

PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

4.2 Proposals for future County electoral arrangements for East Cambridgeshire

4.2.1 With a council size of 68, East Cambridgeshire is entitled to 9 electoral divisions. The County Council proposes the following arrangement, illustrated on map A2.2, which leads to 100% coterminosity across the district.

Table 3: Proposal for East Cambridgeshire - see map A2.2

Division	District Wards	2003 electors	Variation from County Average	2008 electors	Variation from county average
Littleport	Littleport East	3,474		5,090	
	Littleport West	1,918		2,100	
		5,392	-15%	7,190	7%
Ely North East	Ely East	2,954		2,920	
	Ely North	3,804		4,610	
		6,758	6%	7,530	12%
Ely South West	Ely South	1,997		2,610	
	Ely West	3,355		3,570	
		5,352	-16%	6,180	-8%
Sutton	Downham Villages	3,216		3,140	
	Sutton	2,636		2,720	
		5,852	-8%	5,860	-13%
Haddenham	Haddenham	4,306		4,250	
	Stretham	2,792		2,750	
		7,098	12%	7,000	4%
Burwell	Burwell	4,567		4,520	
	The Swaffhams	1,545		1,530	
		6,112	-4%	6,050	-10%

Woodditton	Bottisham	2,906		2,840	
	Dullingham Villages	1,553		1,530	
	Cheveley	3,068		2,980	
		7,527	19%	7,350	9%
Soham	Soham North	2,870		3,310	
	Soham South	4,587		4,510	
		7,457	18%	7,820	16%
Fordham	Isleham	1,672		1,640	
	Fordham	2,672		2,630	
		4,344	-32%	4,270	-37%
Total electorate		55,892		59,250	

4.2.2 The proposed **Littleport** division unites the two Littleport parish wards, keeping this large village together. The electorate in Littleport is forecast to rise significantly, so that, by 2008, it would be within 10% of the county average.

4.2.3 Two divisions are proposed in the **City of Ely**. These divide the whole parish into two coterminous divisions. The electorates of the contiguous wards mean that Ely North East, composed of Ely East ward and Ely North ward, has an electorate of 12% above average. Ely South West, formed from Ely South ward and Ely West ward, falls at 8% below average. Ely is a significant settlement, with a more 'urban' population, and the County Council feels strongly that it should not be grouped with surrounding rural parishes. During consultation, the City of Ely Council supported these division arrangements.

4.2.4 The proposed **Sutton** division combines Sutton ward and Downham Villages ward. The division is coterminous, with electoral variation of 13% below the county average. The proposed **Haddenham** division groups Haddenham ward and Stretham ward. Electoral variation is 4% above the county average by 2008. Together these divisions cover the rural area to the west of the three large settlements of Littleport, Ely and Soham. The River Cam forms a natural division between this area and the rural area to the south of the district.

4.2.5 The proposed **Burwell** division groups the district wards of Burwell and The Swaffhams. These are closely linked by the B1102, which is the main route to this part of the district from Cambridge. By 2008 the electorate would be 10% below the county average.

4.2.6 The proposed **Woodditton** division groups the rural area to the south of Newmarket together, with Bottisham and Lode included to avoid breaking Bottisham ward and losing coterminosity. The electorate is 9% above the county average by 2008.

- 4.2.7 The two remaining divisions in the district are in the **Soham** area. This part of the district constitutes a clearly separate area, bordered to the west by the River Cam, to the south by New River and the Little Fen area, to the east by Newmarket and the district boundary, and to the north by Crooked Drain and the sparsely populated Middle Fen and Great Fen rural area.
- 4.2.8 During consultation, the County Council sought views on moving away from coterminosity and dividing Soham parish further. This would have led to reasonable electoral equality. Representations received from local parties demonstrated strong feelings against such a proposal. A case was made for grouping all of Soham town into one division, and also for keeping Wicken (now part of Soham South district ward) with Soham. According to Wicken Parish Council, children from Wicken attend school in Soham, and the two parishes share a Vicar and Methodist Minister. The County Council agreed that the best arrangement for Soham would be to group Soham North and Soham South district wards into one division, with electoral variation of 16% above the county average.
- 4.2.9 The County Council proposes that the remaining wards of Isleham and Fordham be grouped into one rural division. This division's electorate would be significantly below the county average, at -37%. The County Council feels that this level of inequality should be accepted in this isolated, sparsely populated area, right at the edge of the County. Creating a two-member division with the Soham wards was discussed but rejected on the grounds that the size and local significance of Soham would eclipse the very different needs of Isleham and Fordham.