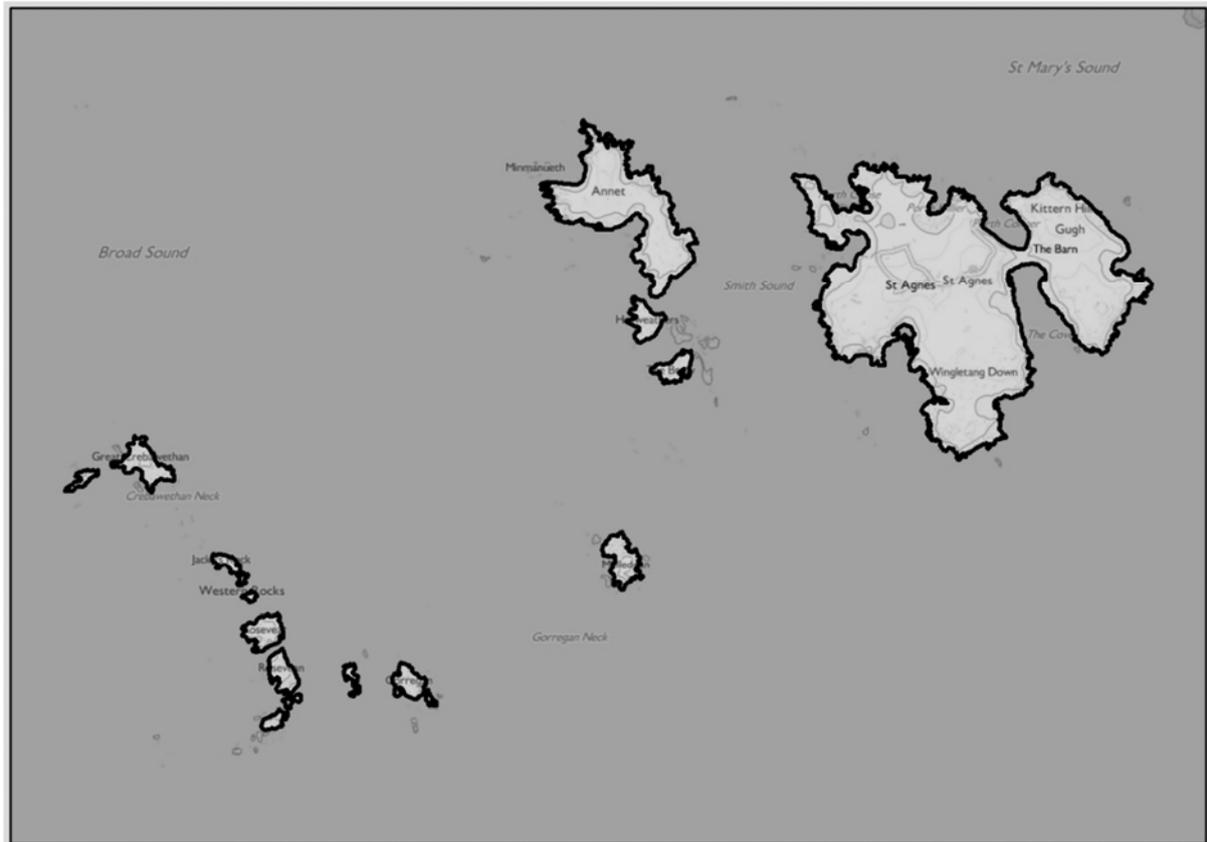
Figure 3 - Bryher ward in figures

Ward boundaries in Bryher

32. The Commission does not propose, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for Bryher.

33. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to the Bryher ward will reduce by one to form a new single-member ward.

St Agnes



Map 2 - St. Agnes

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
St Agnes	1	-34%

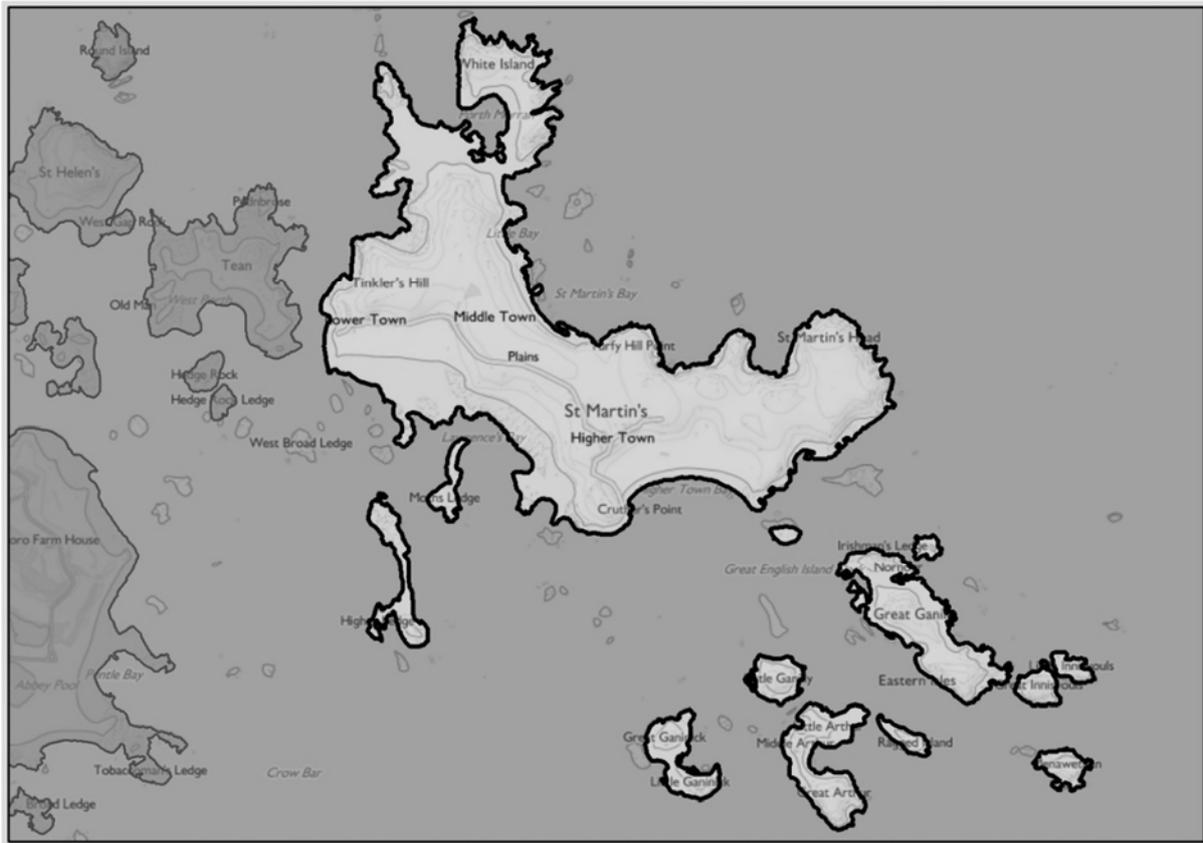
Figure 4 - St. Agnes ward in figures.

Ward boundaries in St Agnes

34. The Commission does not propose, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St Agnes.

35. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to the St Agnes ward will reduce by one to form a new single-member ward.

St Martin's



Map 3 - St. Martin's

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
St Martin's	1	7%

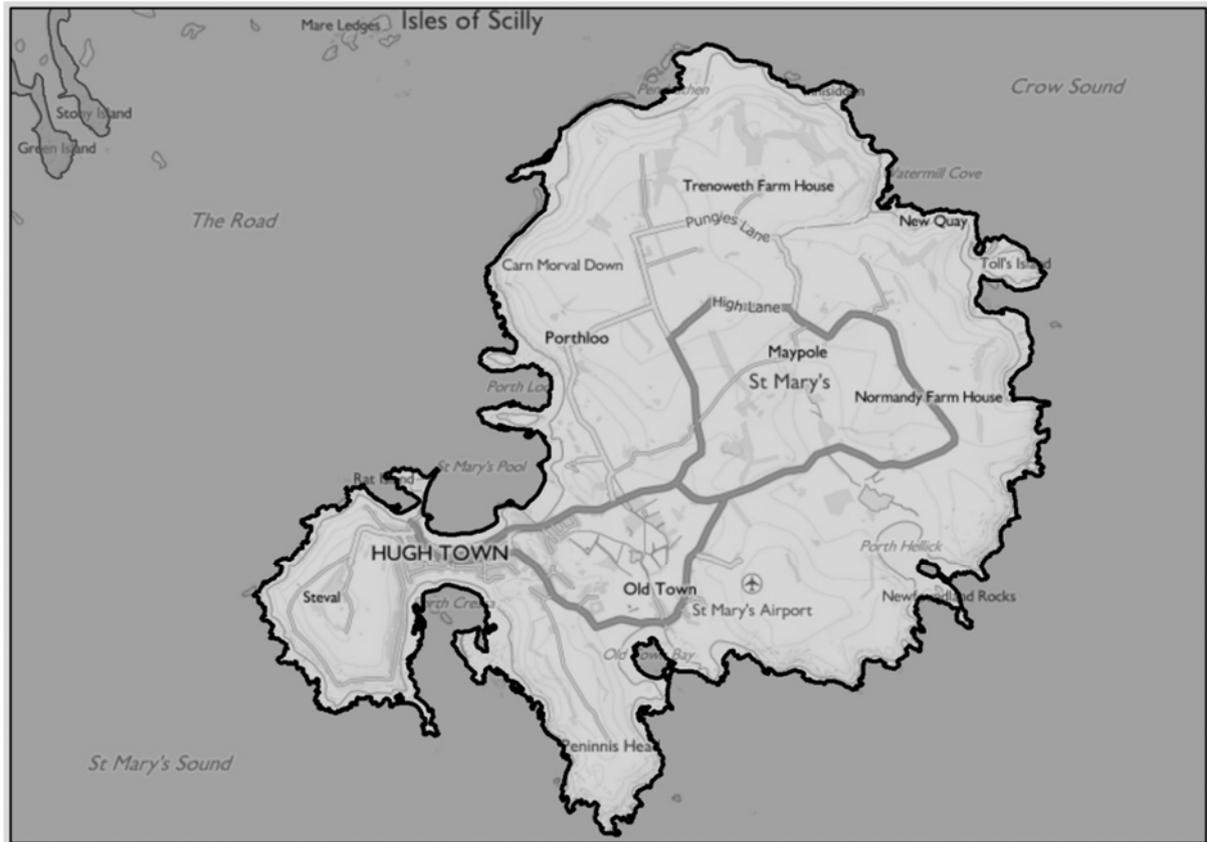
Figure 5 - St. Martin's ward in figures.

Ward boundaries in St Martin's

36. The Commission does not propose, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St. Martin's.

37. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to the St Martin's ward will reduce by one to form a new single-member ward.

St Mary's



Map 4 - St. Mary's

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
St Mary's	12	4%

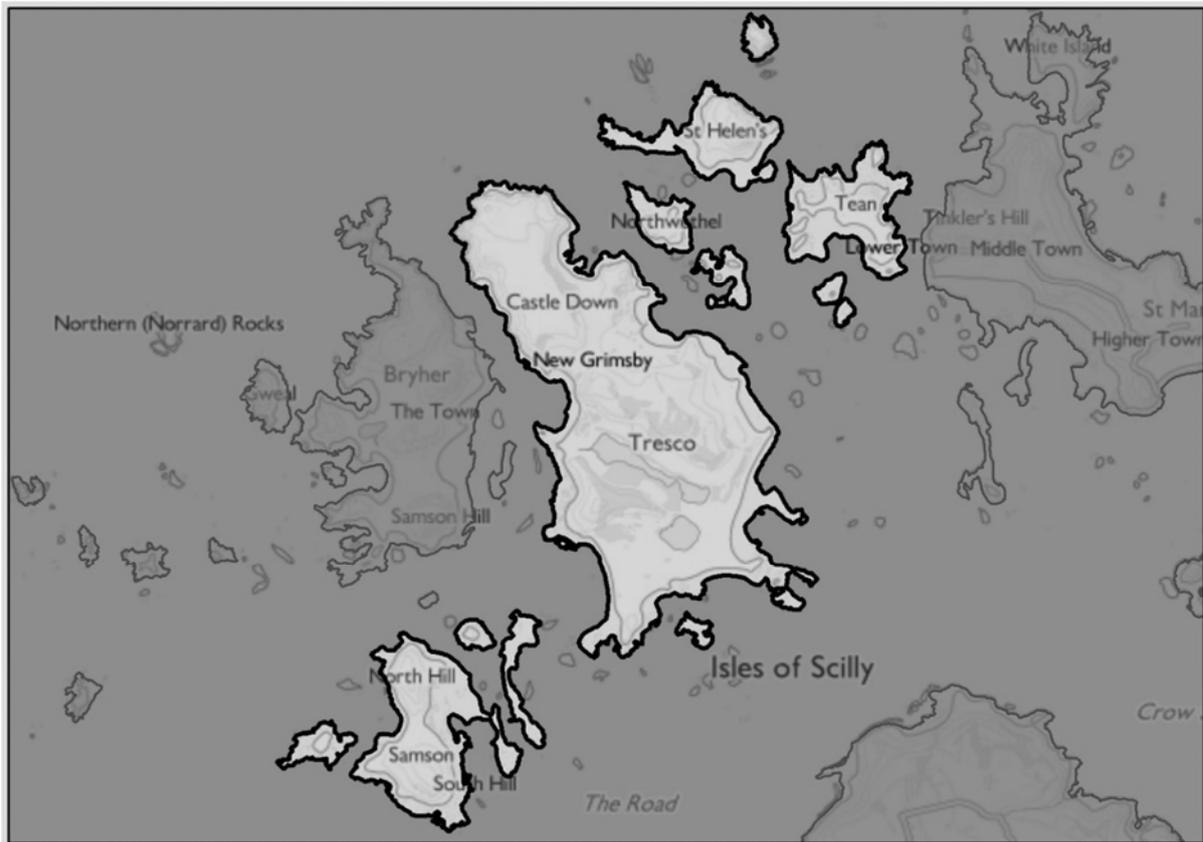
Figure 6 - St. Mary's ward in figures

Ward boundaries in St Mary's

38. The Commission does not propose, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for St Mary's.

39. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to the St Mary's ward will reduce by one to form a new 12-member ward.

Tresco



Map 5 – Tresco

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2022
Tresco	1	11%

Figure 7 - Tresco ward in figures

Ward boundaries in Tresco

40. The Commission does not propose, as part of our draft recommendations for the CIOS, to alter the existing warding arrangement for Tresco.

41. However, the Commission does propose that the number of councillors allocated to the Tresco ward will reduce by one to form a new single-member ward.

Conclusions

42. Figure 8 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2016 and 2022 electorate figures.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2016	2022
Number of councillors	16	16
Number of electoral wards	5	5
Average number of electors per councillor	112	115
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	3
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 30% from the average	2	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 40% from the average	0	0

Figure 8 - Summary of electoral arrangements

Draft recommendation

The Council of the Isles of Scilly should be made up of 16 councillors serving five wards representing four single-councillor wards, and one 12-councillor ward. The details and names are shown in Table 9 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for the Council of the Isles of Scilly. You can also view our draft recommendations for the Isles of Scilly on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Have your say

43. 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 authority or just a part of it.

44. If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for the Isles of Scilly, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

45. 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

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

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

47. The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for the CIOS 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

48. 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

49. Electoral equality:

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

50. 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?

51. 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 ward? Is there any form of public transport?

52. 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.

53. 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.

54. 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.

55. 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 CIOs in 2017.

Equalities

56. 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 the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2016)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bryher	1	78	78	-30%	80	80	-30%
2 St Agnes	1	74	74	-34%	76	76	-34%
3 St Martin's	1	121	121	8%	123	123	7%
4 St Mary's	12	1,398	117	4%	1,426	119	4%
5 Tresco	1	124	124	11%	127	127	11%
Totals	16	1,795	-	-	1,832	-	-
Averages	-	-	112	-	-	115	-

Figure 9 - Draft recommendations

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

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 authority. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Map 6 - Outline map

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the A1 sheet accompanying this report, or on our website: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/cornwall/isles-of-scilly>

Appendix C

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average

Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average

Ward

A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council