

# PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## 4.4 Proposals for future County electoral arrangements for Huntingdonshire

### The County Council's preferred option - map A2.4

4.4.1 This option leads to coterminosity of 28% (5 of 18 divisions).

**Table 5: Proposal for Huntingdonshire - illustrated on map A2.4**

Division	Constituent wards or parishes	2003 electorate	Variation from county average	2008 electorate	Variation from county average
Ramsey	Ramsey	<b>6,147</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>6,280</b>	<b>-7%</b>
Warboys	Upwood and The Raveleys	2,365		2,330	
	Warboys and Bury	4,650		4,680	
	<i>Broughton parish</i>	195		200	
	<i>Old Hurst parish</i>	220		220	
	<i>Woodhurst parish</i>	266		270	
	<i>Pidley-cum-Fenton parish</i>	294		300	
		<b>7,990</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>19%</b>
Somersham	<i>Somersham parish</i>	2,865		2,790	
	<i>Colne parish</i>	619		640	
	Earith	4,732		4,610	
		<b>8,216</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>8,040</b>	<b>19%</b>
St Ives East	St Ives East	5,163		5,010	
	<i>St Ives South part</i>	841		810	
		<b>6,004</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>5,820</b>	<b>-14%</b>
St Ives South	<i>St Ives South remainder</i>	4,023		4,180	
	St Ives West	2,268		2,360	
		<b>6,291</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>6,540</b>	<b>-3%</b>

Fenstanton & The Hemingfords	Fenstanton	2,241		2,350	
	The Hemingfords	4,691		4,740	
		<b>6,932</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7,090</b>	<b>5%</b>
Huntingdon North	<i>Huntingdon North</i>	<b>6,120</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>6,250</b>	<b>-7%</b>
Huntingdon East	<i>Huntingdon East</i>	<b>6,729</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>6,570</b>	<b>-2%</b>
Huntingdon Town & Godmanchester	<i>Huntingdon Town</i>	1,962		2,410	
	Godmanchester	4,545		4,920	
		<b>6,507</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7,330</b>	<b>9%</b>
St Neots Rural	Gransden & The Offords	3,526		5,270	
	Little Paxton	2,421		2,600	
		<b>5,947</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>7,870</b>	<b>17%</b>
St Neots Eynesbury	St Neots Eynesbury	<b>6,694</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7,940</b>	<b>18%</b>
St Neots North	<i>St Neots North (Priory Park + part Eaton Ford)</i>	<b>7,303</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>7,160</b>	<b>6%</b>
St Neots Eaton	<i>St Neots Eaton (part Eaton Ford + Eaton Socon)</i>	<b>7,005</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>6,830</b>	<b>1%</b>
Buckden	Buckden	2,505		2,440	
	Kimbolton & Staughton	2,444		2,400	
	<i>Grafham and Perry parishes</i>	1,007		1,000	
		<b>5,956</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>-13%</b>

Sawtry	Ellington	2,218		2,280	
	Sawtry	5,047		4,960	
		<b>7,265</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>7,240</b>	<b>7%</b>
Brampton	<i>Brampton parish</i>	3,643		3,580	
	Alconbury & The Stukeleys	2,506		3,750	
		<b>6,149</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>7,330</b>	<b>9%</b>
Norman Cross	Stilton	2,348		2,350	
	Elton & Folksworth	2,147		2,130	
	<i>Farcet parish</i>	1,372		1,360	
		<b>5,867</b>	<b>-8%</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>-13%</b>
Yaxley	<i>Yaxley parish</i>	<b>5,896</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>6,690</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Total electorate</b>		<b>119,018</b>		<b>124,680</b>	

### The market towns

4.4.2 In St Ives, the County Council proposes creating two non-coterminous divisions, St Ives East and St Ives South West, with electoral variation of -14% and -3% respectively. St Ives East comprises the whole of St Ives East ward, with the addition of a small section from St Ives South ward, as shown in map A2.4a. The non-coterminous boundary runs along the A1123, the main route through the town, and up Ramsey Road to join the existing district ward boundary. Although coterminosity is lost, the proposed boundary is easily identifiable and it divides the town logically, leading to an acceptable level of electoral equality.

4.4.3 In St Neots, the County Council proposes creating three electoral divisions: one fully coterminous with the St Neots Eynesbury district ward, and two non-coterminous divisions from the Priory Park, Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon district wards. The Eynesbury division is projected to grow to 18% above the county average by 2008. The County Council considered this level of inequality to be justifiable given the maintenance of coterminosity. The Council proposes that the Eaton Ford district ward be split along Duloe Road / Mill Hill Road (as shown in map A2.4b). The area of Eaton Ford to the north should be combined with Priory Park ward to form St Neots North. The area to the south should be combined with Eaton Socon district ward, to form St Neots Eaton. Electoral variation for these divisions is 6% above and 1% above the county average respectively. Although coterminosity is lost, the proposed new boundary is easily identifiable and leads to a good level of electoral equality.

- 4.4.4 The County Council notes the proposal from Huntingdonshire District Council to combine Eynesbury and Eaton Socon into one two-member division. Although this leads to a good level of equality in that division, the grouping is problematic as the River Ouse and extensive riverside area divide the two wards. The main crossing point between the two sections of the division would be St Neots Bridge, which means leaving the division and entering Eaton Ford before returning to the division in question.
- 4.4.5 In **Huntingdon**, the County Council proposes three non-coterminous divisions (as shown in map A2.4c): Huntingdon Town & Godmanchester (6% by 2008), Huntingdon East (-5% by 2008) and Huntingdon North (-10% by 2008). The Huntingdon Town & Godmanchester division groups the parish of Godmanchester with the historic town centre area of Huntingdon. These adjoining settlements are closely linked by the B1044. To reach Huntingdon from the south, drivers must leave the A14 and approach through Godmanchester. The division also includes the Hinchingsbrooke Park area. Although somewhat separated from the rest of Huntingdon by the A14, the area is linked to the town centre by the B1514. The proposed boundary follows the natural boundaries of the A14 and railway line, before heading east to join the existing district ward boundary.
- 4.4.6 The proposed Huntingdon North division combines the remaining Huntingdon West area (mainly the Stukeley Meadows estate) with the Oxmoor estate. The County Council feels it is important that the Oxmoor area is not split between divisions - the area has SRB funding and local regeneration initiatives focus on fostering a cohesive community identity. The industrial land towards the centre of the division is a key growth area for the district.
- 4.4.7 The proposed Huntingdon East division is composed of the rest of Huntingdon East ward. The majority of the division is coterminous with the district ward boundary, with the exception of a small area near the A14.
- 4.4.8 Despite the loss of coterminosity, the County Council feels these proposals best reflect the different community areas of Huntingdon and would therefore facilitate good representation.

### **Ramsey, Upwood, Warboys and Somersham**

- 4.4.9 The north-east part of Huntingdonshire forms a natural section of the district, bordered to the south by the market towns of St Ives and Huntingdon, and to the west by the large rural area west of Ramsey and Woodwalton. Although not coterminous with the district ward boundary, the A1(M) forms a significant boundary between the north-east and north-west areas of the district.
- 4.4.10 The County Council proposes creating three divisions from the parishes in this area. The first is coterminous with the Ramsey parish and district ward boundary, with an electorate 7% below the county average by 2008. The second and third divisions both have an electorate 19% above the county average by 2008. The proposed Warboys division is composed of Upwood & The Raveleys district ward, Warboys district ward, and the parishes of Broughton, Old Hurst, Woodhurst and Pidley-cum-Fenton from Somersham ward. The proposed Somersham division constitutes the remaining parishes of Somersham and Colne from Somersham ward, and Earith ward. Importantly, these groupings keep the rural villages separate from St Ives, a sentiment expressed strongly by Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council.

Although the high electoral variation in these two divisions is undesirable, and the divisions are geographically larger than would be ideal, Councillors felt they reflect the natural settlement groupings well.

### **North-west Huntingdonshire**

- 4.4.11 The County Council proposes creating one division from the parish of Yaxley, which would have an electorate of 1% below the county average by 2008. Keeping the district ward of Yaxley and Farcet together would result in an electorate 20% above the county average, which in this case was felt to be undesirable.
- 4.4.12 The proposed Norman Cross division combines the wards of Elton & Folksworth and Stilton with Farcet parish, to form a division 13% below the county average by 2008. This division groups parishes located close to, and heavily influenced by, Peterborough.
- 4.4.13 Along the western edge of the County, the Council proposes grouping the district wards of Sawtry and Ellington to form Sawtry division. Electoral variation is 7% above the county average by 2008 and the division is coterminous.
- 4.4.14 In the centre of the district, the Council proposes Brampton division, combining Alconbury & The Stukeleys district ward with the parish of Brampton, to give a division with 9% more electors than the county average. The parishes concerned share a close relationship with Huntingdon and all have a significant armed forces presence.

### **South Huntingdonshire**

- 4.4.15 In the south of the district, three rural divisions are proposed. The Kimbolton division is formed from Kimbolton & Staughton district ward, the parishes of Grafham and Perry, and Buckden district ward. The electorate is 13% below the county average by 2008. The St Neots Rural division groups the wards of Little Paxton and Gransden & The Offords. These wards share a close relationship with St Neots. Part of the division, by 2008, will contain new development on the St Neots fringe.
- 4.4.16 The County Council notes the strong opinion received from representatives for Little Paxton that the village be included in a St Neots division. The Council were unable to integrate this wish with the proposal for the rest of the district, and also felt a number of other parishes could claim a similarly close relationship with St Neots.
- 4.4.17 The remaining Fenstanton & The Hemingfords division is composed from the wards of The Hemingfords and Fenstanton, with an electorate 5% above the county average.

### **The County Council's reserve option - map A2.4d**

- 4.4.18 The County Council feels that the 'preferred option', outlined above, best reflects local needs and would give the best local representation. The Council does, however, also realise that the low level of coterminosity is undesirable. Councillors remain opposed to the introduction of multi-member wards but, in

Huntingdonshire, can see they could lead to higher levels of coterminosity, particularly in the market towns. The County Council therefore asks that the Boundary Committee give consideration also to this alternative option. This includes four two-member divisions.

4.4.19 The reserve option leads to 66% coterminosity across the district. The electoral information for the altered divisions is given below; the remaining divisions are as proposed in the 'preferred option'.

**Table 6: Alternative division arrangements for Huntingdonshire - map A2.4d**

Division	Constituent wards or parishes	2003 electorate	Variation from county average	2008 electorate	Variation from county average
St Ives	St Ives East	5,163		5,010	
(2 member)	St Ives South	4,864		5,000	
	St Ives West	2,268		2,360	
		12,295		12,370	
		6,148	-3%	6,185	-8%
Huntingdon East & Godmanchester	Godmanchester	4,545		4,920	
	Huntingdon East	6,737		6,580	
(2 member)	Huntingdon North	3,740		3,920	
		15,022		15,420	
		7,511	18%	7,710	14%
Huntingdon West & Brampton	Huntingdon West	4,334		4,740	
	<i>Brampton parish</i>	3,643		3,580	
(2 member)	Alconbury & The Stukeleys	2,506		3,750	
		10,483		12,070	
		5,242	-17%	6,035	-10%
Norman Cross	Stilton	2,348		2,350	
(2 member)	Elton & Folksworth	2,147		2,130	
	Yaxley & Farcet	7,268		8,050	
		11,763		12,530	
		5,882	-7%	6,265	-7%

- 4.4.20 The main differences in the reserve option are in the market towns of St Ives and Huntingdon. The proposal would retain the original arrangement for St Neots, which involves splitting a parished area. The proposed new boundary is clear and sensible and would lead to good overall representation in St Neots. Creating a two-member division from the Priory Park, Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon wards would lead to an overly large and unwieldy division, especially in comparison to the remaining Eynesbury division.
- 4.4.21 In St Ives, the three district wards could be combined into a single two-member division, with electoral equality 8% below the county average. This arrangement is coterminous and leads to a good level of electoral equality, while also keeping the whole of the market town together and separate from the surrounding rural parishes.
- 4.4.22 In the Huntingdon area, two two-member divisions could be created. The Huntingdon East and Godmanchester division groups Huntingdon East, Huntingdon West and Godmanchester into one two-member division, with an electorate 14% above the county average by 2008. Huntingdon North and Brampton groups Huntingdon North with Alconbury & The Stukeleys ward and the parish of Brampton. This division's electorate would be 10% below the county average by 2008. Although the divisions do combine parts of Huntingdon with surrounding more rural areas, the parishes concerned do have close connections with Huntingdon and each other, and in some cases there is little clear separation between different settlements.
- 4.4.23 One further two-member division could be created, called Yaxley, in the north of the district. This would combine the wards of Yaxley and Norman Cross, and would have an electorate of 7% below the county average by 2008. This division avoids splitting the villages of Yaxley and Farcet, which Farcet Parish Council would prefer.