

# **RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP**

## **Rushcliffe Electoral Review Proposals for warding in Rushcliffe 28 May 2012**

Councillor George Davidson  
Leader, Liberal Democrat Group, Rushcliffe Borough Council

1. Following this group's submissions on 30 December 2011 and 23 February 2012 to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England about the number of borough councillors in Rushcliffe, this document now presents our proposal for warding a council with 45 members instead of the current 50.
2. Although our previous submissions presented our case for retaining a council with 50 members, a council with 45 members can be made to work, provided that certain principles are observed in drawing the ward boundaries.
3. We believe that the current set-up has worked well since the last review about 12 years ago. The wards have been of a suitable size and have facilitated good connections between electors and councillors. We have tried as far as possible to retain these features and to build on the best of the current set-up with a minimum of disruption for both electors and council officers.
4. All figures shown in this document are taken from the Council's forecasts of the numbers of electors in 2018, taking account of expected population changes and housing growth. There are expected to be **93496** electors in the borough of Rushcliffe in 2018. With a council of 45 members, there would be **2078** electors per councillor. With a permitted variation of plus or minus 10% from the average, each ward would have to have between **1870** and **2285** electors per councillor. This proposal achieves this aim, except for a very minor excess variation in the case of Thoroton ward, which is explained below.
5. The electoral register is currently divided into 95 polling districts, which are the basic units of electoral structure from which wards and other areas are constructed. Our aim has been to retain the same polling districts as far as possible, to minimise disruption and retain community identity. This aim has been completely achieved in all areas outside West Bridgford and partially within West Bridgford.
6. Outside West Bridgford, we have aimed to respect community identity, based on parish boundaries, and we have very largely achieved this. Inside West Bridgford, we have aimed to build on local community identities where these are clearly discernible, and we have proposed sensible ward boundaries in those parts of the urban area where it is not possible to identify clearly separate communities.
7. We submit that this proposal is mathematically valid and geographically sensible. There has been no attempt to seek party-political advantage. There has been no artificial drawing of boundaries so as to skew the patterns of voting.
8. We now present our proposals for the urban West Bridgford area, followed by the rest of the borough.

### **West Bridgford**

9. Since 2003, West Bridgford has been divided into 9 x 2-member wards. This arrangement has worked well and has provided close connection between electors and councillors, while giving electors a choice of whom to contact with their concerns and problems and allowing reasonable

cover for absences. Our original submission set out this reasoning in greater detail. We believe that it is best to retain a similar arrangement, and therefore propose dividing the urban area into 8 x 2-member wards, to deal with the overall reduction in councillors.

10. The proposal attempts to meet the requirements of a reduction in councillors with minimum disruption to existing wards, so as to retain existing community identities as far as possible. It reflects a combination of characteristics of the area: the radial nature of arterial roads which create some logical boundaries, bus routes and connections between areas, and seeks to keep large areas in previous ward identities, despite the inevitable disruption of the change to larger wards.

11. The proposal provides the least possible variation in elector numbers consistent with connected areas. It retains one ward without change (Compton Acres). It removes one ward (Melton) and addresses the oversize of Edwalton ward by adjusting bordering areas. The remaining wards could retain their existing names, although Trent Bridge could be renamed "West Bridgford Central". As far as possible, this proposal retains identifiable communities within a single ward.

12. Currently the semi-rural parish of Holme Pierrepont (polling district EE) is part of the borough ward of Gamston. As Holme Pierrepont does not obviously belong to the built-up conurbation, we propose removing it from Gamston and including it in Tollerton, to which it is adjacent.

13. The area covered by the remaining 21 polling districts in urban West Bridgford includes 33935 electors. We propose dividing this area into 8 x 2-member wards. Each ward will have an average of 4242 electors. There will be an average of 2121 electors per councillor throughout West Bridgford, which is just 2.1% above the average in the whole borough. As noted above, there will have to be between 1870 and 2285 electors per councillor in each ward, and this proposal achieves this in every ward in West Bridgford. The corollary is that each of the 2-member wards will have to have between 3740 and 4570 electors.

14. It would have been most convenient to construct the 7 new wards (that is, all those in West Bridgford apart from Compton Acres) from the 18 polling districts which currently cover this area. However, this would not have been possible without breaching the permitted limits of variation and ending up with some very peculiar and divergent wards. So we are here abandoning the retention of the existing polling districts and are simply proposing some ward boundaries which aim to produce wards of roughly equal size. It is outside our scope to propose the new polling district boundaries. However, many existing polling districts are left unchanged in this proposal, so in many parts of West Bridgford there may be no need to realign polling districts.

### **The proposed wards in West Bridgford**

15. **Compton Acres**, which is an identifiable community with well-defined boundaries, is unchanged. The total number of electors (4053) is near target.

16. **Lady Bay** is largely unchanged. The community of Lady Bay is not large enough for a ward of its own and the existing boundaries already cross Radcliffe Road to include a considerable amount of similar housing in central West Bridgford up to the edge of West Bridgford Park. However, elector numbers are under 4000. The proposal extends the ward slightly to include from Abbey ward an area up to and including Violet Road to create a ward of approximately 4152.

17. **Gamston** is marginally changed. The existing ward contains all of the identifiable community of Gamston, but the current number of electors is considerably lower than average at well under 4000. The proposal extends the area of the ward by adding adjacent housing from Edwalton ward to the east of Alford Road and includes Leahurst Road and Leahurst Gardens to create a ward of approximately 4502.

18. **Edwalton** is reduced in size to take account of the anticipated growth of the ward in the Sharphill development. An area (described above) is transferred into Gamston ward. A small area

is removed into Musters: the eastern remnant of Boundary Road, Sutherland Drive and Rydal Gardens. An area is moved from Melton into Edwalton, being a block comprised of Dovedale Road, the sections of Trevor, Dunster and Rodney Roads from Stamford Road to Leahurst Road to create a ward (with the anticipated housing growth) of approximately 4258.

19. **Lutterell** is marginally changed. The existing ward has logically defined boundaries to the south-west (Compton Acres) and to the west (Loughborough Road). However, it is considerably smaller than the average. The proposal extends the ward northwards by transferring an area of roads between and including Loughborough Road and Melton Road from Trent Bridge ward and North Road from Musters to create a ward of approximately 4243.

20. **Abbey** is substantially changed. The existing ward makes some sense, but current elector numbers are well under 4000. The proposal extends it southward and westward so that its boundaries from the Abbey estate run along Stamford Road (including a block to the south comprising Covert and Glenmore Roads). The western edge would include the east side of Melton Road as far as Clumber Road. The boundary would then run along Clumber Road, across to Abbey Circus and then north along Abbey Road. A section of the existing Abbey ward close to the centre of West Bridgford would be moved into Trent Bridge ward. This proposal would create a ward of approximately 4324.

21. **Musters** is marginally changed. The existing ward has well-defined boundaries to the south, east and west and consists of broadly similar housing along bus routes, but current elector numbers are well under 4000. The proposals are to extend the ward to the east to take in an area of similar housing from the junction of Musters and Melton Roads along Melton Road, mainly from Melton ward and partly from Edwalton ward. Moved in from Edwalton would be the remnant of Boundary Road, Sutherland Drive and Rydal Gardens. Moved in from Melton would be the western side of Melton Road and tributary roads to the west of that road. In addition, North Road is moved to Lutterell. This proposal would create a ward of approximately 4095. In view of the large geographical area of Edwalton, we suggest that the southern boundary of Musters be extended across the countryside to the A52 ring road between either side of Sharphill Wood and the Cemetery.

22. **Trent Bridge** is substantially changed. The elector numbers in the existing ward are well under 4000. Expansion to the south is impossible without disrupting the logical boundaries of Compton Acres, with consequent knock-on effects elsewhere. The proposal is to make this a more rounded shape consistent with the description of Central West Bridgford by including substantial areas of Abbey and Melton wards and transferring the block between Loughborough and Melton Roads to Lutterell ward (described above). The southern ward boundary currently runs along Rectory Road. The proposal is for this to change to run from Melton Road along Clumber Road, across to Abbey Circus and then north along Abbey Road to create a ward of approximately 4308.

23. In concluding this description of the proposed arrangements for West Bridgford, we refer readers to Appendix 1 (outline map of new ward boundaries in West Bridgford) and Appendix 3 (table of ward and polling district sizes).

### **Outside West Bridgford**

24. In the rural and semi-rural areas outside the conurbation, we have retained all the existing polling districts and constructed the new wards from them. There will be 59561 electors in these areas, and we propose a total of 29 councillors, with an average of 2054 electors per councillor (only 1.1% less than the borough-wide average).

25. In the 6 large villages (Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe-on-Trent and Ruddington), we have placed great emphasis on respecting the existing community identities as defined by parish boundaries. This has been achieved except that:

- Bingham will be divided (as now) into 2 wards: Bingham East and Bingham West.

- Bingham West and Leake wards will include some small outlying villages, so as to make up the numbers and ensure that all wards are within the permitted range of variation.

26. Bingham East and Bingham West will each have 2 members, to allow for the greater population of Bingham compared to the other large settlements outside West Bridgford (and this will also allow for probable housing developments in Bingham East especially). The other large villages will each have 3 members, Keyworth and Radcliffe-on-Trent each being reduced from 4 to 3 members and being amalgamated into 1 ward in each village. Experience has shown the benefits of each community being represented by a single group of councillors without any internal ward boundaries within the community.

27. We propose altering the boundary between Bingham East and Bingham West so as to transfer about 438 electors from West to East. This would have the effect of equalising the numbers of electors in each ward and ensuring that they are both within the acceptable limits of variation. We do not have any detailed proposals for the streets to be transferred, other than to make the obvious comment that the transferred area must be contiguous with the Bingham East ward.

28. The 7 wards covering the 6 large villages (and some small outlying villages where appropriate) will have a total of 39433 electors and 19 councillors, i.e. an average of 2075 electors per councillor (virtually the same as the borough-wide average).

29. All other rural areas outside the large villages will be divided into single-member wards. We recommend single-member wards as the best way of organising representation in large sparsely populated areas, where multi-member wards would be unwieldy and would lead to poor connections between electors and councillors.

30. The 2-member ward of Wiverton has been removed, as we consider this to have been an aberration, and the ward boundaries in the whole of this large rural hinterland have been drawn as far as possible so that the geographical sizes of the wards are manageable and that community identities and living patterns are respected.

31. The 10 wards covering the rural areas outside the large villages will have a total of 20128 electors and 10 councillors, i.e. an average of 2013 electors per councillor (3.1% less than the borough-wide average).

32. The new Thoroton ward will have 1859 electors, which is 10.5% less than the borough-wide average number of electors per councillor. We justify this by saying that the ward member will have 11 parish councils to deal with (2 more than now) and will have considerable distances to cover in this remote part of the borough. Furthermore, the excess negative variation will not be reached for several years until housing growth (boosting overall electorate numbers) has taken place in other parts of the borough.

33. Where necessary, we have suggested names for the new wards that are significantly different from existing wards, and we note in particular that some names (such as Aslockton and Rancliffe) are resurrected names that used to be assigned to old wards before the previous review.

34. In concluding this description of the proposed arrangements for the parts of the borough outside West Bridgford, we refer readers to Appendix 2 (outline map of new ward boundaries in Rushcliffe) and Appendix 3 (table of ward and polling district sizes).

## **Conclusion**

35. Members of the Liberal Democrat Group are happy to have been consulted on the boundary review, and we are confident that our proposal as set out in this document is fair, sensible and generally acceptable to all sections of the electorate and to political parties. We commend this

document to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and hope that it meets with agreement.

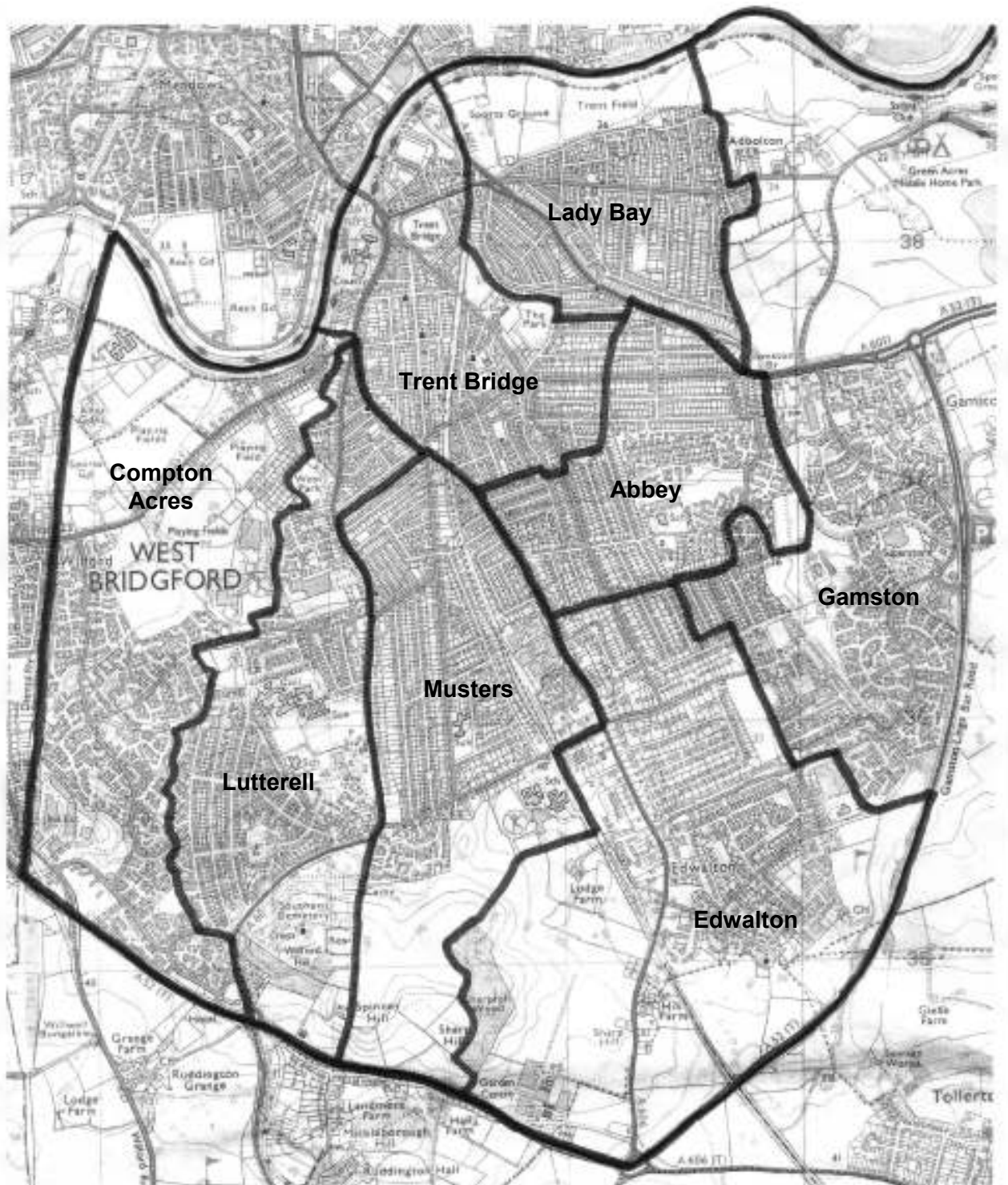
### **Acknowledgements**

Sam Boote  
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### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Outline map of new ward boundaries in West Bridgford  
Appendix 2: Outline map of new ward boundaries outside West Bridgford  
Appendix 3: Table of ward and polling district sizes

**APPENDIX 1: Outline map of new ward boundaries in West Bridgford**



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**APPENDIX 2: Outline map of new ward boundaries outside West Bridgford**



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**APPENDIX 3: Table of ward and polling district sizes****West Bridgford**

<b>New ward</b>	<b>Polling district codes</b>	<b>Polling district areas</b>	<b>Electors</b>	<b>Total electors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variation %</b>
Compton Acres	G1 G2 G3	Compton Acres Compton Acres Compton Acres	1406 2059 588	4053	2	2027	-2.4
Abbey	new	new		4324	2	2162	+4.1
Edwalton	new	new		4258	2	2129	+2.5
Gamston	new	new		4502	2	2251	+8.3
Lady Bay	new	new		4152	2	2076	-0.1
Lutterell	new	new		4243	2	2122	+2.1
Musters	new	new		4095	2	2048	-1.4
Trent Bridge	new	new		4308	2	2154	+3.7



**APPENDIX 3: Table of ward and polling district sizes (continued)**

**Large villages**

New ward	Polling district codes	Polling district areas	Electors	Total electors	Councillors	Electors per councillor	Variation %
Bingham E	C1 C2 **	Bingham E Bingham E from Bingham W	2014 1813 438	4265	2	2133	+2.7
Bingham W	D1 D2 D3 NN3 **	Bingham W Bingham W Saxondale Upper Saxondale to Bingham E	2416 1760 32 496 -438	4266	2	2133	+2.7
Cotgrave	T1 T2	Cotgrave Cotgrave	2356 4494	6850	3	2283	+9.9
Keyworth	FF GG1 GG2	N Keyworth S Keyworth S Keyworth	1412 2175 2172	5759	3	1920	-7.6
Leake	AC X1 X2 X3 KK VV	West Leake East Leake East Leake East Leake Normanton-Soar Stanford-on-Soar	108 1187 2447 1851 365 105	6063	3	2021	-2.7
Radcliffe-on-Trent	NN1 NN2 OO1 OO2	Radcliffe-Manvers Radcliffe-Manvers Radcliffe-Trent Radcliffe-Trent	1231 1599 1930 1429	6189	3	2063	-0.7
Ruddington	RR1 RR2 RR3 RR4	Ruddington Ruddington Ruddington Ruddington	1569 1472 1744 1256	6041	3	2014	-3.1

**APPENDIX 3: Table of ward and polling district sizes (continued)**

**Rural areas and small villages**

<b>New ward</b>	<b>Polling district codes</b>	<b>Polling district areas</b>	<b>Electors</b>	<b>Total electors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variation %</b>
Aslockton	A AD Q1 SS JJ2	Aslockton Whatton-in-Vale Car Colston Scarrington Barnstone	832 681 138 140 358	2149	1	2149	+3.4
Cropwell	U V1 V2 V3	Cropwell Bishop Cropwell Butler Tithby Wiverton	1480 560 53 36	2129	1	2129	+2.5
East Bridgford	W1 TT1 TT2	East Bridgford Shelford Newton	1416 223 638	2277	1	2277	+9.6
Gotham	AA B ZZ PP HH	Gotham Barton-in-Fabis Thrumpton Ratcliffe-on-Soar Kingston-on-Soar	1350 214 130 105 221	2020	1	2020	-2.8
Kinoulton & Langar	II1 II2 DD R JJ1	Kinoulton Owthorpe Hickling Colston Bassett Langar	799 82 427 203 406	1917	1	1917	-7.7
Rancliffe	E P QQ S MM2	Bradmore Bunny Rempstone Costock Plumtree	259 554 339 551 199	1902	1	1902	-8.5
Sutton Bonington	XX	Sutton Bonington	1937	1937	1	1937	-6.8

**APPENDIX 3: Table of ward and polling district sizes (continued)**

**Rural areas and small villages (continued)**

<b>New ward</b>	<b>Polling district codes</b>	<b>Polling district areas</b>	<b>Electors</b>	<b>Total electors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variation %</b>
Thoroton	CC LL1 LL2 LL3 UU1 UU2 Y YY Q2 W2 BB	Hawksworth Elton-on-the-Hill Flawborough Orston Shelton Sibthorpe Flintham Thoroton Screveton Kneeton Granby	94 66 45 381 106 93 470 103 115 46 340	1859	1	1859	-10.5
Tollerton	AB1 EE	Tollerton Holme Pierrepont	1518 495	2013	1	2013	-3.1
Wolds	AE AF AG1 AG2 MM1 WW O AB2	Widmerpool Willoughby Thorpe-in-Glebe Wysall Normanton-Wolds Stanton-on-Wolds Upper Broughton Clipston	298 474 27 288 218 330 244 46	1925	1	1925	-7.3