

## COUNCIL – 8 JANUARY 2013

### 5. SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

#### Summary

Set out below is the proposed submission for this Council in respect of Ward Boundaries.

The Council are requested to approve the submission.

### **Three Rivers District Council** **Proposal for ward boundaries for 39-member council**

#### Background

1. Three Rivers comprises a large number of distinct communities within a smaller number of large and well-recognised parish areas (and one un-parished area). These communities range from small towns and large villages to residential suburbs and smaller villages and some more rural areas with scattered settlements.
2. The district is an unusual shape, curling around the south, west and north of the Borough of Watford, The main population in the district sub-divides into 3 main blocs:
  - a. Abbots Langley parish (approx 25% of district population); north of Watford, main communication links north-south to Watford and Hemel Hempstead (including A41, west coast main railway line, river Gade & Grand Union canal), postal codes WD5 and WD4;
  - b. Watford Rural parish and south-eastern arm of unparished area (approx 33% of district population); south of Watford, main communication links north-south to Watford and Harrow, postal codes WD19 and HA6;
  - c. Rickmansworth and satellites (balance of district population); west of Watford, main communication links east-west to Watford and Bucks (plus Metropolitan line south-east to Harrow & London), postal code WD3.
3. Three Rivers comprises a number of large parishes and one un-parished area; these are the focus for much community activity, including the Area Forums of the Council. The parishes and un-parished area in turn contain a number of smaller communities; and the parishes and smaller communities are by-and-large separated from each other by Metropolitan Green Belt or other clear boundaries. This means that wards need to be constructed from collections of communities and it is not always practical or desirable to move small numbers of electors between wards in order to ensure precise electoral equality. The boundary of the district also mitigates against this as there are several areas (in the north-east, south-east and south-west of the district)

where areas or communities are surrounded on three sides by the external district boundary with a relatively short boundary with the rest of the district.

4. **Electorate numbers** – we have used the numbers provided on the LG BCE website, with the exception of polling district DAJ for which we have used the corrected 2018 numbers circulated by the Council’s Committee Section on 30 October. The additional properties in DAJ all have at least outline planning permission (most of them have full planning permission) and it seems perverse to exclude a large site that will definitely be developed for residential use while including properties elsewhere in the district that do not yet have even outline permission for residential development. Where it has been necessary to divide polling districts we have used the 2012 street-level data available from the Council.

### General Principles

4. In drawing up our proposals we have sought to comply with the guidance issued by LG BCE. Specifically we have followed the following general principals:
  - a. **3-member wards** – the Council elects ‘by thirds’ (one-third of members each year apart from County Council election years) and we note the consequent presumption in favour of 3-member wards. As noted above, the district comprises a large number of distinct communities, and the requirement for 3-member wards in some cases causes distinct communities to be combined in a single ward. However we do not believe there is sufficient justification to depart from the 3-member principle and we note that this approach is supported by SWHerts Conservative Association (SWHCA) in their submission on council size. We have sought to minimise the disruptive effects of this by respecting parish boundaries and other community links in nearly all cases (see below);
  - b. **Parish boundaries** – there are five well-established parish councils within the Three Rivers area. The remainder of the district falls into a single unparished area. Each of the parishes, and the unparished area, link a number of communities and provide a collective identity for the areas they serve. The unparished area and four of the parishes have substantial populations (in each case significantly larger than a single 3-member ward). With one exception (Chorleywood – see below) our scheme respects parish boundaries because they provide strong evidence of community links.
    - i. Three of these large parish areas (Abbots Langley, Watford Rural and Croxley Green) have boundaries that run through Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore run between and separate communities from each other. They therefore form natural sub-divisions of the district for warding purposes.
    - ii. The fourth large parish (Chorleywood) and the unparished area have a common boundary that by contrast runs through the middle of the built-up area and which bisects communities that straddle the boundary. The existing warding arrangement reflects this, with

existing wards (and Rickmansworth County Division) that include electors from both the unparished area and Chorleywood parish.

iii. The fifth parish (Sarratt) covers a similar area to the others; but contains a smaller and more dispersed population, with insufficient electors (based on 39 electors in total) to justify even a single-member ward in its own right. We therefore propose to maintain the whole of the parish within one ward but accept that the ward therefore needs to extend into a neighbouring parish. See paragraph 6 below for further discussion of this.

- c. **Electoral equality** – as far as possible we have sought to ensure that all wards fall within 10% of the average electorate for the district, using both 2012 and 2018 forecast electorates. Note that the majority of the population growth to 2018 is forecast to fall within just four existing wards (Leavesden, Northwick, Croxley Green North and Rickmansworth).
- d. **Existing communities/polling districts** – our view is that wherever possible we will avoid splitting existing polling districts. These have been recently reviewed and reconfirmed by the Council. This provides for convenient government by preserving as far as possible the existing polling arrangements for electors, which is likely to enhance electoral turnout, as well as pointing towards strong community links and existing electoral ties.

5. Combining the above principles provides for the following sub-division of the district into areas, each of which can accommodate whole numbers of 3-member wards both in 2012 and 2018 and which respect parish boundaries and therefore community links. Note that each sub-division as a whole falls within 5% of the district average in 2012 and within 3% of the district average by 2018.

	2012				2018			
Abbots Langley parish	15061	9	1673	-4%	16006	9	1778	-2%
Croxley Green parish	10086	6	1681	-4%	10485	6	1748	-3%
Watford Rural parish	15697	9	1744	0%	16062	9	1785	-1%
Unparished area + Chorleywood & Sarratt parishes	27378	15	1825	4%	28022	15	1868	3%
	68222	39	1749		70575	39	1810	

6. **Situation in relation to Sarratt parish** – we recognise that Sarratt is a distinct community; however we do not believe that this justifies a separate ward. The creation of a single-member ward would require some additional electors from a neighbouring community – and since all the neighbouring areas are parished, this would in turn require the creation of a separate parish ward with small numbers of electors. We do not believe this is justifiable. Although Sarratt is a separate parish, it naturally has links to neighbouring areas. The parish borders three other parishes in Three Rivers: Abbots Langley, Croxley Green and Chorleywood. Sarratt has a WD3 postal code which it shares with Chorleywood and Croxley Green. The bulk of the population, which is in Sarratt village itself, is physically much closer to Chorleywood than to any other centre of population (indeed the polling district that contains over ¾ of the population of the parish has a common boundary

only with Chorleywood); and like Chorleywood, the main focus for Sarratt is clearly Rickmansworth (or nearby towns in Buckinghamshire) rather than Watford which is the main town for Abbots Langley. Most parents in Sarratt look to send their children to St Clement Danes secondary school in Chorleywood (located close to the border with Sarratt parish). Sarratt parish falls into the Chorleywood County electoral division and there is therefore an existing electoral link. We note anecdotally that the current long-standing district councillor for Sarratt lives in Chorleywood and this appears to be well accepted by residents. Most significantly, in order to achieve a pattern of uniform 3-member wards, a link between Sarratt and Chorleywood (together with the unparished area) is the only one that enables all the sub-areas of the district to remain within 5% of the district average. Any alternative configuration is therefore likely to result in both a worsening of electoral equality and the breaking of community links, For all these reasons we feel the most appropriate link is with Chorleywood.

### **Abbots Langley parish area**

7. **Abbots Langley community** – the Abbots Langley parish area has only a short boundary with the rest of the District. Its communication links are north to Hemel Hempstead and south to Watford, rather than to Rickmansworth or other parts of Three Rivers. The postal codes of almost all residents are WD5 and WD4 (plus a few WD25 on the fringes of Watford and a few HP3 on the fringes of Hemel Hempstead). None of these postal codes is found elsewhere in Three Rivers. The parish area has a very distinct community identity, significant community links with areas outside the District (especially with Watford) and minimal community links with any other part of the District. There is significant social housing in the parish which is owned and managed by Watford Community Housing (formerly Watford Borough Council) as well as smaller numbers provided by Thrive Housing (formerly Three Rivers Council) and other housing associations. The ‘core’ of Abbots Langley itself is bounded by Abbots Road to the north; the river Gade / Grand Union canal to the west; South Way to the south and Leavesden Country Park to the east. This area is already divided between three wards (Abbots Langley, Langleybury, Leavesden). The remaining areas in the parish are affiliated to the core of Abbots Langley to a greater or lesser extent. There are a very large number of community groups that serve the greater Abbots Langley area and no other parts of Three Rivers (see for example the list at <http://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/links.htm>). The parish boundary runs through the Metropolitan Green Belt and provides a clear boundary for this sub-area.
8. **Leavesden ward** – the current ward incorporates a number of residential suburbs along the boundary with Watford, as well as a substantial amount of new housing built on the former Leavesden Asylum and Leavesden Aerodrome sites. The ward needs additional electors to make a 3-member ward. We propose to add roads in the Shirley Road and Furtherfield area (Area A1 in annex). This area was previously in the Leavesden ward prior to the last boundary review in 1999. The ward as proposed is at the low end of the target range for electors but a very significant housing development has

permission within the ward and as a result the ward is above the district average by 2017.

9. **Bedmond & Primrose Hill** – the current ward has only just over half the number of electors required; and it is not easy to identify suitable areas to add to the ward to create a 3-member ward. In particular we have sought to avoid dividing either the existing Abbots Langley ward or the Hillside estate in the existing Langleybury ward. By contrast the existing Bedmond & Primrose Hill ward has a natural division, with two distinct parish council wards. Bedmond village in particular has strong links to Abbots Langley village, sharing the same church parish and the WD5 postcode. Primrose Hill by contrast shares the canalside heritage and WD4 postcode with the Hunton Bridge area in the existing Langleybury ward.
10. **Abbots Langley ward** – the current ward has a very strong community identity; and all residents would be clear that they live in Abbots Langley. All residents use the High Street for local shopping; most children attend Abbots Langley JMI school and all residents use the Manor House playing fields for recreation. The current boundary with Langleybury ward along Gallows Hill Lane runs along the line of the ancient (and still existing) boundary between the parish of St Lawrence Abbots Langley and the parish of St Paul Langleybury. We propose to add the Bedmond parish ward which includes electors along the Bedmond Road between Abbots Langley and Leverstock Green in Hemel Hempstead. We considered adding instead electors from the existing Langleybury ward, but adding sufficient electors to create a 3-member ward would have required dividing the Hillside estate which is a distinct area in the parish with its own residents' association. In order to equalise electorates, we also propose to add electors around Tanners Wood and Oak Green (Area A2 in annex). Most of these electors live in roads that are culs-de-sac accessed from the existing Abbots Langley ward so this also addresses a minor anomaly with the existing boundary.
11. **Langleybury ward** – the current ward comprises the Tanners Wood area (which is proposed to be transferred out under the current scheme); the Hillside estate which is former Watford Borough Council housing (now Watford Community Housing Association); and the Hunton Bridge area. Hunton Bridge and Hillside have been linked in the same ward since the formation of Three Rivers in 1974 and we would not wish to disrupt this. The Hillside estate identifies closely as part of Abbots Langley; however the electorate is too large to add to Abbots Langley ward (and there are no alternative electors that could reasonably be removed from that ward in order to accommodate the whole of the Hillside area). In order to create a 3-member ward, we therefore propose to add the Primrose Hill parish ward. There are strong links between this area and Hunton Bridge. Both areas have a canal-side heritage, and share the WD4 postal code. Both areas have also seen recent redevelopment of former industrial sites into canal-side residential developments.
12. **Proposed warding** – having proposed a slightly-enlarged Leavesden ward as set out in para 7 above, we need to create two 3-member wards from the three other existing wards in the parish. Of these, only Bedmond & Primrose Hill ward currently has a natural division existing and accordingly we propose to link the existing Abbots Langley ward with the existing Bedmond parish

ward; and the existing Langleybury ward (less the electors in the Tanners Wood and Shirley Road areas transferred to other wards, see above) with the existing Primrose Hill parish ward. In order to reflect the changed boundaries and to reflect the fact that all three wards contain substantial numbers of electors in the core of the Abbots Langley community, we propose to re-name the wards as follows:

- a. Abbots Langley Breakspeare (Abbots Langley ward plus Bedmond parish ward);
- b. Abbots Langley Gade Valley (bulk of Langleybury ward plus Primrose Hill parish ward);
- c. Abbots Langley Leavesden (Leavesden ward including electors transferred from former Langleybury ward).

**13. A note on ward names** – all three proposed wards include part of the built-up area of Abbots Langley as well as outlying areas of the parish. It therefore seems appropriate for all the wards to include Abbots Langley in the ward name.

The proposed Abbots Langley Breakspeare ward recognises Nicholas Breakspeare, the only English Pope, whose birthplace in Bedmond is marked with a plaque in Bedmond High Street; as well as Breakspeare Road, Popes Road, Breakspeare Court, Breakspeare Place etc in Abbots Langley.

The proposed Abbots Langley Leavesden ward predominantly contains the existing Leavesden ward including the former Leavesden Asylum and Leavesden Aerodrome sites and Leavesden Country Park.

The Abbots Langley Gade Valley ward is self-evidently named for the river that links the areas within the ward.

14. That therefore provides for the following wards:

		<b>2012</b>				<b>2018</b>			
Abbots Langley Breakespear	DAD		2398			2402			
	DAE		1415			1423			
	Area A1		249			249			
	DAB		1183			1183			
			<b>5245</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1748</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>5257</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1752</b>
Abbots Langley Gade Valley	DAF		1108			1113			
	DAG		2832			2916			
	Area A1 & A2		-914			-914			
	DAA		1939			2008			
			<b>4965</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1655</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>5123</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1708</b>
Abbots Langley Leavesden	DAH		2151			2178			
	Area A2		665			665			
	DAI		1237			1241			
	DAJ		798			1542			
			<b>4851</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1617</b>	<b>-8%</b>	<b>5626</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1875</b>

## **Croxley Green parish area**

15. **Croxley Green community** – The Croxley Green parish area comprises the entire and well-defined community of Croxley Green, and there are clear and distinct boundaries between Croxley Green and neighbouring settlements in Three Rivers. To the north there is an extensive area of Metropolitan Green Belt comprising farm land and woodland. To the west the Chess Valley and its natural topography provide a clear separation from the neighbouring town of Rickmansworth. To the south and south east lies a network of watercourses including the Rivers Gade and Colne, the Grand Union Canal, and a number of lakes interspersed by areas of open Metropolitan Green Belt land including Croxley Common Moor within the flood plain. To the east the Grand Union Canal and River Gade provide a well-defined boundary with the larger urban area of Watford Borough. The parish boundary aligns with these features and thus provides a strong boundary for this sub-area.
16. Croxley Green has an extensive village green surrounded by some of its oldest buildings dating from the 17th century. Following construction of Croxley Mill in 1830 by paper manufacturer John Dickinson, the village grew substantially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, centered around New Road. The paper mill was a major source of employment for the growing community; a principal product was *Croxley Script*, a well-known brand of stationery. Extensive new housing – much of it in the ‘Metroland’ style – was constructed during the 1930s, following the opening of London Underground’s Metropolitan Line branch to Watford. More recent developments, including the Byewaters estate on the site of the former paper mill (which closed in 1980) mean that Croxley Green, often just referred to as ‘Croxley’ by local residents, is now a large village with some 5,300 dwellings and over 12,000 inhabitants.
17. Croxley’s well-defined geographical setting is reflected in its positive village atmosphere, and strong community spirit. A large number of community groups serve the Croxley Green area, many of which are listed in the Parish Council’s directory of local clubs, groups and societies (see [http://www.croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk/cg/our\\_community](http://www.croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk/cg/our_community)). An active Residents Association covers the whole of Croxley Green, as well as a number of associations covering individual roads or areas within the village. There are six churches, five public houses and three licensed clubs within the village, one of which is operated by the Croxley Green Community Association which also provides a village hall facility in conjunction with Croxley Green Parish Council. The Parish Council itself was established in 1986 following pressure from the local community.
18. There are a number of groups and activities for children and young people, and a variety of clubs and societies for people of all ages. A wide range of sports and physical activities are catered for (football, tennis, bowls, badminton, rugby, cricket, hockey, walking, cycling, skateboarding, yoga and various forms of dancing) and there are groups and societies covering an array of crafts, hobbies and special interests, including art, needlecraft, lace making, literature, photography, wine, music and singing. Active environmental/conservation groups include the Friends of Croxley Common Moor and the Keep Croxley Green Group.

19. The annual "Revels on The Green" village fair is organised by the Croxley Green Society on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of June, and an annual folk play "St. George and the Dragon" is performed by Croxley Green Mummers during the Christmas period at several local hostelrys. The Parish Council stages a firework display on The Green each New Year's Eve.
20. **Proposed warding** – the Croxley Green parish area is entitled to two 3-member wards. The current arrangement with three wards therefore needs to be revised. Despite the compact nature of the parish area, its layout does not lend itself to a simple subdivision; our proposal therefore divides the parish area into two wards by grouping together the existing electoral polling districts, to produce a Croxley Green 'North-Central' ward and a 'South & West' ward. This approach minimises the need to reassign households between polling districts, although it is necessary to transfer a small area (area B1) from CAA to CBA, in order to equalise (as far as possible) the electorates of the two new wards.
21. **A note on ward names** – The proposed North-Central ward comprises the extensive area of housing between New Road and Baldwins Lane, constructed from 1930s onwards, and the housing north of Baldwins Lane, much of it of a similar age, but with later additions on the former Durrants School site and, most recently, the remainder of the former Durrants House grounds. We propose this ward be named Croxley Green Durrants ward. The proposed South & West ward combines the oldest parts of Croxley Green, including the entire length of The Green, New Road, and roads to the south, with later developments along and south of the A412 Watford Road. It also encompasses the Byewaters estate, constructed south of the Grand Union Canal on the former Croxley Mill site. We propose this ward be named: Croxley Green Dickinsons ward.
22. That therefore provides for the following wards:

		2012			2018			
Croxley Green Durrants	CAA	2732			3002			
	CBB	2590			2590			
	Grove Cresc	-374			-374			
		4948	3	1649	-6%	5218	3	1739
Croxley Green Dickinsons	CBA	1825			1843			
	Grove Cresc	374			374			
	CCA	1202			1257			
	CCB	1240			1296			
	CCC	497			497			
	5138	3	1713	-2%	5267	3	1756	-3%

### Watford Rural parish area

23. **Watford Rural community** – the Watford Rural parish area comprises three distinct communities: South Oxhey, Oxhey Hall, and Carpenders Park (see below). There are many community groups but almost all of these serve their specific community rather than the wider Watford Rural area. There are

separate active residents' associations for Oxhey Hall, Carpenders Park and South Oxhey. The postal code for all residents is WD19, which is not found elsewhere in the District. The parish boundary runs through the Metropolitan Green Belt and as such provides a strong boundary for this sub-area.

24. **South Oxhey** – this community comprises the existing wards of Hayling, Northwick and Ashridge. The South Oxhey community is highly distinct and has strong community ties across the estate. The estate was built from the late 1940s originally by the then London County Council (LCC) and all the original residents were relocated from inner London. Many residents' children have remained within the South Oxhey community. The original LCC estate also incorporated all necessary facilities for residents, including shops, pubs, leisure facilities, schools etc. All land and facilities were owned by the local authority. As such, the community has remained highly integrated and distinct from the surrounding area, even after the housing stock was transferred to Three Rivers following the abolition of the GLC. To a greater extent than elsewhere, we feel there is a strong case to maintain as far as possible separate representation for South Oxhey, in view of the distinctive history and community identity of the area.
25. **Oxhey Hall and Carpenders Park** – these two smaller communities are adjacent to South Oxhey but remain very distinct from it, in each case linked to South Oxhey by a single road link. Both these communities are also adjacent to Watford. We note that neither of these current communities on their own is the right size for a 3-member ward. Together they have the right number of electors to form a single 4-member ward but we note the clear guidance on this and accordingly we have not proposed this solution although it arguably better matches the community identity in the area.
26. **Proposed warding** – in order to maintain the separate representation of South Oxhey, we propose one 3-member ward entirely comprised of South Oxhey electors; and one 3-member ward largely comprising South Oxhey together with a minority of Carpenders Park (area C1). The remainder of the parish then forms a 3-member ward comprising all of Oxhey Hall and the majority of Carpenders Park. We propose to divide Carpenders Park along the line of the stream that bisects the estate (it is crossed by only one road).
27. We accept that the division of Carpenders Park between wards is not ideal; but the obvious alternative requires the division of South Oxhey between three wards, in only one of which South Oxhey would provide a clear majority of electors. We do not believe that the need for Carpenders Park to remain united should take precedence over the similar need of South Oxhey, especially given the unusually strong community identity and unique history of South Oxhey.
28. We also accept that there is no direct road link between the two halves of our proposed Oxhey Hall & Carpenders Park ward. This is due to the district boundary which means the road link runs through Watford borough. We also note that the two communities share links in being part of the same parish area; and that they are already linked in the same County Council electoral division (while South Oxhey is in a separate division), despite the lack of direct road link. This flows from the previous decision of LGBCE to recognise the distinct nature of South Oxhey and the justification to maintain separate representation. Our scheme crosses the County Division boundary only once.

29. That therefore provides for the following wards:

		2012			2018				
Carpenders Park & Oxhey Hall	DCA	2648			2674				
	DCH	4142			4200				
	Area C1	-1256			-1256				
		<b>5534</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1845</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5618</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1873</b>	<b>3%</b>
Hayling & Gosforth	DCB	1833			1882				
	DCC	827			829				
	DCD	1971			2199				
	Area C2	389			389				
	<b>5020</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1673</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>5299</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1766</b>	<b>-2%</b>	
Ashridge & Little Oxhey	DCE	1563			1563				
	Area C2	-389			-389				
	DCF	1458			1460				
	DCG	1255			1255				
	Area C1	1256			1256				
	<b>5143</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1714</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>5145</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1715</b>	<b>-5%</b>	

30. **A note on ward names** – the wards in South Oxhey have traditionally been named after the main roads running through each ward. It is proposed to continue this tradition with the proposed names. As the existing Northwick ward is split between the two proposed new wards we have not used that name to avoid potential confusion. In the case of the proposed Ashridge & Little Oxhey ward, Little Oxhey Lane runs east-west across the ward and unites electors on both sides of the railway.

31. We propose additionally two minor tidying-up amendments to address anomalies.

- a. Furze Close and Burnley Close were built after the existing boundaries were implemented and both roads are currently divided between DCE and DCF polling districts in an arbitrary and confusing way. We propose that all electors in Burnley Close be included in polling district DCE and all electors in Furze Close be included in polling district DCF. Both polling districts are in the proposed Ashridge & Little Oxhey ward so there is no impact on electoral equality.
- b. 83-125 Prestwick Road, in the existing Ashridge ward, would be better placed in the new Haying & Gosforth Ward as they are at the northern extremity of the Ashridge ward and have a long way to go to vote. These electors live opposite the main shopping centre and have more in common with other electors in the commercial centre of South Oxhey who are all in the proposed Haying & Gosforth ward. This change affects some 40 electors and has negligible impact on electoral equality.

## Unparished area, Chorleywood and Sarratt parishes

32. **Rickmansworth and surrounding communities** – as noted above, the boundary between the unparished area and Chorleywood parish runs through the built-up area and bisects rather than defines communities. This is reflected in the existing District ward boundaries and County electoral division boundaries which use the Metropolitan railway line rather than the parish boundary.
33. **Boundaries within sub-area** – we are aware of proposals to use the M25 as a boundary; however we do not agree. The M25 post-dates almost all the housing development in the area, and it bisects existing communities, in particular the Chorleywood East community (polling district BA) and Sarratt Parish. By contrast the Metropolitan railway is a much stronger boundary, as it pre-dates the majority of the development in the area. Within the Chorleywood parish and unparished area there are more road crossings of the M25 than of the railway (with further crossings of the M25 in Sarratt parish).
34. **Southern unparished area** – we note that the existing Moor Park & Eastbury ward has too few electors to be a 3-member ward. We also note that the whole of the unparished area south of the river Colne contains an appropriate number of electors for a 3-member ward. This area is divided from the remainder of the unparished area by the river, with just a single road crossing, providing a clear and strong boundary. However, despite the river, the Batchworth area is an integral part of Rickmansworth town and the residents of this area clearly regard themselves as part of the town. We therefore propose to retain the Batchworth area in a Rickmansworth ward; but the remainder of the CDB polling district, which is less urban in character, we propose to include in the Moor Park and Eastbury ward to ensure that the ward has sufficient electors.
35. **Sarratt parish** – we propose to retain the whole of Sarratt parish in a single ward, together with part of Chorleywood parish. As noted above, we do not regard the M25 as a strong boundary since it bisects communities rather than separates one community from another. Please see also paragraph 6 above which sets out why we believe Sarratt should be linked with Chorleywood rather than any other area, in order to preserve community ties and to maximise electoral equality.
36. **Chorleywood East** – the existing Chorleywood East ward is centred on the old village centre including Chorleywood House although anomalously the parish church currently falls outside the ward. The ward also includes the Loudwater area east of the river Chess. We propose to extend the existing boundary further west using the Metropolitan railway as a strong and clearly-defined boundary. That means electors around Chorleywood Common are transferred from Chorleywood West ward (areas D1 & D2); and together with Sarratt parish provides the right number of electors for a 3-member ward with a clear boundary. The ward would naturally be called Chorleywood East and Sarratt.
37. **Rickmansworth and Mill End** – the area south of the Metropolitan railway contains a suitable number of electors for two 3-member wards. There is a clear division within this area between the town of Rickmansworth; and the distinct community of Mill End. In order to equalise electorates and to avoid the boundary running down the centre of Berry Lane, dividing the road, it is

proposed to transfer electors on the east side of Berry Lane (including culs-de-sac on the east side of Berry Lane – area D3) to the proposed Penn & Mill End ward. This means that several roads currently divided between wards are united in the proposed Penn & Mill End ward (Berry Lane, Tudor Way, Field Way); and no roads are divided by the proposed boundary.

We propose one ward named Rickmansworth Town ward to include the town centre, Batchworth on the southern side of the river, and the Cedars estate and Moneyhill areas. All the residents in this ward would view themselves as members of the Rickmansworth community.

The remaining ward we propose should be called Rickmansworth Penn & Mill End, this reflects the fact that the two wards together comprise the wider Rickmansworth built-up area and this ward includes the community of Mill End as well as electors from Rickmansworth West and Penn wards.

38. **Additional tidying-up amendment** – there are a number of electors in Chess Way and adjacent roads who are separated from other electors in the unparished area by the River Chess and are clearly part of the built-up area of Loudwater which is otherwise in the existing Chorleywood East ward (Area D4). It would be possible to create a small polling district and include these electors with the rest of Loudwater in the Chorleywood East & Sarratt ward but we have not incorporated this proposal into our submission below because it marginally worsens numeric equality. It would however improve community links if implemented.
39. **Maple Cross** – the community of Maple Cross, together with the smaller communities of Heronsgate and West Hyde, forms a distinct community in the extreme south-west of the District and the County. Until the last boundary review it formed a separate ward, although this was not possible after 1999 due to numbers of electors. It is clearly separate from any other community, with its own community association, a separate church parish and distinct identity. As such we believe there is no detriment in altering the existing electoral link to Mill End. There are clearly insufficient electors to create a 3-member ward and it is therefore necessary to link Maple Cross with another adjacent community.
40. **Chorleywood West** – this part of Chorleywood contains the commercial centre which grew up around the station. We propose to transfer electors around Chorleywood Common north of the Metropolitan railway into the Chorleywood East and Sarratt ward (see above). Electors in this area fall between the centres of Chorleywood East and West and this boundary is a clear dividing line (it corresponds with the ecclesiastical parish boundary between Christchurch (Chorleywood East) and St Andrew (Chorleywood West) for example). Together with electors from Maple Cross, Heronsgate and West Hyde we propose to create a 3-member ward named Chorleywood West and Maple Cross.
41. **A note on ward names** – the proposed ward names in this sub-area are largely geographic and reflect the community or communities contained within each ward. ‘Penn’ relates to William Penn who is commemorated in the former school and existing leisure centre as well as reflecting the existing ward name.
42. **Proposed warding** – we therefore propose the following wards:

2012

2018



43. We have sought to propose a warding arrangement that meets the specific criteria set out in the Commission's guidance; we summarise below how we believe we have achieved this.

### Electoral Equality

44. We believe our proposals create a reasonably good level of electoral equality while balancing the other factors that need to be considered (in particular community identity). Our proposal is summarised below. Only one ward differs from the district average electorate per councillor by more than 10% in either 2012 or 2018; and most wards move closer to the district average by 2018. (in other words, the areas with high projected growth have smaller 2012 electorates while the wards with larger 2012 electorates have the lowest forecast growth). We are confident that our proposals significantly improve electoral equality immediately compared with the existing warding arrangements; with further improvements forecast during the review period, We have reviewed the LGBCE's recent recommendations for district councils and we note that our proposals produce a similar or better level of electoral equality compared with all other parished districts reviewed in the past year.

Proposed ward	electorate		elec per cllr		electorate		elec per cllr	
	2012				2018			
Abbots Langley Breakspear	5247	3	1749	0%	5259	3	1753	-3%
Abbots Langley Gade Valley	4966	3	1655	-5%	5124	3	1708	-6%
Abbots Langley Leavesden	4848	3	1616	-8%	5623	3	1874	4%
Ashridge & Little Oxhey	5143	3	1714	-2%	5145	3	1715	-5%
Carpenders Park & Oxhey Hall	5534	3	1845	5%	5618	3	1873	3%
Chorleywood East & Sarratt	5674	3	1891	8%	5769	3	1923	6%
Chorleywood West & Maple Cross	5942	3	1981	13%	6032	3	2011	11%
Croxley Green Dickinsons	5157	3	1719	-2%	5286	3	1762	-3%
Croxley Green Durrants	4929	3	1643	-6%	5199	3	1733	-4%
Hayling & Gosforth	5020	3	1673	-4%	5299	3	1766	-2%
Moor Park & Eastbury	5080	3	1693	-3%	5136	3	1712	-5%
Rickmansworth Penn & Mill End	5166	3	1722	-2%	5195	3	1732	-4%
Rickmansworth Town	5516	3	1839	5%	5892	3	1964	9%
<b>TRDC Total</b>	<b>68222</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1749</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>70575</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1810</b>	<b>0%</b>

### Community Identity

45. We have set out in detail above how we have sought to maximise community identity and avoid breaking community links, whilst achieving a uniform pattern of 3-member wards across the District. In particular we have avoided crossing any parish boundaries, with the exception of those between Chorleywood and the unparished area (where the boundary bisects communities) and between Chorleywood and Sarratt (due to the small

number of electors in Sarratt and the requirement to achieve 3-member wards).

### **Effective and Convenient Government**

46. We accept the desirability of a uniform pattern of 3-member wards to ensure that all electors have the same opportunity to vote; we believe this supports the Council's stated intention to continue with elections 'by thirds' and that it thereby increases the democratic accountability of the council to the electorate as they can express their views annually following the budget-setting and issuing of Council Tax bills.  
Avoiding crossing parish boundaries also helps to ensure effective and convenient government as well as aiding understanding and acceptance by residents.
47. We have sought to ensure that our proposed wards are internally coherent and respect existing community ties and communication links, within the constraints of the external district boundary; the parish and community boundaries; and the requirements of electoral equality.
48. We have also sought to minimise movements of electors between polling districts. This can affect the location of polling stations and as such contributes significantly to residents' feelings of convenience and understanding of the electoral process. Our proposals require only around 4,500 electors to move between polling districts; therefore almost 95% of electors will continue to poll at the same polling station as today. (see Appendix 1 below detailing electors moved between polling districts in our proposals).

**In summary it is our view that these proposals comply with the guidance issued. Subject to minor amendments that could be accommodated within the scheme, we do not believe there is an alternative scheme that can achieve as much in balancing the statutory requirements.**

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### **Appendix - electors moved between polling districts**

#### Area A1

DAG to DAE	249
Oak Green	155
Oak Green Way	28
Pinehurst	33
Tanners Wood Lane	33

#### Area A2

DAG to DAH	665
Berkeley Close	97
de Havilland Way	51
Furtherfield	144
Helston Place	25
Keble Terrace	9
Lancaster Way	35
Margaret Close	65
Pegasus Court	4

Pryor Close	34
Queens Drive	37
Shirley Road	133
Wadham Road	31

Area D1	
BF to BB (new PD)	268
Green Street	133
Orchard Close	18
Orchard Drive	87
Greenbury Close	30

Area D2	
BE to BB (new PD)	370
Chenies Road	54
Common Road	65
Darvells Yard	31
Colleyland	37
Station Approach	36
Woodland Lane	19
Rickmansworth Road	5
Old Common Road	52
Betjamin Gardens	31
Homefield Road	40

Area C1	
DCH to DCI (new PD)	1227
Attenborough Close	21
Bellingdon	23
Buckland	13
Compton Place	182
Gibbs Couch	87
Harrow Way	279
Little Oxhey Lane	70
Oulton Way	93
Romilly Drive	163
St Georges Drive	296

Area C2	
DCE to DED	389
Northwick Road	166
Birstall Green	29
Redwood Close	194

Area D3	
CFA to CGA	467
Berry Lane	90
Arnett Way	81
Arnett Close	21
Field Way	70
Mead Place	60
Berry Way	65
Tudor Way	80

Area B1	
CAA to CBA	374
Dugdals	25
Grove Crescent	251
Baldwins Lane (part)	40
Little Green Lane (pt)	13

Lovatts	11
The Green / Croxley Hse	34

Area D6 (balance of CDB) =	425
(Batchworth total)	712
Batchworth Hill	59
Church Street	1
Frogmoor Lane	44
Harefield Road	213
Heron Close	43
Juniper Close	2
Juniper Gate	13
Landford Close	36
Malm Close	26
Moss Close	39
Plaitford Close	43
Rushmoor Close	23
Sherfield Avenue	119
Stockers Farm Road	16
The Byeway	35

