

Exeter City Council Electoral Review

Warding Patterns Submission



March 2015

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1. Introduction

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is carrying out an electoral review of the City. The LGBCE has finished its consultation on the size of the Council and is minded that Exeter City Council should have 39 members in the future.

The Commission has now asked for submissions proposing Warding patterns that reflect this change. Any group or individual is able to put forward suggestions on Warding patterns for all or part of the City. The LGBCE will consider all submissions and propose a warding pattern for the City and then run a ten week consultation on these proposed warding patterns before it publishes its final recommendations. Boundaries will be changed following the laying down of an Order in Parliament and will take effect from the city council elections in May 2016.

In preparing its submission proposing new ward arrangements for the City, the Council must take account of:

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

2. Equality of representation

Based on a council size of 39 and growth projections, the projected electorate in 2020 is 94,016 which means the average number of electors for each Councillor is 2,411.

3. Community identities and interests

Using maps, the Electoral Review Steering Group met on two occasions to consider the proposed ward boundaries, bearing in mind the above criteria. It identified key communities within the City, as well as any man-made or natural barriers such as major roads, rivers and water courses that acted as boundaries between communities. Using the Group and officer's knowledge of communities within the City, warding arrangements are proposed that the Steering Group feels best reflect the community identities and interests of the area, whilst ensuring the proposals would deliver electoral equality.

The table provided as **Appendix 1** provides a summary of proposed warding arrangements and the figures to support the proposals. A copy of a map showing the proposed new Ward boundaries is also enclosed as **Appendix 2** document.

This submission also provides evidence and rationale for how the proposed warding arrangements reflect community identities and interests by highlighting local amenities and facilities that may be either a focal point or natural break between communities; the history and tradition of individual areas which may be the basis of their sense of community identity; and any natural or man-made physical barriers that mark the

boundary between different communities. The list is not exhaustive; it is illustrative of the connections that bind local communities.

The submission was further considered by the Council's Executive Committee on 17 March 2015 and formally approved by Full Council on the 25 March 2015.

PROPOSED WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The table below shows how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory criteria of:

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

It is proposed that all Wards are represented by 3 councillors.

Ward Name	Forecast electorate 2020	Forecast electoral variance in 2020	Evidence and rationale that the proposals meet the 3 statutory criteria
Alphington	6970	-3.62%	This is an existing 3 member ward, which has been extended to its previous North Eastern boundary, but retains its strong natural boundaries of the Western and Southern boundary of the City, the River Exe and railway line. There is a strong community within Alphington itself, where many local facilities are provided. The area which has been added to this ward is serviced predominantly by roads accessed via the mainroad which dissects the ward.
Duryard	7571	+4.69%	This combines the existing Duryard ward with the existing St James ward. It encompasses much of the student accommodation required for Exeter University (both on and off campus) and as such has a wide range of community facilities within the area to serve its requirements. Great attention has been paid to ensuring that the St James Neighbourhood Plan area is included in one ward and this has been achieved here. Its boundaries are well defined by the River Exe and roads.
Exwick	7332	+1.38%	This is an existing 3 member ward, which has strong boundaries on all its sides (the city boundary and the River

			Exe.) Its Southern boundary has been extended to include those properties accessed from Isleworth Road. There is a strong community spirit within the area, focussed principally around the previous village of Exwick and developments in this area. The majority of the area is accessed via the main road which runs through the centre of the ward.
Heavitree	7002	-3.18%	This retains the current Heavitree Ward, which is extended to take in part of the previous Polsloe and Whipton Barton Wards, allowing it to take in all of the area known locally as Heavitree (including the cemetery). It has strong community spirit around the previous village of Heavitree, which has many local facilities which serve as a local hub. It also has strong public transport links to the city centre by both rail and bus.
Middlemoor	7054	-2.46%	This retains the previous St. Loyes ward and is added to by an area of the previous Whipton Barton ward bounded by the railway line, therefore forming strong boundaries to all sides. It has been renamed Middlemoor, which is a locally recognised area of the City. The majority of the residential areas in this ward, are serviced by the main arterial road running through the centre of the ward and also benefits from a railway station within the ward.
Pinhoe	7406	+2.41%	This ward takes in virtually all of the previous Pinhoe ward, whilst taking in part of the previous Whipton Barton ward. It is very much based around the previous village of Pinhoe, which has good community facilities and local recognition. The majority of the ward is serviced via a main road which cuts through the centre of the ward, as well as a railway station.
Priory	7039	-2.67%	This is an existing 3 member ward, which has amended only slightly from its current state, with its boundary with the Topsham ward being moved to the centre of the main arterial

			road (Topsham Road). This together with its other boundaries of river and roads, gives a very strong definition to the area. There are two distinct communities within the ward (both of which have strong local identities and are served well by good community facilities and public transport), with also some connectivity between the two.
Riverside	7467	+3.25%	This ward takes in the majority of the City Centre and its local and city-wide facilities. It has strong boundaries with them being easily defined by river, road or railway line. It also brings both sides of the Quay community together in one ward, therefore strengthening this aspect of riverside living. There are local community facilities at both the Quay and also in the St David's area of the proposed ward..
Magdalen	7062	-2.35%	This ward takes in all of the previous Newtown ward as well as the majority of the previous St Leonard's ward. It brings together all of the outer city centre area and is served by local community facilities based around the Magdalen Road and Newtown areas. The ward takes its name from the main road running through the centre of it.
St Thomas	7477	+3.39%	This ward takes in all of the existing St Thomas ward, but now also takes in the area known locally as Higher St Thomas, and which looks to use the local facilities of St Thomas. This is one of the strongest local communities within the City. It has good public transport links with the City Centre, including a railway station.
Stoke Hill	7211	-0.29%	This takes in the previous Pennsylvania ward, which is extended to take in all of the properties which are accessed from both sides of Pinhoe Road. The ward has been renamed to take account of the strong community based around the Stoke Hill area of the City with its boundaries being very distinctly defined by roads and the City limits.
Topsham	7231	-0.01%	This is an existing 2 member ward which has been only slightly amended from its current state (as detailed above in

			<p>the Priory description) and, as such, retains its very strong boundaries of city limits, rivers and roads.</p> <p>There are two distinct communities within this ward – one very much based around the historic town of Topsham (and all the facilities that brings) with the second very much still in the development stage. Both communities are well served by public transport, including rail stops in both.</p> <p>The smaller community within the Southbrook area of the City remains connected with the remainder of the ward by a main arterial road to the City and public transport.</p>
Whipton	7191	-0.57%	<p>This ward covers all of the area previously covered by the Mincinglake ward, but now includes the area to the South of the Whipton Village centre bounded by the railway line and roads. This allows for the strong local community around the previous village centre of Whipton to be enhanced in this area. There is a further strong local community around the Beacon Lane area of the City.</p>