

# New electoral arrangements for Mid Devon District Council Final Recommendations

January 2021

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### **A note on our mapping:**

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

# Contents

Introduction	1
Who we are and what we do	1
What is an electoral review?	1
Why Mid Devon?	2
Our proposals for Mid Devon	2
How will the recommendations affect you?	2
Review timetable	3
Analysis and final recommendations	4
Submissions received	4
Electorate figures	4
Number of councillors	5
Ward boundaries consultation	5
Draft recommendations consultation	6
Further draft recommendations consultation	6
Final recommendations	6
Tiverton, Bampton and the surrounding areas	8
Cullompton and Bradninch	11
Canonsleigh, Halberton and the Culm Valley	13
Central Mid Devon	16
Taw & Upper Yeo	19
Crediton	21
Conclusions	22
Summary of electoral arrangements	22
Parish electoral arrangements	22
What happens next?	24
Equalities	25
Appendices	26
Appendix A	26
Final recommendations for Mid Devon District Council	26
Appendix B	28
Outline map	28
Appendix C	29

Submissions received	29
Appendix D	31
Glossary and abbreviations	31

# Introduction

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.<sup>1</sup> 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. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

## What is an 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 there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why Mid Devon?

7 We are conducting a review of Mid Devon as the value of each vote in district council elections varies depending on where you live in Mid Devon. 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.

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

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

## Our proposals for Mid Devon

9 Mid Devon should be represented by 42 councillors, the same number as at present.

10 Mid Devon should have 22 wards, two fewer than at present.

11 The boundaries of all wards, except two (Silverton and Upper Culm wards), should change.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Mid Devon.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

13 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.

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

## Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Mid Devon. We then held three periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
20 August 2019	Number of councillors decided
27 August 2019	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
4 November 2019	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
4 February 2020	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
20 July 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
29 September 2020	Publication of further draft recommendations; start of third consultation
9 November 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
12 January 2021	Publication of final recommendations

17 The consultation on our draft recommendations originally closed on 13 April 2020 and re-opened between 8 June 2020 and 20 July 2020 to allow those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to make submissions.

## Analysis and final recommendations

18 Legislation<sup>2</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>3</sup> 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.

19 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.

20 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.

	2019	2026
Electorate of Mid Devon	63,272	69,724
Number of councillors	42	42
Average number of electors per councillor	1,506	1,660

21 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 but one of our proposed wards for Mid Devon will have good electoral equality by 2026.

## Submissions received

22 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

23 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the originally scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 10% by 2025, primarily due to substantial housing developments in the towns of Cullompton and Tiverton.

24 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. Given that we

<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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



undertook a further round of consultation, the publication year of our final recommendations has changed to 2021. However, we are content that the original 2025 forecast is a reasonable estimate of the forecast number of electors likely to be present in the district in 2026. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

## Number of councillors

25 Mid Devon District Council currently has 42 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

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

## Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received 19 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included a district-wide proposal from Councillor Radford, who submitted the Council's planned proposal that did not gain cross-party support and was not subsequently submitted to us. The Central Devon Conservative Association also submitted a partial scheme that covered the Central Devon parliamentary constituency area.

28 We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries. Our draft recommendations were therefore broadly based on a combination of these two schemes. However, we pursued our own alternative pattern of wards in the towns of Cullompton and Tiverton.

29 The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the district. Our recommendations also considered the local evidence we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries.

30 We visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Mid Devon helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

31 Our draft recommendations were for five three-councillor wards, 11 two-councillor wards and five single-councillor wards. We considered that our draft

recommendations provided for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests, where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

32 We received 68 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included comments from four political groups, 13 submissions from councillors, 10 parish and town councils, one local organisation and 40 local residents. The majority of submissions focused on specific areas.

33 The Mid Devon District Council Liberal Democrat Group and the Central Devon Liberal Democrats put forward significantly different ward boundaries from those in our draft recommendations for the rural west of the district. We found that these proposals were well-evidenced, and we were persuaded to make significant changes to our draft recommendations. However, given that a number of these proposed changes had not been the subject of consultation, we decided to publish further draft recommendations and consult on this area of the district only for six weeks.

## Further draft recommendations consultation

34 In response to this consultation, we received 37 representations which predominantly opposed the further draft recommendations. Most of these submissions related to our proposed Morchard, Yeo and Newbrooke & Sandford wards. We nonetheless received support in relation to our single-councillor Taw Vale ward. One submission supported our further draft recommendations in full.

35 Based on the evidence received, we have decided to revert to our original draft recommendations for the rural west area for our final recommendations, with the exception of Taw Vale ward and the transfer of Stockleigh English parish into Way ward.

## Final recommendations

36 Our final recommendations are for 42 councillors serving 22 wards representing seven single-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and five three-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

37 The tables and maps on pages 8–21 detail our final recommendations for each area of Mid Devon. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>4</sup> criteria of:

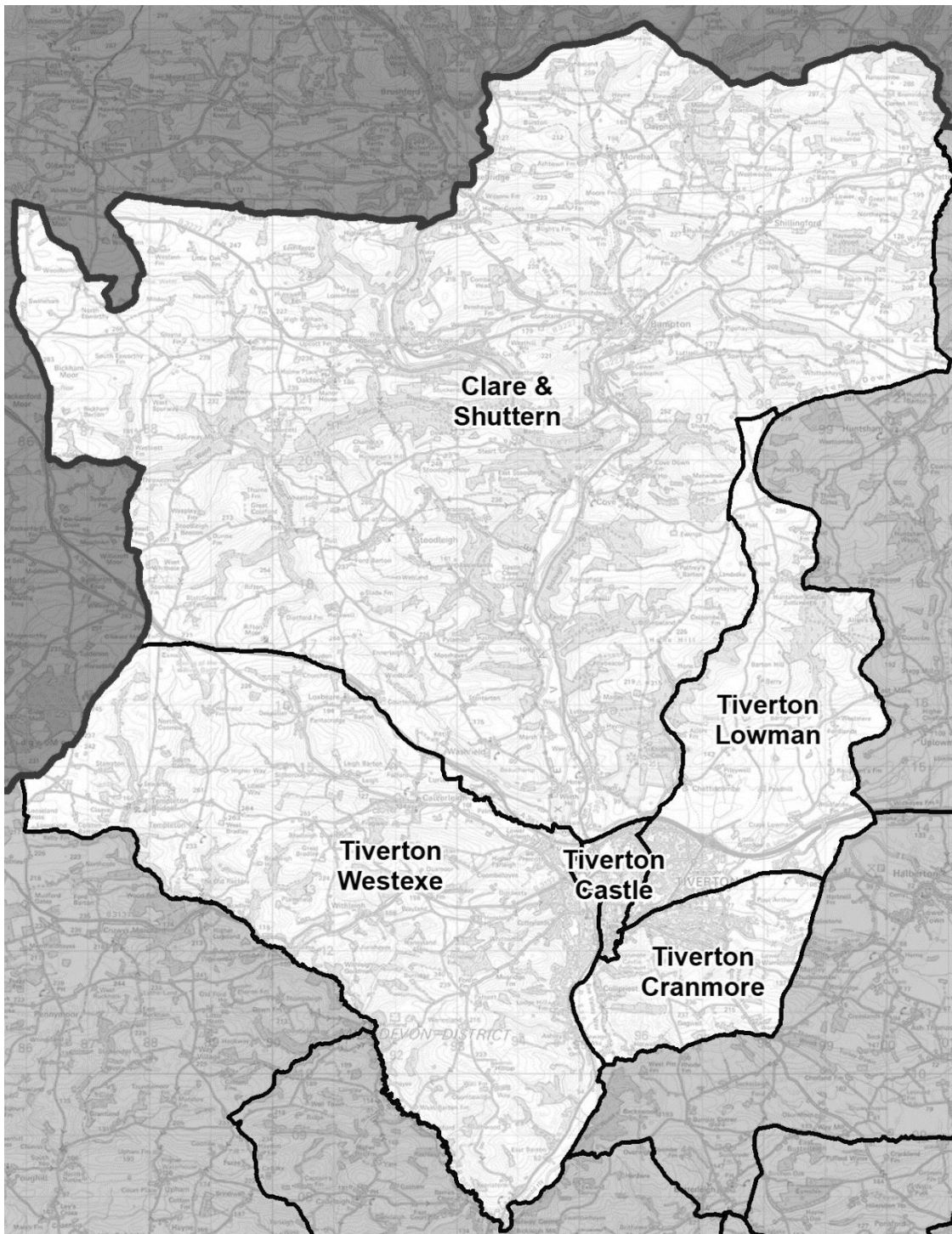
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<sup>4</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

38 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 26 and on the large map accompanying this report.

## Tiverton, Bampton and the surrounding areas



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Clare & Shuttern	2	-4%
Tiverton Castle	2	9%
Tiverton Cranmore	3	-9%
Tiverton Lowman	3	8%
Tiverton Westexe	3	-3%

39 We received several submissions that suggested that we prefix our town wards across Mid Devon with the name of the town, stating that this would make them more recognisable to local electors. We have been persuaded by the evidence received and have consequently renamed our proposed Castle, Cranmore, Lowman and Westexe wards with a Tiverton prefix.

#### *Clare & Shuttern and Tiverton Castle*

40 We received eight submissions that opposed our draft recommendations for Clare & Shuttern and Castle wards. These included representations from the Liberal Democrat Group, Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats, the Tiverton Branch of Mid Devon Liberal Democrats, Councillor Holdman and four local residents. These primarily objected to our proposal to place the villages of Bolham and Cove into Clare & Shuttern ward, providing evidence that Bolham village, in particular, has closer links to Tiverton than with the more rural Clare & Shuttern ward.

41 We have very carefully considered the submissions received for this area but have decided not to amend our draft recommendations for these two wards. We consider that the A361 forms a strong and identifiable ward boundary here, and we maintain the view, as outlined by Councillor Moore in the previous round of consultation, that the two parishes of Templeton and Loxbeare have stronger links with Tiverton. This warding arrangement was also supported by one local resident.

42 Two local residents suggested that our proposed Clare & Shuttern ward be split into two single-councillor wards. Both broadly proposed a Shuttern ward comprising Bampton and Morebath parishes and a Clare ward containing the parishes of Oakford, Stoodleigh, Washfield, Templeton, and the villages of Bolham, Cove and Withleigh. However, given our decision to place the parishes of Templeton and Loxbeare in Tiverton Westexe ward, we are unable to adopt this proposal and ensure good electoral equality.

#### *Tiverton Cranmore and Tiverton Lowman*

43 The Liberal Democrat Group, Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats and a local resident all supported our proposed Cranmore ward, supporting our decision to use Blundell's Road as the ward boundary between Cranmore & Lowman wards, agreeing with our view that it will provide for a more identifiable ward boundary. We have therefore decided to confirm the boundaries of our draft Cranmore ward as final.

44 However, the same submissions also questioned our decision to abolish the Central parish ward that was created as part of our recent electoral review of Devon County Council. This area was transferred from the existing Cranmore ward to Castle ward as part of our draft recommendations. We decided to integrate the existing Central parish ward into a larger Castle parish ward as we consider that a

Castle parish ward that is fully coterminous with the Tiverton Castle district ward will aid effective and convenient local government.

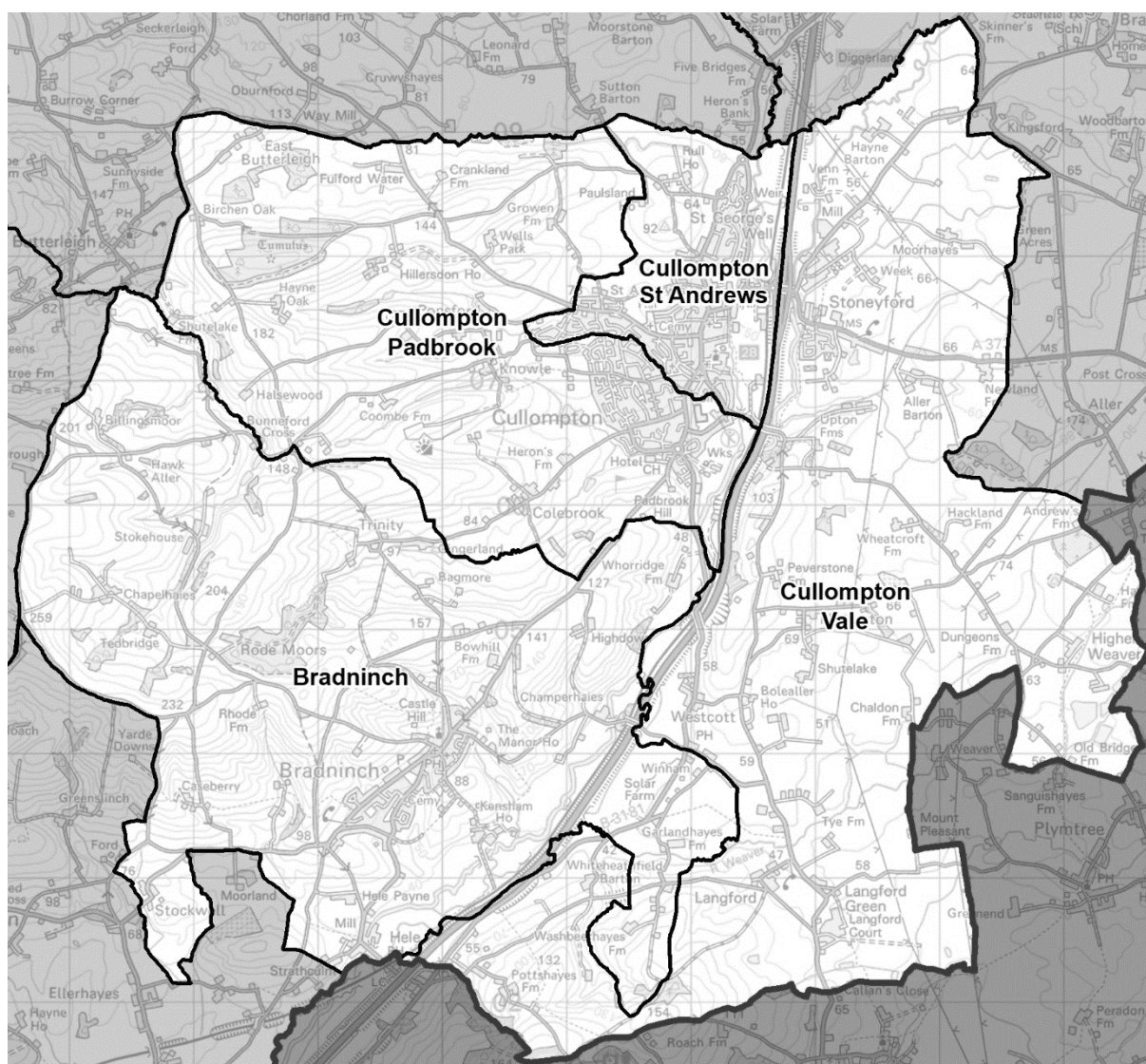
45 The local resident also disputed our reasoning as to why the northern boundary of our proposed Lowman ward did not follow the A361. The local resident suggested that the entire area north of the A361 transfer to a Clare & Shuttern ward, which could consequently constitute a single parish ward containing a forecast 592 electors by 2026. However, we cannot create a parish ward comprising the entirety of this area due to the county division boundary that broadly follows the Tiverton Leat. If a parish is to be divided between different district wards and county divisions, we are legally required to divide the parish into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single district ward and county division. Consequently, we have decided not to amend the boundaries of our Lowman ward as part of the final recommendations.

#### *Tiverton Westexe*

46 The Liberal Democrat Group, Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats and a local resident argued that our proposed Westexe ward was too large given our decision to include the parishes of Loxbeare and Templeton in the ward. However, as discussed in paragraph 41, we consider that these parishes share more in common with Tiverton, with the A361 forming a strong and identifiable boundary. We have therefore not been persuaded to amend our proposed Westexe ward as part of our final recommendations.

47 The local resident did suggest the creation of a parish ward centred upon Withleigh, where a councillor could work with parishes of Loxbeare and Templeton to represent the common interests of this more rural area. However, we consider that a community governance review conducted by the Council after the completion of our electoral review would be the most appropriate starting point for addressing this issue.

## Cullompton and Bradninch



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Bradninch	1	3%
Cullompton Padbrook	2	-1%
Cullompton St Andrews	3	-4%
Cullompton Vale	1	-9%

48 We received several submissions that suggested that we prefix our proposed town wards across Mid Devon with the name of the town, stating that this would make them more recognisable to local electors. We have been persuaded by the evidence received and have consequently renamed our proposed Padbrook and St Andrews wards with a Cullompton prefix. We have also adopted a local resident's suggestion to rename our proposed Culm Vale ward to Cullompton Vale, as we consider this ward name will best represent the area and the community that resides within it.

49 The Tiverton Branch of the Mid Devon Liberal Democrats and Cullompton Town Council suggested we rename our Cullompton town wards by cardinal direction. We decided not to adopt this proposal as we were not persuaded that enough compelling evidence had been received to justify these revised ward names.

#### *Bradninch*

50 The Liberal Democrat Group, Central Devon Liberal Democrats and the Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats all supported our draft recommendations for this ward, which reunites Bradninch parish in one ward. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Bradninch ward as final.

#### *Cullompton Padbrook, Cullompton St Andrews and Cullompton Vale*

51 The Liberal Democrat Group, the Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats, Cullompton Town Council and a local resident all supported our draft recommendations for these wards.

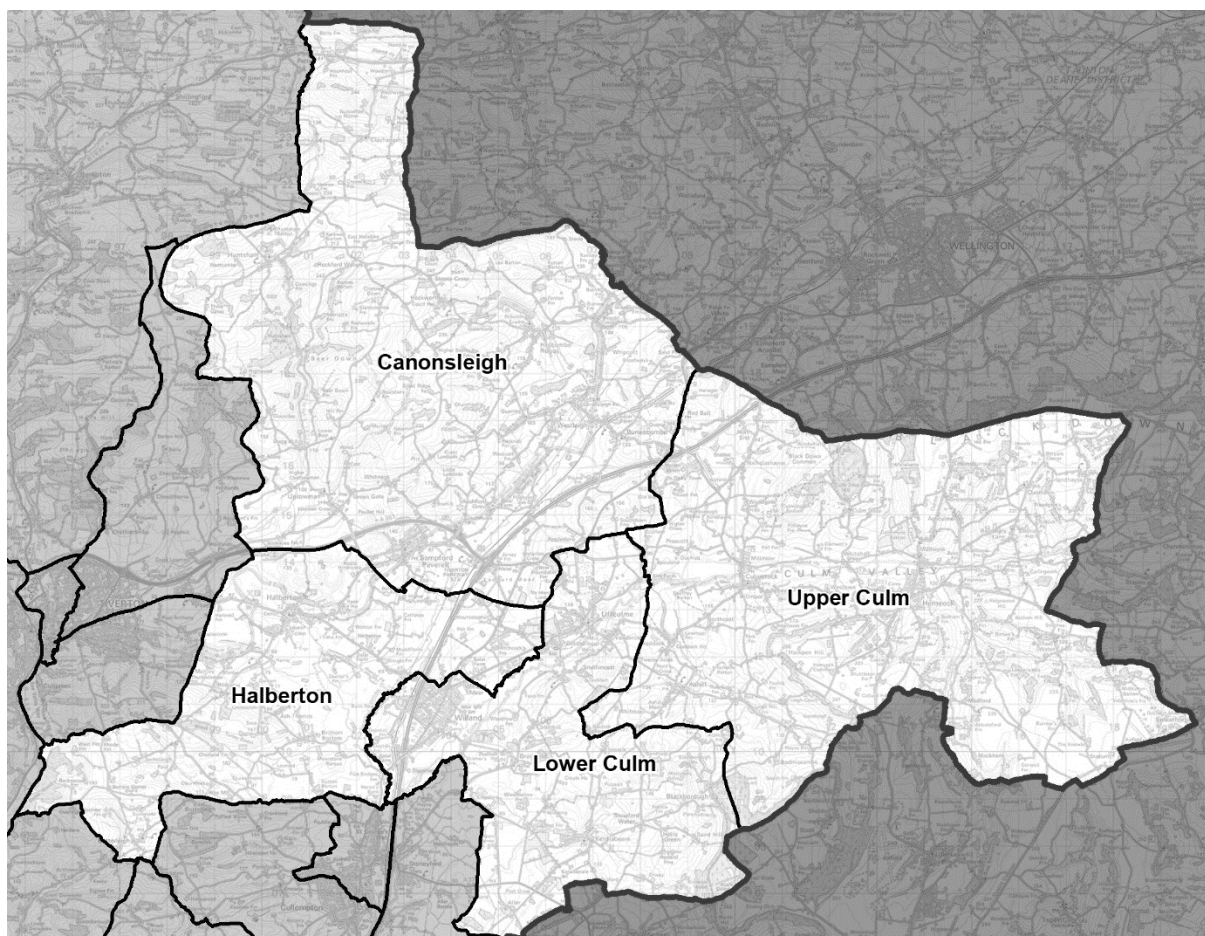
52 Councillor Berry and two local residents opposed our decision to abolish the existing Cullompton Outer ward, stating our draft recommendations would not allow for the effective representation of the rural communities that surround the town. While we note these concerns, the existing Cullompton Outer ward will be significantly under-represented by 2026 as a result of the high level of development expected around Cullompton. This necessitates a significantly different warding pattern for the area in order to meet our statutory criteria. In any case, we consider including villages either side of the M5 in the same ward would not provide for a cohesive ward with good internal access routes.

53 Councillor Wilce opposed our proposed three-councillor St Andrews ward, expressing a preference for the ward to be divided into single-councillor wards. We were not persuaded to adopt this proposal, as we decided there was not enough community evidence provided to justify this change, and it was not clear how these single-councillor wards would be configured.

54 Therefore, after carefully considering the submissions received for this area, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations for Cullompton Padbrook, Cullompton St Andrews and Cullompton Vale wards as final.



## Canonsleigh, Halberton and the Culm Valley



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Canonsleigh	2	-6%
Halberton	1	-6%
Lower Culm	3	13%
Upper Culm	2	3%

### *Canonsleigh*

55 The Liberal Democrat Group, Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats and a local resident all supported our draft recommendations for Canonsleigh ward, which transferred Uplowman parish from the existing Halberton ward. Burlescombe Parish Council objected to this decision, arguing that the addition of Uplowman parish would result in an unacceptably high workload for the district councillors that represent the ward. However, removing Uplowman parish from Canonsleigh ward results in an electoral variance of -16%, which we consider too high. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for Canonsleigh ward as final.

### *Halberton, Lower Culm and Upper Culm*

56 Halberton Parish Council and Councillor Radford were supportive of our proposed Halberton ward, which included the parish of Butterleigh. This decision was opposed by Councillor Berry and two local residents, who argued that the parish has better community links with the rural villages that surround Cullompton. However, by removing Butterleigh parish from Halberton ward, the electoral variance for the Halberton ward worsens to -12%. We were not persuaded that the community evidence provided was strong enough to justify such a variance and we have decided not to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations. We also consider that Butterleigh parish has good community links with the other rural villages that comprise Halberton ward.

57 We received 18 submissions that related to the boundary between our proposed Halberton and Lower Culm wards. Fifteen of these submissions, including representations from Willand Parish Council, Councillor Evans and Councillor Warren, argued that electors in the area bounded by the M5 and the parish boundaries of Burlescombe, Uffculme and Willand would be more effectively represented in a Lower Culm ward. Three other submissions, from Halberton Parish Council and two from Councillor Radford, opposed the transfer of this area from Halberton ward.

58 As outlined in our draft recommendations report, we examined placing this area in Lower Culm ward. Adopting this proposal would result in an electoral variance of -17% for Halberton ward and 12% for Lower Culm ward. While we recognise that the M5 does represent a significant barrier between the parishes of Halberton, Willand and Uffculme, we are required to ensure that local electors have a vote of broadly equal weight. We consider that the evidence received is not strong enough for us to accept these variances. Furthermore, we also consider that the creation of a parish ward for Halberton parish (which we would be legally obliged to do if we were to adopt this proposal), would not aid effective and convenient local government.

59 One local resident suggested we transfer the village of Sampford Peverell into a two-councillor Halberton ward, using the A361 as a northern boundary. This was proposed in order to facilitate the transfer of the area bounded by the M5 and the parish boundaries of Burlescombe, Uffculme and Willand into a Lower Culm ward and ensure good electoral equality. We have decided not to adopt this proposal as we did not consider the community evidence persuasive enough. Furthermore, it would necessitate the creation of a parish ward north of the A361 comprising approximately 80 electors. This would not, in our view, be viable or provide for effective and convenient local government.

60 Willand Parish Council suggested that Halberton ward merge with Lower Culm ward. However, to achieve good electoral equality, a four-councillor ward would be required. We consider four-councillor wards potentially dilute the accountability of

councillors to the electorate, so we have not adopted this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

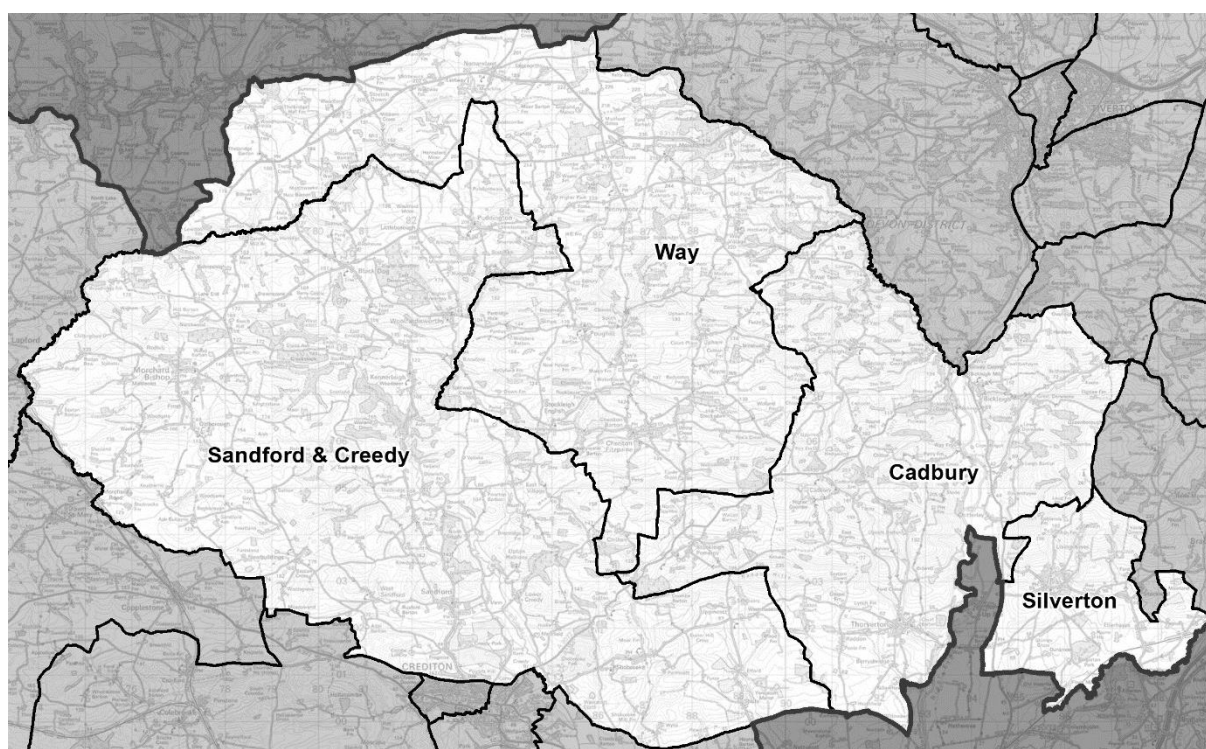
61 We do note that several of these submissions discussed the problems that the current parish boundaries have upon local governance in this area. We consider that a community governance review, carried out by the Council after the completion of this electoral review, would be the most effective way to effect parish boundary changes in this area. A request for related alterations following a community governance review would then provide the Council with an opportunity to modify district wards so that they are coterminous with any revised parish boundaries.

62 We also received several submissions in relation to our proposals for Kentisbeare parish. While these submissions were broadly supportive of our proposal to transfer the parish from any proposed Cullompton-centric ward, they were opposed to our decision to split the parish between Lower Culm and Upper Culm wards in order to achieve good electoral equality. It was argued that this would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government and that the Blackborough community would not be as effectively represented within an Upper Culm ward.

63 We have been persuaded by the evidence received from Kentisbeare Parish Council, Culmstock Parish Council and several local residents to place the parish within a single district ward. We have consequently placed the entirety of Kentisbeare parish within a Lower Culm ward, which results in a 13% electoral variance. While this is relatively high, we are content that enough evidence has been received to justify this change.

64 One local resident suggested Kentisbeare parish form a single-councillor ward. We did not adopt this proposal as the electoral variance would be -52% which, in our view, would be unacceptably high.

## Central Mid Devon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Cadbury	1	-9%
Sandford & Creedy	2	0%
Silverton	1	-3%
Way	1	4%

### *Cadbury and Silverton*

65 We received 24 submissions that related to our proposals in this area. These submissions objected to our proposal to merge the existing single-councillor Cadbury and Silverton wards into a larger two-councillor Cadbury & Silverton ward. It was argued that Silverton village has a distinct community identity from the rural parishes that comprise the current Cadbury ward, where the River Exe and the A396 act as strong, natural borders between communities.

66 Silverton Parish Council, Councillor Wright and two local residents suggested that the entirety of Silverton parish could be included in a single-councillor Silverton ward, in order to reunite the parish in one district ward. However, this results in an electoral variance of -15% for Cadbury ward. We consider that the evidence supplied was not strong enough to justify such a variance. We have therefore not adopted this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

67 Nonetheless, we have been persuaded by the evidence received that Silverton village is distinct from the rural parishes comprising the existing Cadbury ward and

we have therefore decided to revert to the existing warding arrangement in this area for our final recommendations (except for the inclusion of Stockleigh Pomeroy parish in Cadbury ward). We consider that this pattern of wards addresses the objections to our draft recommendations and will effectively reflect local communities. Our proposed Cadbury and Silverton wards will have good electoral equality by 2026, with an electoral variance of -9% and -3%, respectively.

### *Sandford & Creedy*

68 As part of our further draft recommendations, we proposed a single-councillor Morchard ward and a two-councillor Newbrooke & Sandford ward. We received near universal opposition regarding these wards.

69 We received opposition to our proposed Morchard ward on the basis that it separated Kennerleigh parish from a group of several closely knit parishes that included Puddington, Woolfardisworthy and Washford Pyne. These submissions provided good evidence of the strong cultural and geographical links between the parishes. In relation to our proposed Newbrooke & Sandford ward, several respondents, including Sandford Parish Council (with the support of Upton Hellions Parish Meeting) and Councillor Squires, were critical of our recommendations. In particular, they opposed our decision to combine Sandford and Newton St Cyres parishes and part of Crediton Hamlets parish in a single ward. These submissions stressed the distinct community identities of these parishes. We instead received strong community-based evidence that outlined the links between the parishes of Sandford and Morchard Bishop.

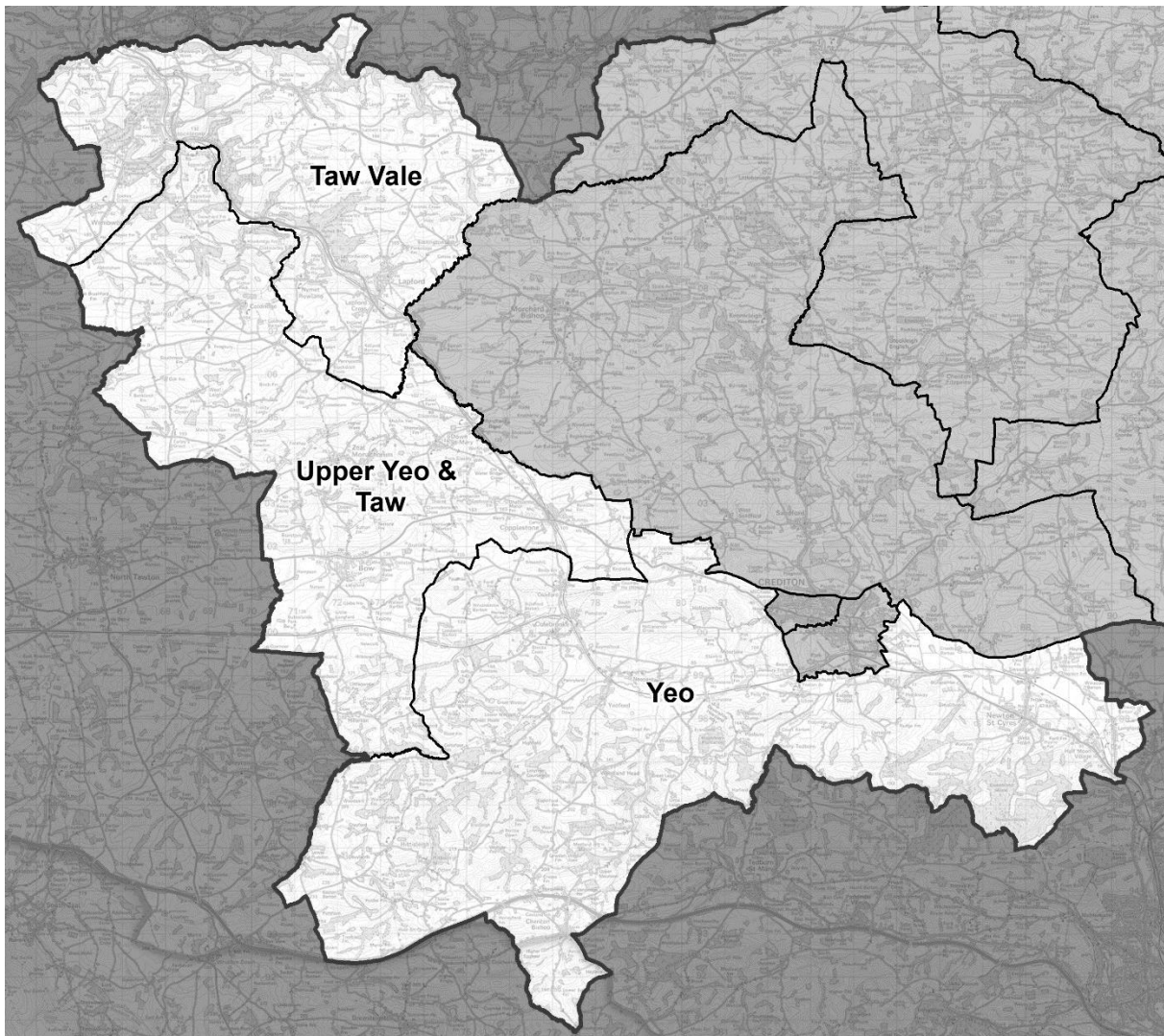
70 We have very carefully considered the submissions that relate to this area of Mid Devon. We are of the view, based on the evidence received throughout the three rounds of consultation, that reverting to our original draft recommendations for a two-councillor Sandford & Creedy ward will offer the best balance of the statutory criteria. This ward reunites Sandford parish and Morchard Bishop parish in one ward and places Kennerleigh parish in a ward with the parishes of Puddington, Woolfardisworthy and Washford Pyne. We consider that this ward will best reflect the weight of evidence we have received throughout the review relating to community links and identification.

### *Way*

71 We received a handful of submissions in relation to Way ward during our consultation on the further draft recommendations. Two local residents and Councillor Squires opposed our proposed Way ward on the basis that it split the village of Nomansland between two wards. We were persuaded by the evidence received that this warding arrangement would not promote effective and convenient local government. We have therefore reverted to our original draft recommendations for Way ward, which will include Thebridge parish.

72 A local resident suggested that Stockleigh English parish be included within Way ward, providing good evidence of strong community links that exist between the parishes of Stockleigh English and Cheriton Fitzpaine. We were persuaded by the evidence received and have therefore transferred Stockleigh English parish into Way ward. We consider this change will better reflect community identities and the shared interests between the two parishes. Our final Way ward will have an electoral variance of 4% by 2026.

## Taw & Upper Yeo



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Taw Vale	1	7%
Upper Yeo & Taw	2	-2%
Yeo	2	-8%

### *Taw Vale*

73 We received support for our proposed Taw Vale ward from Lapford Parish Council, Chawleigh Parish Council and Councillor Eginton during the consultation on our further draft recommendations. They all agreed with our decision to incorporate the parish of Nymet Rowland within the ward. We have therefore decided to confirm our proposed Taw Vale ward as final.

### *Upper Yeo & Taw*

74 We received one submission that related to this ward during our further draft recommendations consultation. Councillor Squires opposed our decision to include

Down St Mary parish in our proposed Morchard ward, stating it had closer community links with the parish of Coplestone. We agree with the evidence provided that placing Down St Mary parish in an Upper Yeo & Taw ward will better reflect community identity. We have therefore transferred the parish into Upper Yeo & Taw ward as part of our final recommendations.

### Yeo

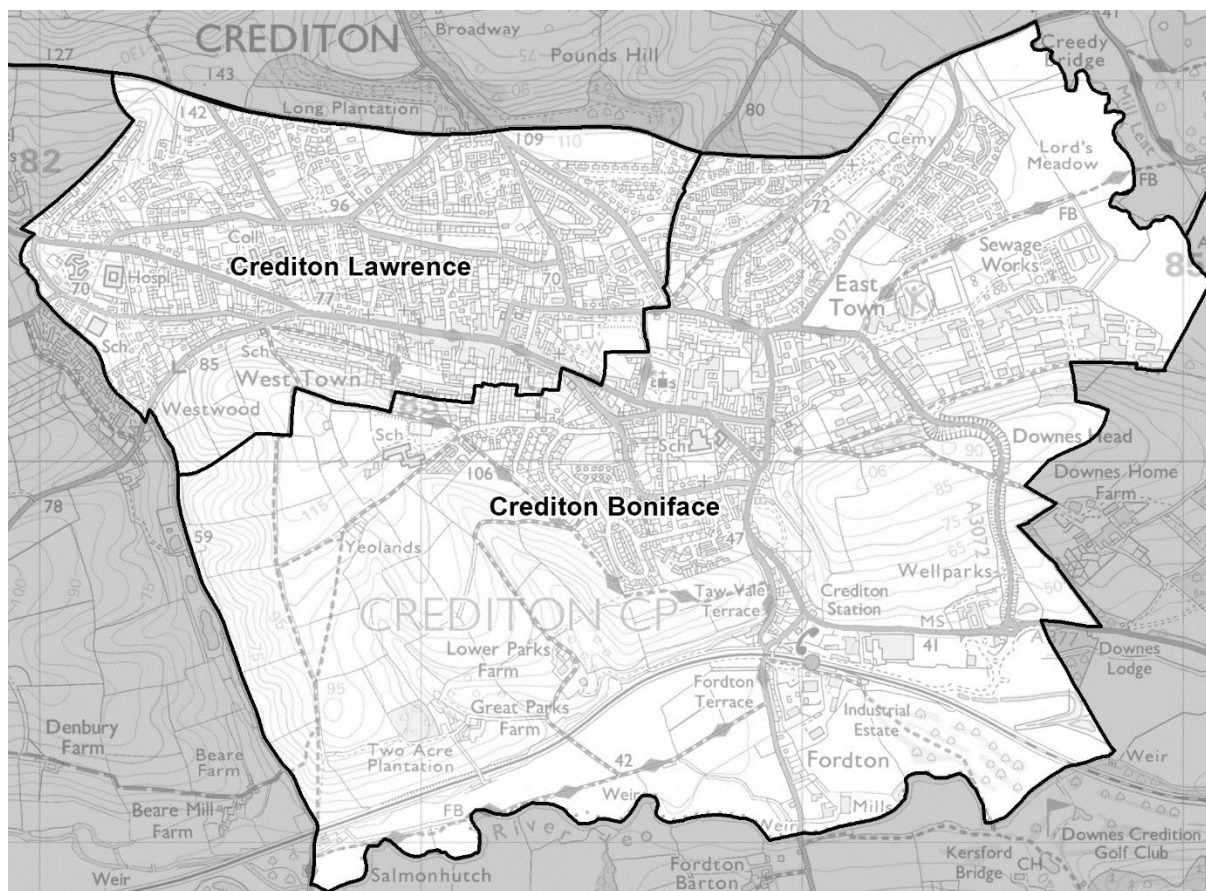
75 Crediton Hamlets Parish Council, Councillor Coren, Councillor Penny and several local residents all made submissions that related to Yeo ward. All of these submissions opposed our decision to split Crediton Hamlets parish between two wards, broadly arguing that this warding arrangement would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government for the parish. It was also argued that placing hamlets such as Hookway, Uton and Venny Tedburn within a two-councillor Newbrooke & Sandford ward would hinder the effective representation of these communities.

76 We were persuaded by the evidence received that splitting Crediton Hamlets across wards would not provide the best reflection of our statutory criteria. Therefore, as part of our final recommendations, we have decided to revert to our original draft recommendations for a two-councillor Yeo ward. This ward comprises the parishes of Colebrooke, Crediton Hamlets, Cheriton Bishop, Hittisleigh and Newton St Cyres. We did examine the possibility of maintaining a single-councillor Yeo ward, but we were unable to do so while providing good electoral equality across wards.

77 One local resident suggested that we follow the A377 as the northern boundary of Yeo ward. We decided not to adopt this proposal as it would require the creation of a parish ward comprising approximately 40 electors. We are of the view that this would not provide for effective and convenient local government.



## Crediton



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2026
Crediton Boniface	2	8%
Crediton Lawrence	2	2%

78 We received several submissions that suggested that we prefix our recommended wards across Mid Devon with the name of the town, stating that this would make them more recognisable to local electors. We are persuaded by the evidence received and have consequently renamed our proposed Boniface and Lawrence wards with a Crediton prefix.

### *Crediton Boniface and Crediton Lawrence*

79 The Liberal Democrat Group, Central Devon Liberal Democrats and a local resident were supportive of the boundaries proposed in our draft recommendations. We received no further submissions that related to the warding proposals in this area. Consequently, except for the ward name changes, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

## Conclusions

80 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Mid Devon, referencing the 2019 and 2026 electorate figures. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

### Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2019	2026
Number of councillors	42	42
Number of electoral wards	22	22
Average number of electors per councillor	1,506	1,660
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	0

#### Final recommendations

Mid Devon District Council should be made up of 42 councillors serving 22 wards representing seven single-councillor wards, 10 two-councillor wards and five three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

#### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Mid Devon.

You can also view our final recommendations for Mid Devon on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

### Parish electoral arrangements

81 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.

82 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, Mid Devon 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.

83 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 Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton.

84 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Crediton parish.

**Final recommendations**

Crediton Town Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Boniface	6
Lawrence	6

85 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Cullompton parish.

**Final recommendations**

Cullompton Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Padbrook	5
St Andrews	8
Vale	2

86 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Tiverton parish.

**Final recommendations**

Tiverton Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Castle	5
Cove	1
Cranmore	5
Lowman	7
Westexe	6

## What happens next?

87 We have now completed our review of Mid Devon. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2023.

## Equalities

88 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Final recommendations for Mid Devon District Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bradninch	1	1,691	1,691	12%	1,711	1,711	3%
2	Cadbury	1	1,457	1,457	-3%	1,505	1,505	-9%
3	Canonsleigh	2	2,948	1,474	-2%	3,118	1,559	-6%
4	Clare & Shuttern	2	3,055	1,528	1%	3,171	1,586	-4%
5	Crediton Boniface	2	2,875	1,438	-5%	3,588	1,794	8%
6	Crediton Lawrence	2	3,120	1,560	4%	3,401	1,701	2%
7	Cullompton Padbrook	2	3,197	1,599	6%	3,271	1,636	-1%
8	Cullompton St Andrews	3	3,845	1,282	-15%	4,799	1,600	-4%
9	Cullompton Vale	1	602	602	-60%	1,505	1,505	-9%
10	Halberton	1	1,409	1,409	-6%	1,557	1,557	-6%
11	Lower Culm	3	5,458	1,819	21%	5,617	1,872	13%
12	Sandford & Creedy	2	2,890	1,445	-4%	3,322	1,661	0%

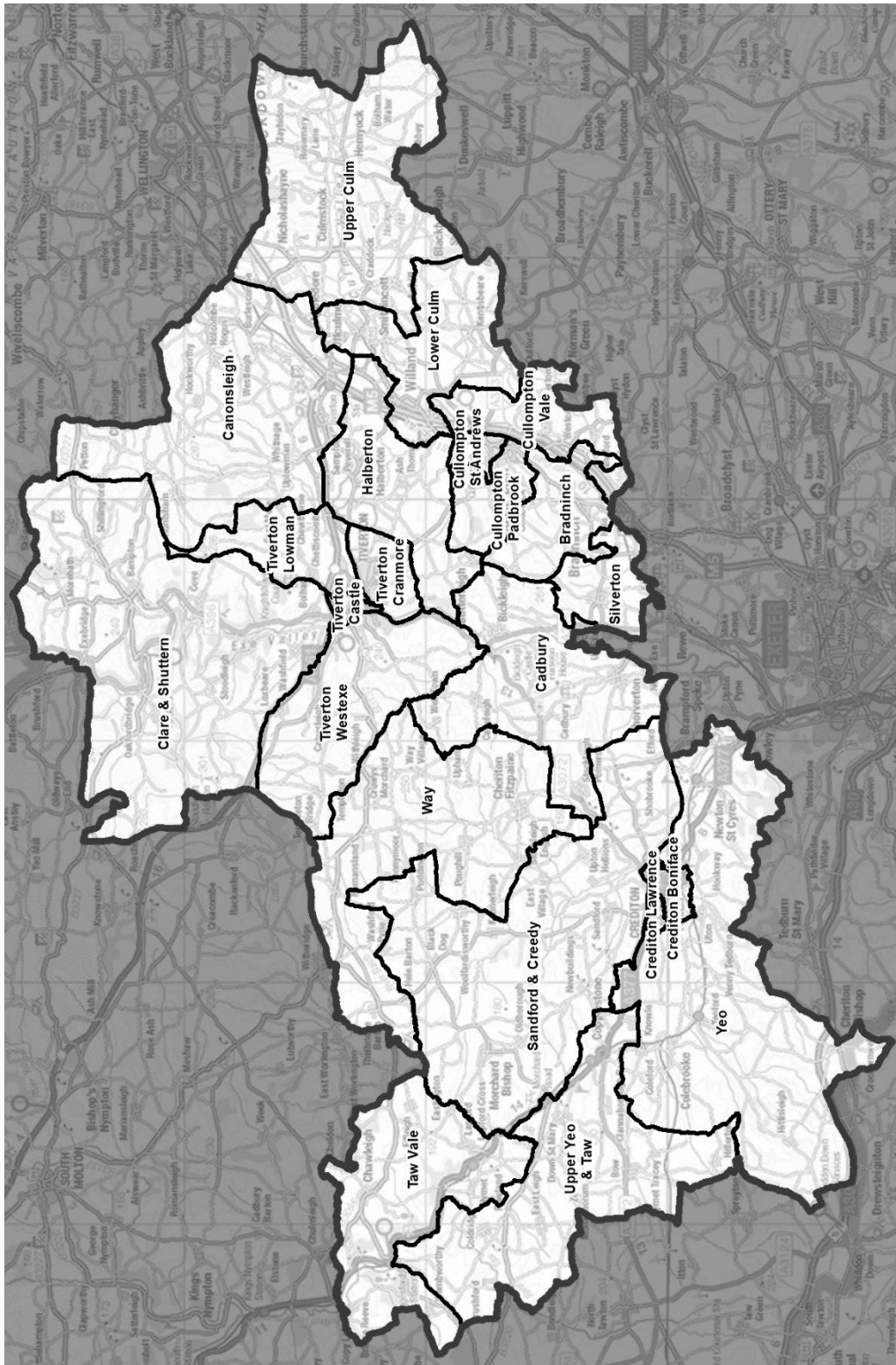
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2026)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Silverton	1	1,571	1,571	4%	1,612	1,612	-3%
14 Taw Vale	1	1,708	1,708	13%	1,774	1,774	7%
15 Tiverton Castle	2	3,403	1,702	13%	3,603	1,802	9%
16 Tiverton Cranmore	3	3,593	1,198	-20%	4,508	1,503	-9%
17 Tiverton Lowman	3	4,655	1,552	3%	5,360	1,787	8%
18 Tiverton Westexe	3	4,745	1,582	5%	4,843	1,614	-3%
19 Upper Culm	2	3,349	1,675	11%	3,432	1,716	3%
20 Upper Yeo & Taw	2	3,140	1,570	4%	3,257	1,629	-2%
21 Way	1	1,641	1,641	9%	1,723	1,723	4%
22 Yeo	2	2,920	1,460	-3%	3,047	1,524	-8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>63,272</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>69,724</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,660</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Mid Devon District Council.

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

# Appendix B

## Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/devon/mid-devon](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/devon/mid-devon)



## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:  
[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/devon/mid-devon](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/devon/mid-devon)

### Draft recommendations: Submissions received

#### *Political Groups*

- Central Devon Liberal Democrats
- Mid Devon District Council Liberal Democrat Group
- Tiverton & Honiton Liberal Democrats
- Tiverton Branch – Mid Devon Liberal Democrats

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor G. Barnell (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor J. Berry (Mid Devon District Council and Devon County Council)
- Councillor B. Deed (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor F. Derbyshire (Silverton Parish Council)
- Councillor C. Eginton (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor R. Evans (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor I. Hemsworth (Lapford Parish Council)
- Councillor B. Holdman (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor R. Radford (Mid Devon District Council and Devon County Council) (x2)
- Councillor B. Warren (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor R. Wilce (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor J. Wright (Mid Devon District Council)

#### *Local Organisations*

- Lapford Lookout and Lapford Project 2000

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Burlescombe Parish Council
- Cullompton Town Council
- Culmstock Parish Council
- Halberton Parish Council
- Kentisbeare Parish Council

- Lapford Parish Council
- Newton St Cyres Parish Council
- Shobrooke Parish Council
- Silverton Parish Council
- Willand Parish Council

#### *Local Residents*

- 40 local residents

### Further draft recommendations: Submissions received

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor D. Coren & S. Penny (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor C. Eginton (Mid Devon District Council)
- Councillor G. Ford (Sandford Parish Council)
- Councillor M. Squires (Mid Devon District Council and Devon County Council)
- Councillor R. Vigers (Crediton Hamlets Parish Council)

#### *Local Organisations*

- Parochial Church Council of Woolfardisworthy East
- Kennerleigh & District Community Benefit Society

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Chawleigh Parish Council
- Crediton Hamlets Parish Council
- Kennerleigh Parish Meeting (x2)
- Lapford Parish Council (x2)
- Morchard Bishop Parish Council
- Sandford Parish Council
- Washford Pyne Parish Council
- Woolfardisworthy Parish Meeting

#### *Local Residents*

- 20 local residents

## Appendix D

### 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 <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
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

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.

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