

## **Cambridge City Council-submission to the LGBCE**

We wish to draw your attention to revised estimates on Cambridge electors

The County Council's submission to the Boundary Commission was based on numbers taken from the Electoral Register of February 2014 and the projections for new housing made in December 2013.

These numbers understate the figures for the City in that:

i) They overlooked new student accommodation projected to house 2,410 students. As University records show that approximately 16% of students are not citizens of the UK, EU or a Commonwealth country, it is reasonable to assume that 84% (ie 2,025) are expected to be eligible to vote in UK elections.

ii) The most recent projections for new housing in the City, published in December 2014, updates information about housing that should be considered as part of the review period. Some sites should be included as they will be brought forward quicker than previously expected eg. in Queen Edith's division. It also shows that some new build has been wrongly allocated to the present wards. Much of the new build on the Darwin Green site will not be in the present Castle ward as previously expected, but in Arbury and the new build on the CB1 site will be in the present Trumpington ward rather than Petersfield. These errors of placement have now been accepted by the Boundary Commission which reissued its data last week.

The December 2014 projections for housing, and the consequent calculations for numbers of electors, are not yet available for the other Districts. The overall numbers for the County are therefore uncertain.

The City Council believes that projected numbers in the rest of the County are uncertain and these might make the City under-represented if LGBCE retain the proposed 63 divisions, in that divisions in the city could be significantly larger than those in the rest of the County.

The City Council agrees that co-terminosity between County Council divisions and City Council wards is very desirable for good governance and any period when this is not the case should be as short as possible.

Recognising that the data above may not affect LGBCE proposals for city ward numbers and in case Cambridge is allocated twelve county councillors, the City Council supports the County Labour Group's submission (attached) while continuing to investigate the accuracy of the elector numbers and the potential impact on the number of county councillors allocated to each District and the city's total share of overall county councillors.

# **Labour Group Submission to the LGBCE for Cambridge District in Cambridgeshire County Council**

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## **1. Requirements provided by the Local Government Boundary Commission**

The Local Government Boundary Commission has written as follows to county and district councils in Cambridgeshire:

In developing its work programme for 2014-15, the Commission identified Cambridgeshire County Council as requiring a Further Electoral Review. Each year, the Commission studies the levels of electoral imbalance arising in each local authority area in order to establish whether there is a need, because of imbalances which have arisen, for an electoral review.

Electoral imbalances arise when voters are either over-represented or under-represented by their councillor(s) when compared to average levels of representation for the authority as a whole. Under the criteria adopted by the Commission, if the following criteria [sic] is met, then consideration is given to the need for a review. These criteria are:

- \* Any local authority with an electoral division or ward that has an electoral variance in excess of 30%. For Cambridgeshire, this means a division having over 30% more or fewer electors per councillor than is average for the county council as a whole; and/or
- \* Any local authority where more than 30% of divisions or wards have an electoral variance in excess of 10% from the average for that authority; and
- \* The imbalance is unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate within a reasonable period.

Cambridgeshire County Council meets these selection criteria. The data shows that 19 (31.67%) of the 60 electoral divisions have an electoral variance in excess of 10% from the average for the authority.

The Local Government Boundary Commission has set out the key requirements for valid proposals or responses:

... to have regard to:

- the need to secure equality of representation;
- the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- the need to secure effective and convenient local government.

3.6 Included in the community identities and interests criterion is the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable, and which will not break local ties. Our aim is to identify clear and long-lasting boundaries for ward/division. We also take into account factors such as the location and boundaries of parishes and the physical features of the local area when drawing boundaries.

3.7 In addition, in reviewing two-tier county councils we are required to have regard to the boundaries of district or borough wards. We will seek to use them as the building blocks for county electoral divisions. In making our recommendations, we must ensure that every electoral division is wholly within a single district, so that no division crosses the boundary between two neighbouring districts.

## **2. Principles governing Labour's proposals for Cambridge District**

Labour's proposals for the Cambridge District review are intended to respond appropriately to the Commission's guidelines. The proposals also assume, as the Commission has resolved, that Cambridgeshire County Council will comprise 63 members by 2017 with no dual-member divisions. Respect has been paid primarily, as required, to the principle of equal electoral districts – a principle which earlier iterations appear to have failed adequately to respect. The proposals reflect the problem posed by major growth in some parts of the city and the essential pre-requisite that the proposals should 'correct imbalances' by anticipating growth up to 2020. The proposals are made on the basis of the information which Cambridgeshire County Council has provided noting that, by the time the new registers are intended to come into operation in 2017, half of this anticipated growth is likely already to have occurred.

The proposals also reflect the Commission's concerns for:

- boundaries between divisions 'which are and will remain easily identifiable'
- historic village identities (these are the proposed Chesterton Division, Cherry Hinton, Trumpington, and Newnham)
- historically identifiable geographical locations which have constituted wards or divisions in the past (these are Arbury, the proposed Barnwell Division, Castle, King's Hedges, Romsey, the proposed St Matthew's Division, the proposed St Paul's Division, and Queen Edith's)

In addition, a further principle has been developed here: that the universities and university colleges should be dispersed and diluted amongst as many divisions as is compatible with considerations of numbers and geography.

These principles are developed in greater detail below:

1. Equal divisions constitute the cardinal principle in establishing valid representative electoral areas.
2. There are significant physical boundaries to communities in the city: the river, the railway line, and certain roads:
  - a. The river boundary should only be breached where there are many and flexible crossings. In practice, this means the city centre, where many colleges stretch across both sides of the river. In addition, smaller watercourses such as Vicar's Brook do not form physical boundaries but are clearly identifiable features suitable for use as division boundaries.
  - b. The railway line frequently divides communities, especially where there are a limited number of crossings and where traffic levels cause them to form bottlenecks. The present Abbey and Cherry Hinton divisions already cross railway lines and this has not caused representational problems, while connections between Trumpington and Addenbrookes Hospital are being improved by the construction of new bridges. However, the Mill Road railway bridge between the present Petersfield and Romsey divisions and the Hills Road railway bridge between the present Coleridge and Trumpington divisions are clearly bottlenecks and it is not therefore appropriate for divisions to be connected over them.

- c. Roads are often community identifiers but they are equally often barriers which militate against effective division boundaries. For example, while Mill Road may appear to be a unifying feature to outsiders for whom it is primarily a retail location, the residential communities on either side of Mill Road in the present Petersfield Division are divided by Mill Road and are distinct communities of fundamentally different characters. This is reflected by the existence of different community organisations: Petersfield Area Community Trust (PACT) and South Petersfield Residents' Association (SOPRA).
3. Community identity is a significant issue but can be difficult to pin down. Local councillors and activists can easily confuse existing division boundaries in which they may have thrived politically with what constitutes a 'community'.
4. Villages such as Cherry Hinton, Chesterton, Newnham, and Trumpington are historic parishes. However, these areas have seen significant development since they were incorporated and the generally transient nature of much of Cambridge's population means that it is unwise to adhere too slavishly to historical boundaries.
5. The area surrounding the historic castle mound is a significant feature whose community identity has not been respected in recent boundary arrangements.
6. The present Market Division has long been a local government ward/division and has represented the defined geographic area of the city centre. However, this does not mean it represents a community. The division has historically experienced some of the lowest turnouts in Cambridge District, largely due to its large student population, and this has meant non-student electors in Market have in practice had their votes count more than electors elsewhere in the city. There are therefore benefits in diffusing the impact of the university colleges across as wide a number of divisions as is compatible with topographical coherence: to the proposed divisions of Castle, Newnham, St Matthew's, and St Paul's.
7. Moreover, the students of Cambridge University do not constitute a unified community. The collegiate nature of the university means that students look to their colleges rather than to their university for key services. Their shared interests with students at Anglia Ruskin University (most of whom resident in the Mill Road area) also deserves to be taken into consideration. Like all other residents of the city centre area, students are affected by issues like public safety on the greens and commons as well as congestion in the city centre. It is proposed that no effort should be made to group colleges together artificially into one division. By placing colleges with residential areas with which they share interests, it is hoped that political engagement with university students will be measurably improved.
8. Schools and colleges may have inherited, or with their catchment areas generated, weaker versions of community identities. Examples include Chesterton and Coleridge. But secondary school catchments are wider, and those of primary schools narrower (such as St Luke's, St Matthew's, and St Paul's), than the areas or parishes from which they commonly derive their names. Catchment areas are thus mentioned in the proposals where they support community identities. But the absence of a shared catchment area for a proposed division does not constitute evidence of absence of community identity.
9. Communities in Cambridge without these historic or institutional features have often made valiant efforts to establish themselves with communal activities such as the Mill Road and Romsey Fairs, Arbury Carnival, and Abbey People.
10. These communities, though often dynamic, experience ebbs and flows which ought not to confer on them unchallenged status as valid communities in the face of the over-riding principle that one person's vote should be worth neither more nor less than another's.

### 3. The detailed proposal

The proposal is summarised below:

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

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

Explanations for these proposed divisions are below:

1. **Arbury Division** is clearly bounded on the west by the eponymous Arbury Road, which it now includes. It also includes those streets which directly access the north end of Arbury Road. North of Campkin Road, housing on Arbury Road is located only on the western (Arbury) side. The road also divides the catchment area of Arbury Primary School from that of King's Hedges Primary School and that of Chesterton Community College from that of North Cambridge Academy. Arbury Road thus serves as a meaningful and clearly identifiable barrier. The division clearly includes the entire length of Histon Road and extends as far as Windsor Road to the west. In the south it is clearly bounded by Victoria Road then extends eastwards to include streets north of Chesterton Community College, bisecting Gilbert Road at the traffic lights outside the school. The division thus includes those roads which lead off Victoria Road to the north which also have traffic access northwards to Darwin Drive and Bateson Road. As had been the case in earlier iterations of the boundaries, it also includes North Street.
2. **Barnwell Division** is extended to include all communities bordering on Coldhams Common, which acts as a key shared interest particularly with respect to leisure. Its north side is established by the River Cam. The boundary with Romsey Division is clearly identified by the traffic barriers all along the roads at the north end of the existing Romsey Division. The proposed boundary also reflects distinct community differences in Romsey, bisecting historic nineteenth- and twentieth-century terraced housing from mid-twentieth-century semi-detached housing which was originally council-owned. The boundary with the proposed St Matthew's Division is clearly set at Newmarket Road. As a major transport artery with limited pedestrian crossings, it forms a clearly and largely impermeable boundary.
3. **Castle Division** clearly comprises the eponymous and historic Castle area bounded in the north by Victoria Road, known informally as the 'Triangle', and includes those roads to which only

Victoria Road provides vehicular access. It clearly consists of those streets between Histon Road and Madingley Road, including the north side of Madingley Road itself. South of the river, it includes areas of Magdalene College and St John's College, both of which occupy properties on both sides of the Cam and residential areas which (due to bollards) can only be accessed north of the Cam.

4. **Cherry Hinton Division** contains the historic village and is clearly bounded by the airport to the north, by the city boundary to the east, and by Cherry Hinton Brook to the west. To the south and south west, its boundaries are set to include the north side only of Cherry Hinton Road and Perne Road but also to include Perne Avenue and Gisborne Road. It also includes two roads to the south of Cherry Hinton Road whose vehicular access is confined to Cherry Hinton Road.
5. **Chesterton Division** approximates the historic Chesterton village. While this abolishes the present East Chesterton and West Chesterton divisions, this distinction is meaningful primarily to political activists rather than to residents. Road signs direct motorists neither to East Chesterton nor West Chesterton but to Chesterton. School catchment areas are not divided along Elizabeth Way and the Chesterton Residents' Association serves communities currently in both East Chesterton and West Chesterton. Historically and architecturally, Elizabeth Way provides a wholly artificial and false boundary between divisions. The proposed division's boundaries are set clearly to reflect existing features. In the east it has those roads to which only Fen Road provides vehicular access, separated between Franks Lane and Cam Causeway to the north and Fallowfields and Cheney Way to the south. Further north, the junction of Green End Road with High Street and Water Lane forms the boundary. The division takes in roads accessible only from Scotland Road as well as communities on both sides of Milton Road. In the north, Chesterton Community College marks the boundary while, in the west, Mitcham's Corner forms a clear boundary. The division thus includes all of Milton Road as far east as Arbury Road and streets between Gilbert Road and Arbury Road.
6. **King's Hedges Division** is situated to the east of Arbury and encompasses communities on both sides of Milton Road with Chesterton as the bordering division. The importance of Arbury Road as a dividing line between communities has already been laid out and the proposed division excludes the entirety of Arbury Road. Milton Road, however, serves to unite the communities that look onto it. Both Woodhead Drive (to the north) and the Fraser Road area (to the south) have vehicular access only onto Milton Road and communities on both sides are served by the Guided Busway and the Citi 2 service. Road signage on Arbury Road and Milton Road at Mitcham's Corner also point to this area as King's Hedges. Children on both sides of Milton Road attend North Cambridge Academy. The properties in the parts of the division south of Milton Road include a high proportion of new developments (particularly in the 'Apples' estate) and they thus have similar interests to those historically located in King's Hedges rather than with the more established communities in Chesterton.
7. **Newnham Division** respects the historic village identity of the area west of the River Cam and south of Madingley Road. It includes Queens' College which bridges the river, Silver Street, and Little St Mary's. It conforms exactly to the catchment area of Newnham Croft Primary School.
8. **Queen Edith's Division's** northern side is clearly demarcated as the area south of Cherry Hinton Road, excluding only a small area (Bullen Court and Missleton Court) whose only vehicular access is via Cherry Hinton Road. To the west it is bounded by the railway as far south as Long Road. The area around Addenbrooke's Hospital is identified as part of the major development in the south of the city associated with Trumpington and the boundary of Queen Edith's Division is therefore set to exclude those properties on Hills Road and Babraham Road which abut the hospital site.



9. **Romsey Division** incorporates all the existing division minus those parts of northern Romsey absorbed into the new Barnwell Division, following the line of the existing traffic barriers. It is bounded by the railway in the west until that meets Hills Road at which point it is clearly then bounded in the south by Cherry Hinton Road, of which it retains only the north side. To the east it is bounded by, but does not include, Perne Road, Perne Avenue, and Gisborne Road. It does include Brooks Road and Brookside. The name Romsey is chosen in recognition of the historic consideration that Coleridge Division was originally created out of Romsey. Unlike the present Petersfield Division, Mill Road east of the railway serves as a community unifier. Residents in the existing Romsey and Coleridge divisions identify themselves as residents east of the railway and locate Mill Road as the central spine of their community. In particular, Mill Road serves as a key transport route for Coleridge residents who access the road via Coleridge Road.
10. **St Paul's Division** is created from the northernmost part of the existing Trumpington Division, the southern and western part of existing Market Division, and the southern part of the existing Petersfield Division. Its boundaries are clearly set at the railway to the east as far north as the Mill Road railway bridge. It includes all those streets to the west of Mill Road (but not Mill Road itself), Parker's Piece, and Emmanuel College, as well as those streets west of Sidney Street as far north as the junction at the Round Church. It excludes St John's College. To the west it is bounded by the River Cam but excludes Queens' College, Silver Street and Little St Mary's Street. To the south west it is bounded by Vicar's Brook and Empty Common, and includes the developments on the Cambridge University printing and government offices site. The proposed division reflects strong community identity between southern Petersfield and Newtown. Both areas are connected by Hills Road, especially retail facilities and bus services, and use similar community facilities such as St Paul's Church. Both areas are also served by St Paul's Primary School. The community in southern Petersfield is also strongly demarcated from the community in northern Petersfield by Mill Road, reflected in the two residents' associations serving the two different communities.
11. **St Matthew's Division** is clearly demarcated to the east by the railway and to the north by Newmarket Road as far west as Elizabeth Way. It includes all the east side of the existing Market Division up to and including Christ's College, Sidney Street, and Park Street up to the vehicle barriers. Its south-west side is clearly demarcated by Parkside and Mill Road as far east as the railway bridge. The proposed St Matthew's Division restores the historic local government electoral ward/division which covered the area now known as northern Petersfield and the area surrounding the Grafton Centre. This is reflected in the name of the local primary school, whose catchment area would conform with the proposed division, and the 1960s housing estate built alongside Norfolk Street and East Road commonly known as the St Matthew's Estate. The present boundaries rely on the artificial and false boundary of East Road which provides a popular interchange for residents accessing northern Petersfield from the Grafton Centre and *vice versa*.
12. **Trumpington Division** is based on the historic village, retaining the southernmost parts of the existing division, but excluding those northern parts which become St Paul's Division whose boundary is Vicar's Brook and the Brooklands Avenue junction with Trumpington Road. This also matches the catchment area of Fawcett Primary School. It also incorporates all of Long Road and the roads abutting Addenbrooke's Hospital on the west side of Hills Road and Babraham Road. Further development in the south of the city will lead to an increase in the numbers of voters in this division and care has been taken to ensure that this division will continue to provide electoral equality in 2020 and beyond. New bus connections now mean that Addenbrooke's is accessible from Trumpington. The division thus respects the continuing identity of Trumpington as a community partially separate from Cambridge and also unites the city's hospital and a large number of its employees in the same division.

**4. Map of the proposal**

