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Revised Recommendations 2021-2022 Review

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Chapter 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents my Revised Recommendations for the Review of Local Government Boundaries in Northern Ireland. These Revised Recommendations will now be the subject of a further period of public consultation for six weeks.
- 1.2 I was appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC) as Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland in June 2020. My task is to review and make recommendations in respect of the number, boundaries and names of the 11 local government districts and the number, boundaries and names of the wards into which each district is divided. The Department has directed me to submit my final recommendations by 31 May 2022.
- 1.3 On 1st August 2021 the Department appointed 5 Assistant Commissioners to assist me with my Review. The primary role of the Assistant Commissioners will be to consider written and oral representations made in respect of my Provisional Recommendations and to provide impartial advice to me.
- 1.4 The initial period of public consultation, on my Provisional Recommendations, ran from 27th July until 21st September 2021. Eleven public hearings were held in September and October, each chaired by an Assistant Commissioner.
- 1.5 I have endeavoured to make this Review as accessible and inclusive as possible. I am presenting these Recommendations in an accessible digital format that has been developed by colleagues in Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI). This approach is not only in response to the current public health situation, but also because I am of the view that the quality of the digital maps is far superior to a printed version and this will allow everyone to examine my proposals in detail. I am encouraged by the positive feedback that I have received about this approach in response to my Provisional Recommendations.

Chapter 2. Legislative Framework

- 2.1 This chapter sets out the legislative framework for my Review. The parameters of the Local Government Boundaries Review and the procedures for the Review that I must follow are set out in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.
- 2.2 I was appointed under Part IV of the above act, Article 50 Paragraph (1) (b). Part IV of the Act provides that:
- The function of a Commissioner appointed under subsection 50 (1) (b) shall be to review and make recommendations regarding*
- a. *The number, boundaries and names of local government districts; and*
 - b. *The number, boundaries and names of the wards into which each district is divided.*
- 2.3 Schedule 4 of the above act sets out the appointment process for a LGB Commissioner, as well as the procedure for my Review that I must follow and the rules that I must adhere to. Full details of this legislation can be found at www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/links. I set out my approach to this legislation in Section 4 of this report.
- 2.4 The current names and boundaries of local government districts and wards in Northern Ireland are detailed in the Local Government (Boundaries) Order 2012. Following the 2012 Order, a number of District Councils made applications to the Department to amend the District name. These changes to the names of the districts took effect in 2016 full details of the legislation can be found at <https://www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/links>.
- 2.5 The current boundaries of districts and wards can be found on the Map Viewer at <https://apps.spatialni.gov.uk/LGBC/LGBCPublicConsultationApp/index.html>.
- 2.6 I have set out in detail my general approach to the Review and to the legislation in my Provisional Recommendations Report Chapter 4. This can be accessed at [LGBC - Provisional Recommendations 2021-2022 Review](#).

Chapter 3. Work to Date and key milestones

- 3.1 This chapter summarises the work done in advance of the publication of these Revised Recommendations for public consultation. A summary of key milestones is available at <https://www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/milestone-timeline>.
- 3.2 The data that informs the Review was provided by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland on the Enumeration Date, the 4th January 2021.
- 3.3 I published a public notice on 3 February 2021 launching the LGBC website and announcing that the preparatory stage of my Review was complete. I invited proposals from councils, political parties, associations, organisations and individual members of the public in relation to the number, boundaries and names of the 11 districts: and the number, boundaries and names of the wards within the 11 districts.
- 3.4 In May 2021 I hosted a number of ‘Meet the Commissioner’ virtual information sessions with officers and members from the 11 councils. I used these virtual sessions to raise awareness among councils about the Review, to clarify the Review process and the timescales involved. A number of the questions raised during these sessions can be found at <https://www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/faqs>.
- 3.5 On 27 July 2021 I launched my Provisional Recommendations report for public consultation for a period of 8 weeks. I published a public notice in the local and regional press announcing the launch of the consultation and inviting responses from all interested parties. My proposals were presented in an online format with high quality digital maps for each district and ward provided by OSNI on Spatial NI. There was an online portal for responses, with more detailed responses submitted by e-mail. More detail on the consultation is included in the next section. The consultation closed on 21st September 2021.
- 3.6 On 1st August the Department for Communities appointed five Assistant Commissioners to assist me with my Review. From 28th September until 14th October a series of Public hearings

were held, one for each district. The hearings were chaired by the Assistant Commissioners, and were conducted in a hybrid format that allowed socially distanced in-person participation at the venues as well as participation via an online platform. The Assistant Commissioners have since submitted their reports to me on each of the districts, taking into consideration oral and written submissions. The Reports are published on the LGBC website at [Publications | Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland](#). More detail on the consultation is found in Sections 4 and 5 of this report.

- 3.7 The second stage consultation on these Revised Recommendations will run for 6 weeks. The closing date for receipt of written representations is 1st March 2022.
- 3.8 I will give consideration to all representations received in formulating my final report and making my recommendations to the Department. The Department has directed me to submit my final report by 31 May 2022.

Chapter 4. Consultation on Provisional Recommendations.

- 4.1 I published my Provisional Recommendations for public consultation on 27 July 2021. I advertised the public consultation by publishing a public notice in the local and regional press, as well as via LGBC social media channels.
- 4.2 I announced the publication of my Provisional Recommendations and the opening of the 8 weeks consultation period by sending a letter of notification to Assessors to the Commissioner including the Chief Electoral Officer, the Director of Census (in place of the Registrar General), the Commissioner of Valuation and the Chief Survey Officer. Chief Executives of the 11 Councils were notified and asked to disseminate to their members, as were those government and non-governmental bodies on the Department for Communities Section 75 Consultee lists which includes all political parties in Northern Ireland and to all those who showed an early interest in my Review.
- 4.3 My Provisional Recommendations were presented in an online format with high quality digital maps for each district and ward provided by OSNI on Spatial NI. There was an online portal for responses, with an e-mail address provided for the submission of more detailed responses.
- 4.4 Libraries NI assisted in the consultation process by facilitating online access to the consultation across the network of local libraries in Northern Ireland. A number of District Councils also provided online access to the consultation for their citizens in council facilities, which meant that those who do not have internet access at home were able to access the report, maps and consultation. I am very grateful for Libraries NI and to the District Councils who were able to assist us in this, particularly given the challenging public health situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic over recent months.
- 4.5 The report and consultation documents were made available in alternative formats and in other languages on request. Following a request the team provided a translation of the report and consultation questions in Irish, which was also published on the LGBC website.

- 4.6 There were a total of 290 responses to the consultation. There were 8 responses received by e-mail and 282 on the online portal.
- 4.7 On the online portal, the vast majority of the responses referred only to the issue of monolingual/bilingual/trilingual ward and district names. There was strong support voiced for the use of bilingual Irish/English ward and district names, and strong support voiced against the use of any language other than English. There was limited support voiced for the use of Irish only names, and limited support for trilingual Irish/English/Ulster Scots names.
- 4.8 While more respondents on the online portal declared that they did not agree with proposals for each of the 11 districts than those who did support them, only a very small number gave reasons for this. Many of those who said they did not agree included comments setting out their support for/opposition to the use of bilingual English/Irish names. It is important to note that none of the district proposals included recommendations for the naming of wards or districts. The issue of signage is also out of scope for my Review. The majority of respondents did not answer the district specific questions.
- 4.9 I have set out my approach to the district specific issues raised in the consultation in Chapter 6 of this Report. Chapter 5 deals with my general approach to naming districts and wards.
- 4.10 Following the 8 week consultation period for written responses to my Recommendations, I convened a public hearing in each of the 11 districts. The public hearings were held in line with public health guidance. It was challenging for my team, supported by Morrow Communications, to locate suitable venues across the 11 Districts given the prevailing public health restrictions, I am very grateful to them for their efforts.
- 4.11 Given the public health situation and to allow increased participation for citizens, the events were held in a hybrid format, which allowed oral representations to be made in person and via an online platform.

- 4.12 Each hearing was chaired by an Assistant Commissioner. The Assistant Commissioners have all submitted reports to me on their Districts that took all oral and written representations into account. The reports are available at [Publications | Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland](#).
- 4.13 I have considered the Assistant Commissioners' reports in respect of each District, which have been of considerable assistance to me in formulating these Revised Recommendations. I have departed from my Provisional Recommendations where an Assistant Commissioner's report has drawn to my attention something that I consider justifies such a revision. It is however important to note that by sections 50(1) and (3) of the 1972 Act, the functions of review and recommendation in the 2021/2022 Review are conferred on the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner, and on no-one else. The recommendations that follow are therefore mine alone.

Chapter 5. Names of Districts and Wards.

Function of a Local Government Boundaries Commissioner

- 5.1 My primary function as Local Government Boundary Commissioner is the delineation of administrative boundaries which groups electors for the purpose of local elections and to seek to ensure that each vote has approximately equal weight. My work therefore is primarily calculating numbers in a spatial context using the latest detailed digital mapping.
- 5.2 Schedule 50 of the Local Government (NI) Act 1972, (as amended), also sets out my role in making recommendations for the names of local government districts and the names of wards. It is my view that my role in recommending names of the Districts and Wards is in large measure linked to my role in the delineation of boundaries.

My approach to this Review

- 5.3 I set out my approach to this Review in detail in my Provisional Recommendations report available at [LGBC- Provisional Recommendations 2021-2022 Review](#).
- 5.4 Following my established principle of minimum intervention where possible in this Review, and my approach that naming of districts and Wards is linked to my spatial consideration, it follows that if the space within proposed Districts and wards is not changing or shifting significantly, there would not seem to be a requirement to change the names from the names which were settled in the last Review and passed into legislation.

Legislative framework for changes to names of Districts and Wards

- 5.5 As set out above, Schedule 50 of the 1972 Act describes the function of a Local Government Boundaries commissioner, in relation to making recommendations for names of districts and wards.
- 5.6 It is important to note that the district names formed under a Local Government Boundary Review and subsequent legislation do not have to be adopted permanently by the council in

that District. It is open to any council to apply under Section 51 (1) of the Local Government Act to change its name. It is therefore not exclusively a matter for this Review process to settle the names of Districts.

5.7 In the period since the last Review, three councils have exercised the statutory right under Section 51 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to name the council differently from the district name conferred under the 2012 Order. I can therefore confirm the names of those councils have been legally changed pursuant to an application under Section (51) 1 and it follows that the District names are now officially:

- Ards and North Down (North Down and Ards in the 2012 Order);
- Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon (Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon in the 2012 Order); and
- Derry City and Strabane District (Derry and Strabane in the 2012 Order).

These three Districts are therefore referenced with their respective updated names in this report and associated official maps.

5.8 Ward names are not subject to any other method of potential name change other than in the periodic local government boundary reviews.

Bilingual/Trilingual names of Districts and Wards

5.9 There has been engagement in this Review by Conradh na Gaeilge, an organisation concerned with the promotion of the Irish language, and the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ). It is their submission that this Review, given that it has remit for place naming, should produce a map with names for all wards and Districts in Irish. These organisations provided me with a joint written submission in advance of the publication of my Provisional Recommendations. In addition, a representative of Conradh na Gaeilge attended the Public hearing in Belfast and provided oral evidence. Foras na Gaeilge provided a written submission to my Provisional Recommendations in support of the use of names in Irish across all local government districts. I received a number of responses to the consultation both for and against the use of Irish language and Ulster Scots in ward and District names. I received two written responses by e-mail setting out strong opposition to the use of any language other than English in ward and district names.

5.10 My view is that the starting point in considering this issue is to look to the commitments made in the New Decade New Approach (NDNA) Report in January 2020. Commitments in relation to the issue of language and culture in Northern Ireland are set out in Paragraphs 26 and 27 as follows:

26. *The First Minister and deputy First Minister, supported by Junior Ministers in The Executive Office, will sponsor and oversee a new framework both recognising and celebrating Northern Ireland's diversity of identities and culture, and accommodating cultural difference.*

27. *The framework will be underpinned by an affirmation of the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, while acknowledging and accommodating those within our community who define themselves as 'other' and those who form our ethnic and newcomer communities. It will comprise:*

a. An Office of Identity and Cultural Expression to promote cultural pluralism and respect for diversity, build social cohesion and reconciliation and to celebrate and support all aspects of Northern Ireland's rich cultural and linguistic heritage.

b. Legislation to create a Commissioner to recognise, support, protect and enhance the development of the Irish language in Northern Ireland and to provide official recognition of the status of the Irish Language in Northern Ireland. The legislation will also repeal the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737.

c. Legislation to create a further such Commissioner to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots / Ulster British tradition and to provide official recognition of the status of the Ulster Scots language in Northern Ireland. The legislation will also place a legal duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the use of Ulster Scots in the education system.

d. The main function of the Irish Language Commissioner will be to protect and enhance the development of the use of the Irish language by public authorities including by providing advice and guidance, and introducing, supporting and monitoring the use of best practice language standards.

e. The main function of the further such Commissioner will be to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots/ Ulster British tradition in Northern Ireland.

f. A central Translation Hub will also be established in the Department of Finance within three months of an agreement, in order to provide language translation services for the 9 Executive Departments, Arm's Length Bodies, Local Government and Public Bodies.

g. The Assembly's Standing Orders will also be amended to allow any person to conduct their business before the Assembly or an Assembly Committee through Irish or Ulster Scots. A simultaneous translation system will be made available in the Assembly to ensure that a person without Irish or Ulster Scots is not placed at a disadvantage.

h. This legislation - including establishing the Office and both Commissioners - will be established as new dedicated parts of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This is the legislation which implements the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and subsequent agreements and establishes the Assembly and Executive in law. The enactment of these new Parts of the Northern Ireland Act will reflect the importance of these issues to people and society in Northern Ireland.

i. The Office of Identity will provide funding streams and schemes, including publishing and broadcasting, small grants, events and tourism, exhibition and museum curation, built heritage, cultural education and tourism projects¹.

5.11 At the point of writing, these commitments have not been implemented by the NI Executive.

5.12 In the absence of the structures outlined above, my view is that an appropriate starting point for consideration of the Irish language issue, as a matter of law, is the recognition by the Court of Appeal in *Re MacGiolla Cathain's Application* [2010] NICA 24 at [2] – [3] that:

¹ [2020-01-08 a new decade a new approach.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

'... English remains the language of the vast majority of the population and it is the general language of public administration.

The way in which Irish should be recognised and valued in Northern Ireland is a matter of political debate. The Good Friday and St Andrew's Agreements pointed up the issue. How the question should be dealt with is a question of policy not law. The court cannot resolve the issue or contribute to the political debate. It can only determine the present appeal by reference to the correct legal principles applicable under the existing law'

It should be noted that this ruling predates the publication of the NDNA in 2020.

- 5.13 In my view it would be inappropriate, as well as a fundamental disservice to the important issue of language, if I were to make decisions on the use of Irish language across all administrative place names in the absence of any legislative framework on the use of minority languages in public administration.
- 5.14 As a general matter of policy affecting all districts and wards, it would be preferable for the question of the use of Irish and other minority languages to be addressed within the statutory framework committed to in *New Decade, New Approach* when put in place. However, in the absence of such a statutory framework, it may be appropriate for a particular district or ward to be named in a manner reflective of, for example, how that place is referred to locally, including in a minority language.
- 5.15 I note the information provided by Conradh na Gaeilge in relation to the Queen's University Belfast Place Names project. The Place Names project is a very interesting and valuable piece of work, which provides strong evidence on the Irish language origins of the majority of local place names. The work however is not as yet complete in that it does not include a list of agreed names for electoral wards in Northern Ireland. I therefore do not have evidence of fully authenticated names that could be said to be settled place names in Irish for all wards and districts across Northern Ireland.

Conclusions

- 5.16 It is therefore my view that there should be no change to my approach of naming districts and wards with the same names as settled in the 2012 Order subject to the following caveat: I wish to be careful not to conflate the issue of recognition of Irish Language (which is outside my remit) and the appropriateness of naming a district or ward by using a particular name which is connected to that place or space (which is within my remit).
- 5.17 I would make the distinction between the wider submission requesting that I adopt a naming convention across the whole map incorporating the Irish language, which is a request to develop a policy approach on the use and recognition of a language, and the different issue of very locally focused submissions on more appropriate ward names which may be more in keeping with the prevalent use of a language in that particular area.
- 5.18 Whilst it is my initial position not to interfere with the settled names of wards if nothing has changed in spatial terms since the last Review, if there is strong evidence to support the case that an existing ward name does not fully correspond to how local people refer to their particular place or space, then I think that case for a change of ward name could be made.
- 5.19 My assessment in each case will depend on the strength of the evidence in each particular locality. If it is the case that a ward name change which is based on the use of language and cultural identity in a particular area may have merit, then I have set out my views on this in the proposals for that that particular district.

Chapter 6. Revised Recommendations for the 11 Districts.

Summary position

District	Change from Provisional Recommendations
Antrim and Newtownabbey	Ward boundaries changes
Ards and North Down	Ward boundary changes, correction of district name
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	Correction of district name
Belfast	Ward boundary changes
Causeway Coast and Glens	Ward and minor district Boundary changes
Derry City and Strabane District	Correction of District name
Fermanagh and Omagh	Ward boundary changes
Lisburn and Castlereagh	Ward boundary changes
Mid and East Antrim	Ward and minor district boundary changes
Mid Ulster	No change
Newry Mourne and Down	No change

6.1 Antrim and Newtownabbey

District boundary

6.1.1 In my Provisional Recommendations Report I recommended a correction to the defacement of the district line at Upper Road Greenisland, on the boundary with Mid and East Antrim District. I reaffirm this proposal.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.1.2 The Assistant Commissioner has made a number of conclusions concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Glengormley, Hightown and Mallusk wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Antrim and Newtownabbey Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). I recommend the realignment of these wards as set out in the attached maps on the basis that it provides for improved representation of rural and urban electorate in the area which is a consideration to which I must have regard under the statutory rules.

6.1.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 100909 electors within the district which averages at 2522 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries that I have proposed can be viewed at [Antrim and Newtownabbey](#).

6.1.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 1. Antrim and Newtownabbey

Number of wards – 40	Total electorate – 10909	Average ward size – 2522	
Ward name	Current Electorate²	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Abbey	2404	2404	
Aldergrove	2728	2728	
Antrim Centre	2796	2726	
Ballyclare East	2684	2767	
Ballyclare West	2838	2748	
Ballyduff	2331	2331	
Ballyhenry	2076	2704	2541
Ballynure	2620	2620	
Ballyrobert	2728	2735	
Burnthill	2639	2393	
Carnmoney	2092	2338	
Carnmoney Hill	2363	2364	
Clady	2733	2733	
Collinbridge	2320	2320	
Cranfield	2304	2304	
Crumlin	2632	2632	
Doagh	2533	2533	
Fairview	2204	2356	
Fountain Hill	2270	2307	
Glebe	2367	2367	
Glengormley	2337	2337	2483

² The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Greystone	2091	2433	
Hightown	2202	2632	2670
Jordanstown	2552	2543	
Mallusk	3812	2754	2733
Monkstown	2480	2480	
Mossley	2657	2505	
O'Neill	2285	2285	
Parkgate	2464	2464	
Randalstown	2545	2545	
Rathcoole	2290	2290	
Rostulla	2736	2736	
Shilvodan	2627	2710	
Springfarm	3306	2771	
Steeple	2338	2748	
Stiles	2622	2355	
Templepatrick	2584	2584	
Toome	2699	2699	
Valley	2393	2280	
Whitehouse	2235	2348	

6.2 Ards and North Down

District boundary

6.2.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.2.2 The Assistant Commissioner has included a number of recommendations concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Harbour and Bryansburn wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Ards and North Down Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). I recommend the realignment of these ward boundaries as set out in the attached maps as they provide a better balance of electors in the wards and follow a readily identifiable boundary.

6.2.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 118537 electors within the district which averages at 2963 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Ards and North Down](#).

6.2.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 2. Ards and North Down

Number of wards – 40	Total electorate - 118537	Average ward size - 2963	
Ward name	Current Electorate³	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Ballycrochan	2563	2887	
Ballygowan	3222	3222	
Ballygrainey	3683	3251	
Ballyholme	2975	2975	
Ballymagee	3080	2861	
Ballywalter	3287	3258	
Bloomfield	2966	3197	
Broadway	2749	3081	
Bryansburn	2949	2834	3012
Carrowdore	3031	3060	
Castle	2835	2835	
Clandeboye	2934	2750	
Comber North	2790	2790	
Comber South	2859	2859	
Comber West	2828	2828	
Conway Square	2853	2940	
Cronstown	3307	3083	
Cultra	3094	3141	
Donaghadee	2955	2955	
Glen	3299	3212	

³ The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Gregstown	2466	2826	
Groomsport	2881	2881	
Harbour	3408	3076	2898
Helen's Bay	3023	3023	
Hollywood	3267	3220	
Kilcooley	2870	2870	
Killinchy	2815	2815	
Kircubbin	3157	2849	
Loughries	3064	3141	
Loughview	3106	3106	
Movilla	2834	2698	
Portaferry	2558	2866	
Portavogie	2707	2707	
Rathgael	2543	2727	
Rathmore	2924	2924	
Scrabo	3208	3208	
Silverbirch	2892	2892	
Silverstream	2566	2681	
Warren	3153	3172	
West Winds	2836	2836	

6.3 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.

District boundary

6.3.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.3.2 I have considered all the consultation responses received and the report of the Assistant Commissioner for this District. The Assistant Commissioner for the District has concluded in his analysis that my provisional proposals for both District and ward boundaries should be affirmed. I agree with the analysis set out by the Assistant Commissioner for this district and I therefore affirm my provisional recommendations for this District. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). The proposed ward and district boundaries for this district can be viewed at [Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon](#).

6.3.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 41 wards and the table below lists the ward names and their electorates. There is a total of 149505 electors within the district which averages at 3646 electors per ward and my recommended changes are designed to balance the electorate across the district.

6.3.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021, and the electorate per ward in my Provisional and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 3. Armagh City, Craigavon and Banbridge

Number of wards - 41	Total electorate 149505	Average ward size 3646
Ward name	Current electorate ⁴	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL /REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS
Aghagallon	3698	3698
Ballybay	3376	3776
Banbridge East	3337	3533
Banbridge North	3179	3331
Banbridge South	3511	3511
Banbridge West	3768	3768
Blackwatertown	3946	3946
Bleary	3525	3525
Brownlow	4071	3902
Cathedral	3364	3364
Corcrain	3485	3485
Craigavon Centre	4202	3743
Demesne	3750	3750
Derrytrasna	3606	3606
Donaghcloney	3476	3378
Dromore	3396	3396
Gilford	3341	3341
Gransha	3469	3469
Hamiltonsbawn	3624	3624
Keady	3695	3695
Kernan	3892	3971
Killycomain	3458	3917
Knocknashane	3269	3296

⁴ The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Lough Road	3802	3802
Loughbrickland	3981	3633
Loughgall	3928	3928
Magheralin	3669	3669
Mahon	3532	3532
Markethill	3847	3847
Mourneview	3512	3706
Navan	3749	3749
Parklake	3719	3719
Quilly	3197	3295
Rathfriland	3447	3447
Richhill	3588	3588
Seagahan	3951	3951
Shankill	4057	3836
Tandragee	3640	3640
The Birches	4118	3718
The Mall	3576	3576
Waringstown	3844	3844

6.4 Belfast

- 6.4.1 I have provided considerably more detail in this chapter due to the volume and nature of the representations made to me in the consultation, and the analysis provided to me by the Assistant commissioner for Belfast. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Belfast City Assistant Commissioner's Report](#).

District boundary

6.4.2 *Galwally – District Line of Belfast with Lisburn and Castlereagh*

I note the submissions on this issue and the analysis of the Assistant Commissioner. I am in agreement with the rationale of the Assistant Commissioner on the importance of the fact that the boundary line at this point was mandated by a process of the Northern Ireland Assembly following the last Review in 2008/09. It is true to say that the boundary line at this area does not correspond to the recommendations made by my predecessor in the 2008/09 Review, however, it is the line which was passed into law after consideration and amendment by the legislature during the passage of the 2012 Act.

My approach in this Review is one of minimum intervention where possible. In the absence of a compelling reason, I am not persuaded to interfere with existing District boundary lines. I agree with the Assistant Commissioner that the submission made by Belfast City Council (BCC) does not constitute a compelling reason to interfere with the District boundary between the District of Belfast City and the District of Lisburn and Castlereagh. The submission from BCC can be accessed at [Belfast City Council - Submission to the LGBC.pdf \(lgbc-ni.org.uk\)](#) as can the letter from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council [Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council - Submission to the LGBC.pdf \(lgbc-ni.org.uk\)](#).

I also note that there was another submission to alter the same District line at the area around Drumkeen to bring a small number of houses into Belfast from the District of Lisburn and Castlereagh. I agree with the Assistant Commissioner that there is no compelling reason to interfere with the District boundary line on this basis.

6.4.3 *Harbour*

I note the findings of the Assistant Commissioner and I am in agreement that the submission of Belfast City Council raises a compelling reason to realign the District

Boundary at Duncairn and Sydenham wards on the grounds of defacement. As stated by the Assistant Commissioner:

I believe that there is defacement to the existing district line between the District of Belfast City & Belfast Lough. Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that the district line should be amended to encompass existing and future development of the Harbour estate.

I have addressed this issue and the realignment of the District boundary at this point can be seen in the attached map.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.4.4 61 Ward Model

A submission by the SDLP relating to wards in South Belfast has been described as raising 'valid points' by the Assistant Commissioner. Some of the submission is noted as being out of scope as it references the clustering of wards under the District Electoral Areas process, which is a separate statutory process and not part of this Review. Other points raised by the SDLP made the case that my proposed ward configuration cuts across cohesive communities and is summarised by the Assistant Commissioner in his report as follows:

- ***Concern that the current proposals are based more on the required mathematical balancing than taking into account the actual experience and liveability of these wards on the ground and are therefore artificially separating communities and goes against the essence of democratic participation where established communities work with their recognised elected representatives for the ongoing enhancement of their area;***
- ***Suggest the addition of one additional ward within each of the Balmoral DEA & the Botanic DEA, to therefore have 12 wards as opposed to the current 10 within these areas (additional ward in each DEA) to take account of natural population growth within this area and to redesign the 12 wards in such a way as to accommodate, facilitate and recognise the natural growth of this part of the city rather than artificially cleaving it apart and splitting up communities;***
- ***Concern that the current proposals will artificially spilt existing communities (citing an example of the proposed changes adjacent to the Ravenhill Road along the Park Road, North Parade and South Parade with these being very distinct and unified communities and part of the Ormeau Road community and the problems that would occur if they were moved into the Ravenhill Ward);***

- ***Concern that the current proposals will lead to a lack of community cohesion in areas where there is already an existing issue with low voter turnout, and***
- ***Concern that the current proposals will negatively affect what are diverse communities and will create shells of communities, tilting the wards towards vast tracts of under populated areas where you have a transient population such as The Holylands or the wider university area or parts of the inner city.***

Under my approach I have followed a principle of minimum intervention where possible and so I have not changed District lines unless there is a compelling reason to do so. I have not increased or decreased the amount of existing wards because I was able to produce workable models which met the statutory criteria for all 11 Districts by using the same number of wards as currently exist.

6.4.5 However, there are other options open to me in terms of reconfiguring the changes required to distribute the number of electors in wards and indeed within districts. For example, I could reconfigure district lines to move electors in more populous areas such as Belfast into neighbouring districts that are less populous such as Lisburn and Castlereagh or Ards and North Down. I decided against this option under my principle of minimum disruption and instead configured the Belfast population within its existing district lines. A consequence of this is that there is more widespread change to the internal ward boundaries in order to equitably distribute the number of electors in Belfast across 60 wards.

6.4.6 Under the Rule in Paragraph 18, it is open to me to consider an increase or decrease of the number of wards in a District by a maximum of 5 wards if *'having regard to the matters mentioned in paragraph 17, the Commissioner considers it desirable.'* In considering the exercising of this discretion it is clear that I must only have regard to the Paragraph 17 factors, which are ***the size, population and physical diversity of the district and the desirability that there should be a proper representation of the rural and urban electorate within the district.***

- 6.4.7 At the outset of this process I was mindful of the Paragraph 17 factors that are of particular relevance to Belfast, namely the spatial size of Belfast and the fact that it is the most populous area of Northern Ireland. However, it is important to note that the legislation acknowledges and makes allowance for this by allocating 20 more wards to this District compared to all other Districts in Northern Ireland. When analysing the changes to electoral numbers within Belfast since the date of the last Review, the creation of more wards to deal with growth was considered. However, I decided to test whether the District could be configured by using 60 wards in order to demonstrate whether it was desirable to create more wards in Belfast. I was able to produce a 60 ward model which suggests that the 60 ward model still works for Belfast based on current numbers across the whole District.
- 6.4.8 The Assistant Commissioner notes the significant population growth in wards of Blackstaff, Central, Stranmillis and Windsor and on this basis he puts forward an alternative model of 61 wards to deal with the bulges in population which have occurred in these areas since the last Review. The SDLP submission argued for two additional wards. Whilst I did not choose a model of more than 60 wards for my Provisional Recommendations, I would not rule out using my discretion to increase or to decrease the number of wards as a method of configuring boundaries within a District and this submission provides a welcome opportunity to further test the issue in the context of this district.
- 6.4.9 In the previous Review, the Rule 17 factors were considered in reaching a decision to increase to 41 wards in the Districts of Newry Mourne and Down and Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon. However, it should be noted that these Districts have slightly different considerations than Belfast. These Districts encompass both urban and very rural areas. The same cannot be said of Belfast which is almost wholly urban. The analysis of the Assistant Commissioner in terms of the desirability of increasing the number of wards in Belfast has regard to the relevant matters in paragraph 17, namely size and population. Accordingly, in order to test the available evidence on the issue of population in Belfast and in particular in South Belfast, I have taken counsel from the Chief Statistical Officer for Northern Ireland who is a statutory advisor to me in this Review. Links to the data provided by the Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA) can be found here [Population | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/population).

6.4.10 Data relating to population in different parts of the city is calculated on the four current Parliamentary Boundary constituencies (Belfast North, Belfast South, Belfast East and Belfast West). It should be noted that the submission under analysis refers to population in wards which largely fall within the Belfast South Parliamentary constituency. Numerically, Belfast South is the largest Parliamentary Constituency (PC) of the 4 constituencies in Belfast, with an estimated total of 115,900 people in mid-2020. Belfast South also has the largest population of people aged 16 and over, 96,700 people, as of mid-2020. I therefore agree that this is a particularly populous area of the city.

6.4.11 However, I also note that Belfast South PC has the highest levels of negative net migration since mid-2013, totaling 4,000 people leaving. The evidence also confirms that since the date of the last Review, Belfast South is **not the area of largest growth in the City**. Belfast East is the area of largest growth with Belfast South being second largest. Moreover, in general terms, whilst population may have increased in the city as a whole since 2009, **the population of Belfast is projected to stagnate over the next ten years**. The following statistics on this are notable:

- At the time of the last Review of Local Government Boundaries, the population of Belfast District in mid-2009 was estimated to be 331,800 people. By mid-2020, the population increased by 10,800 people (3.3 per cent) to reach 342,600;
- Population growth for Belfast District since mid-2009 **falls below the Northern Ireland population growth for the same period** (5.7 per cent);
- The population of Belfast District is projected to increase by 4,400 people (1.3 per cent) in the short term (mid-2018 to mid-2028), however less so in the long term (to mid-2043), 2,600 people (0.8 per cent);
- Northern Ireland over the same period is projected to grow by 3.7 per cent in the short term (mid-2018 to mid-2028) and 5.7 per cent in the long term (mid-2043);
- Age Analysis was also considered in terms of the likely impact of the impact of population statistics on electorate statistics (people coming on to the electoral register)

- Since mid-2009, the population of Belfast District has increased by the largest percentage in the middle to older ages;
- The population aged 40-64 has increased by 6,500 people (6.8 per cent) and the population aged 65+ has increased by 3,400 people (7.0 per cent). In comparison, the population aged 16-39 has decreased by 2,500 people (2.0 per cent) over the same period;
- This trend is projected to continue over the next 25 years. In the short term (mid-2018 to mid-2028) the population of Belfast is projected to increase by 2,900 people (2.9 per cent) for ages 40-64 and by 8,800 people (17.5 per cent) in the population aged 65+;
- In the long term, (mid-2043) the population aged 40-64 is projected to decrease slightly (0.3 per cent) while the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 40.3 per cent (20,200 people); and
- Belfast is also projected to experience significant decreases in the younger population, 0-15 and 16-39 over the next 25 years (mid-2043), by 12.2 per cent and 7.3 per cent, respectively.

Notably there is also a trend of population movement out of Belfast. Belfast District has experienced a **negative net migration since mid-2009**. Over the past decade, net migration has contributed to a loss of 10,600 people from Belfast District. The majority of this loss of people can be attributed to negative net internal migration, which totalled 8,100 people between mid-2009 to mid-2020. Essentially, this shows **a trend of people moving out of Belfast, mostly into other areas of Northern Ireland**.

6.4.12 These trends are projected to continue. In the short term, mid-2018 to mid-2028, Belfast District is projected to experience positive natural change of 10,000 people and in the long term (mid-2043) this is projected to increase to 19,400 people. In comparison, net migration is projected to remain negative. Over the period, mid-2018 to mid-2028, Belfast LGD is projected to lose 5,600 people due to net migration, increasing to 16,800 by mid-2043.

6.4.13 Aside from population I also looked at this issue in terms of any significant growth in the electorate figures since my enumeration date. I consulted with the Chief Electoral Officer of Northern Ireland, also a statutory advisor to me under this Review, who provided me with an informal update on trends emerging from the Electoral Office canvass. Having extensively researched and tested the issue of population and the impact of this in terms of electorate and balance of local government representation in Belfast, my conclusions are:

- ***It is difficult to conclude, on the grounds of population growth since the wards were last configured, that the area which is the subject of this proposal needs another ward or more representation at council level when compared to other areas of the City;***
- ***It is difficult to conclude that the District of Belfast requires additional local government wards over and above the current 60 ward model, when its projected population data is compared to other areas across Northern Ireland. The 60 ward model is workable on current numbers and is likely to continue to be workable when looking at the projections for population patterns over the next 10 years;***
- ***In balancing all of the evidence on the population of Belfast as a whole, and particularly the area of Belfast in question, I am not persuaded that another ward in the south of the city as submitted is justified. Indeed, I do not see any evidence which would persuade me that more than 60 wards would be required in this District;***
- ***I also note that the argument for more wards in Belfast was advanced by only one consultee. Belfast City Council actively engaged with the Review and did not make any representations that Belfast requires more than 60 wards; and***
- ***I therefore do not agree with the reasoning of the Assistant Commissioner that a 61 ward model for the District of Belfast is desirable having regard to all of the matters in Paragraph 17.***

I fully understand the views expressed about the challenges of drawing boundary lines around communities when the legislative focus is on achieving wards which are ‘substantially the same’ whilst drawing boundary lines which are ‘readily identifiable’.

It is often the case that people find this process too focused on mathematical balancing and geographical features rather than paying attention to how people feel about disruption to cohesive communities and separating housing which was previously in the same ward.

It is difficult to preserve cohesion when the process is designed to redistribute the number of electors in an equal way. As a result, change to what people have become used to is unavoidable when updating electoral boundaries against patterns of population movement over a considerable period of time.

6.4.14 Where possible, I wish to ensure that readily identifiable boundaries are used and sometimes there may be many options of to choose from in terms of a readily identifiable boundary in an area. When comparing one boundary to another it is open to me to test the strength of numerous boundaries by listening to evidence such as that contained in the SDLP submission about the Ravenhill Road. I agree with the Assistant Commissioner's analysis on this particular issue:

the boundary between Ormeau and Ravenhill reverts back to the current ward boundary, as prior to this review, but this means Ravenhill still needs additional electors which is achieved by moving the boundary between Cregagh and Ravenhill, using the stream at the back of the houses at Onslow Parade as the real-world feature for the boundary to follow

As analysed by the Assistant Commissioner, the SDLP have made a relevant argument based on achieving a boundary that can be described as being more readily identifiable than the boundary I have proposed at this point. In addition, the use of this alternative boundary can also achieve the requirement of achieving ward units which contain a number of electors which is 'substantially the same' as set out in the reconfiguration set out in the report of the Assistant Commissioner. Indeed I also note a representation from the Alliance Party that states

Additionally, the proposed changes to the boundary between Ravenhill and Ormeau wards again removes a clear line of demarcation. The boundary remaining on the Ravenhill Road gives a clear boundary line between the DEAs of Botanic and Lisnasharragh.

Whilst this submission references the boundaries of District Electoral Areas, which is out of scope of my remit and is not a permissible consideration under my legislation, I note the phrase 'clear line of demarcation' which refers to the Ravenhill Road. This is broadly the same point that has been made by the SDLP submission about this area which tends to give this argument additional weight. I am therefore content to accept the analysis and proposal by the Assistant Commissioner to redraw the boundary line at Ormeau, Cregagh and Ravenhill wards as shown in the attached map.

6.4.15 There is a total of 230236 electors within the district which averages at 3837 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 60 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Belfast](#). The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out at Table 4 below.

Belfast Ward Names

6.4.16 As set out in Chapter 5 on the general issue of the naming of districts and wards under this process, it is my view that my role in recommending names of the Districts and Wards is in large measure linked to my role in the delineation of boundaries.

Descriptors of place for the naming of administrative units such as Districts and wards makes use of spatial reference points like compass points county names and also geographical features associated with a particular space such as a lough, river, mountain or main road. It is also true to say that many place descriptions have evolved from multiple languages and cultural influences.

6.4.17 In Chapter 5 I set out how I make the distinction between the wider submission on the use of the Irish language across the whole map, which is a request to develop a policy approach on the use and recognition of a language, and those submissions which are more local and nuanced in terms of how local people in specific areas refer to the name for their locality which, in some cases, may be linked to the use of a language and strong cultural heritage of a particular local area.

6.4.18 I also set out in Chapter 5 that I would not be inclined to interfere with naming of wards if nothing has changed in spatial terms since the ward was last settled with its legal name i.e. in the 2008/09 Review. However, if there is strong evidence to support the case that an existing ward name does not fully correspond to how the people living there identify and refer to their space or place, then I think that individual submissions could potentially be well argued for a ward name change, depending on the strength of the evidence in the particular locality. This includes names in a minority language.

6.4.19 I agree with the findings of the Assistant Commissioner about the potential merit in the submission for a ward name change in 7 particular Belfast wards to reflect how the local community refers to the areas in question. These wards are Ballymurphy, Beechmount, Cliftonville, New Lodge, Shaw's Road, Turf Lodge and Twinbrook. In these 7 wards there is evidence of prevalent use of the Irish language. In particular, a number of clear and tangible issues have been raised during the consultation including the fact that all 7 of these wards contain an Irish Medium School. This is a significant development since the last Review and the evidence of the growth of Irish Medium education in Northern Ireland over the last ten years is well documented. This is particularly true in parts of Belfast.

6.4.20 I also note the prevalence of the use of the Irish name for some of these wards based on how the community refers to the area on which the ward name is founded. I can see this in several of the consultation responses on the online portal that refer to Ballymurphy ward as Baile Uí Mhurchú. I further note that the Assistant Commissioner paid site visits to the areas identified and observed significant use of the Irish language in signage and other public communication in the locality and he received representation on the widespread use of Irish and the importance of the Irish language for the community in these areas. However, I also note that there is no evidence so far either from the consultation or from The Place Names Project that would support a well-used and understood name in the Irish language which could be nominated for the naming of all of these wards. There is no evidence available at all as to the Irish name used for the areas of Cliftonville ward Turf Lodge ward.

6.4.21 I can see that the Assistant Commissioner has focused on these 7 wards due to the location of Irish Medium Schools in each of these wards, but it is not clear that the community in each of these 7 wards do in fact share a well-known and understood Irish name for the area

which would be an appropriate ward name for me to propose. My conclusion is that some or all of these wards may be more appropriately named by use of the Irish name known and used by the local communities, but I am unable to make a definitive assessment at this stage as to what those names should be. However, I have received information from the Place Names Project at Queen's University which gives information on the Irish names on 5 of the 7 wards in question.

6.4.22 Accordingly, I am not minded to change any of these ward names in these revised proposals, but I would ask for further views on these 7 wards as to the appropriate name for each ward which I will duly consider when making my final recommendations after the secondary consultation has closed. The evidence received under the consultation, including the work done by the Place Names Project, suggests the following names may be well understood names for the areas:

Ballymurphy – Baile Uí Mhurchú;

Beechmount – Ard na bhFeá;

Cliftonville – No evidence of any other name used;

New Lodge – An Lóiste Úr;

Shaw's Road – Bóthar Seoighe;

Turf Lodge – No evidence of any other name used; and

Twinbrook – Cill Uiaghe.

6.4.23 I look forward to hearing more views on the potential names for these seven wards so that I may make a final evaluation.

Table 4. Belfast

Number of wards – 60	Total electorate - 230236	Average ward size - 3837	
Ward name	Current Electorate⁵	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Andersonstown	3713	3713	
Ardoyne	3665	4018	
Ballygomartin	4168	4129	
Ballymacarrett	3819	3819	
Ballymurphy	3598	3598	
Ballysillan	3449	3651	
Beechmount	3605	3605	
Beersbridge	4076	3611	
Bellevue	3672	3672	
Belmont	3608	3608	
Belvoir	3681	3681	
Blackstaff	4398	4209	
Bloomfield	3919	3618	
Cavehill	3403	3513	
Central	5282	4214	
Chichester Park	3970	3860	
Cliftonville	3896	3896	
Clonard	3956	3828	
Collin Glen	4089	4089	
Connswater	3975	3975	

⁵ The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date

Cregagh	3402	3577	3491
Duncairn	4584	4088	
Dunmurry	3878	3878	
Falls	3329	3457	
Falls Park	3707	3707	
Finaghy	3539	4217	
Forth River	3307	3479	
Fortwilliam	3393	3876	
Garnerville	3553	3553	
Gilnahirk	3740	3740	
Hillfoot	3630	3630	
Innisfayle	3932	3932	
Knock	3855	3649	
Ladybrook	3728	3927	
Lagmore	5070	3986	
Legoniel	3974	3772	
Malone	3754	4202	
Merok	3193	3513	
Musgrave	3705	4219	
New Lodge	3447	3460	
Orangefield	3568	3713	
Ormeau	4200	3911	4200
Poleglass	3969	4131	
Ravenhill	3399	3688	3485
Rosetta	4028	3853	
Sandown	3287	3794	
Shandon	4000	4000	
Shankill	4415	4086	
Shaw's Road	3984	3984	
Stewartstown	3644	3644	
Stormont	3791	3791	

Stranmillis	4391	4184	
Sydenham	3732	3732	
Turf Lodge	3521	3521	
Twinbrook	3475	4198	
Upper Malone	3707	4218	
Water Works	4307	3954	
Windsor	4865	4178	
Woodstock	3793	3793	
Woodvale	3498	3694	

6.5 Causeway Coast and Glens

District boundary

- 6.5.1 In my Provisional Recommendations Report I recommended a correction to the defacement of the district line with Mid and East Antrim at Tullykittagh Road. I reaffirm this proposal.
- 6.5.2 The Assistant Commissioner has made a recommendation that a defacement of the district boundary with Mid and East Antrim at Maboy Road is corrected. I accept this recommendation.

Number and boundaries of wards

- 6.5.3 The Assistant Commissioner has included a number of recommendations concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Windy Hall and Dundooan wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Causeway Coast and Glens Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). I recommend the realignment of these wards as the Windy Hall estate, after which the ward had been named, was removed from the Windy Hall ward and the Assistant Commissioner's recommendation resolves this while providing a solution that is more faithful to the statutory rules.
- 6.5.4 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 99547 electors within the district which averages at 2488 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Causeway Coast and Glens](#).
- 6.5.5 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 5. Causeway Coast and Glens

Number of wards – 40	Total Electorate count - 99547	Average ward size - 2488	
Ward name	Current Electorate⁶	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Aghadowey	2562	2562	
Altahullion	2241	2254	2333
Atlantic	2613	2613	
Ballycastle	2386	2386	
Ballykelly	2290	2572	
Ballymoney East	2145	2306	
Ballymoney North	2502	2341	
Ballymoney South	2318	2318	
Castlerock	2621	2694	2671
Churchland	2641	2643	
Clogh Mills	2646	2646	
Coolessan	1897	2256	
Dervock	2480	2480	
Drumsumn	2548	2265	
Dundooan	2588	2665	2489
Dungiven	2511	2511	
Dunloy	2574	2574	
Feeny	2487	2487	2438
Garvagh	2362	2362	
Giant's Causeway	2463	2436	2435

⁶ The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date

Greysteel	3143	2654	
Greystone	2388	2379	2349
Hopefield	2593	2593	
Kilrea	2661	2661	
Kinbane	2709	2709	2710
Loughguile and Stranocum	2626	2624	
Lurigethan	2136	2258	
Macosquin	2499	2655	2675
Magilligan	2308	2252	
Mountsandel	2611	2611	
Portrush and Dunluce	2186	2265	
Portstewart	2201	2302	
Quarry	2768	2590	
Rasharkin	2712	2712	2704
Roeside	2077	2260	
Route	2396	2396	2398
Torr Head and Rathlin	2654	2532	
University	2278	2456	
Waterside	2962	2731	
Windy Hall	2766	2536	2710

6.6 Derry City and Strabane

District boundary

6.6.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.6.2 I have considered all the consultation responses received and the report of the Assistant Commissioner for this District. The Assistant Commissioner for the District has concluded in his analysis that my provisional proposals for both District and ward boundaries should be affirmed. I agree with the analysis set out by the Assistant Commissioner for this District and I therefore affirm my provisional recommendations for this District. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Derry City and Strabane Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). The proposed ward and district boundaries for this district can be viewed at [Derry City and Strabane](#).

6.6.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the ward names and their electorates. There is a total of 109899 electors within the district which averages at 2747 electors per ward and my recommended changes are designed to balance the electorate across the district.

6.6.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021, and the electorate per ward in my Provisional and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 6. Derry City and Strabane

Number of wards – 40	Total Electorate - 109899	Average ward size - 2747
Ward name	Current Electorate⁷	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL/REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS
Artigarvan	2653	2653
Ballycolman	2761	2636
Ballymagroarty	2820	2820
Brandywell	2573	2573
Carn Hill	2331	2996
Castlederg	2536	2536
Caw	2959	2959
City Walls	2457	2457
Claudy	2605	2605
Clondermot	2877	2877
Creggan	2820	2820
Creggan South	2843	2843
Culmore	3210	2790
Drumahoe	3010	3010
Dunnamanagh	2585	2585
Ebrington	2746	2746
Eglinton	2868	2868
Enagh	2930	2930
Finn	3006	2654
Foyle Springs	2624	2624
Galliagh	2823	2891
Glenderg	2479	2479
Glenelly Valley	2532	2532

⁷ The manual geocoding process results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date

Kilfennan	2998	2998
Lisnagelvin	2496	2496
Madam's Bank	2428	2923
New Buildings	2824	2824
Newtownstewart	2291	2643
Northland	2985	2985
Park	2574	2574
Shantallow	2879	2980
Shantallow East	3293	3021
Sheriff's Mountain	2591	2591
Sion Mills	2749	2749
Skeoge	3480	2843
Slievekirk	2612	2612
Springtown	2534	2534
Strabane North	2767	2767
Strabane West	2421	2546
Victoria	2929	2929

6.7 Fermanagh and Omagh

District boundary

6.7.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.7.2 The Assistant Commissioner has included a number of recommendations concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Ballinamallard, Irvinestown, Trillick, Fintona and Lisnarrick wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Fermanagh and Omagh Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). I recommend the realignment of these wards as set out in the attached maps as they take into account the boundary between the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone and provide a solution within the statutes that results in a redistribution of electors in order to achieve substantially the same number in each ward.

6.7.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 84713 electors within the district which averages at 2117 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Fermanagh and Omagh](#).

6.7.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 7. Fermanagh and Omagh

Number of wards – 40	Total Electorate - 84713	Average ward size - 2117	
Ward name	Current Electorate⁸	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Ballinamallard	2192	2098	2316
Belcoo and Garrison	2121	2121	
Belleek and Boa	2375	2237	
Beragh	2109	2109	
Boho, Cleenish and Letterbreen	2493	2312	
Brookeborough	1920	1985	
Camowen	2186	2186	
Castlecoole	2284	2284	
Coolnagard	2348	2072	
Dergmoney	1847	2123	
Derrygonnelly	2072	2072	
Derrylin	2032	1988	
Donagh	2030	2000	
Dromore	1986	1986	
Drumnakilly	2161	2161	
Drumquin	2149	2149	
Ederney and Kesh	2085	2223	
Erne	2122	2122	
Fairy Water	2209	2209	
Fintona	1827	1937	1923

⁸ The manual geocoding process described in Chapter 6 results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date

Florence Court and Kinawley	2243	2243	
Gortin	2257	2257	
Gortrush	2217	2217	
Irvinestown	2284	2284	2199
Killiclogher	2273	2124	
Lisbellaw	2232	2232	
Lisnarrick	2444	2239	2320
Lisnaskea	1853	2042	
Maguiresbridge	2462	2007	
Newtownbutler	1915	1977	
Newtownsaville	2166	2166	2070
Owenkillew	2086	2086	
Portora	2255	2255	
Rosslea	1775	1988	
Rossorry	1830	2011	
Sixmilecross	2033	2033	
Strule	1854	2003	
Tempo	2142	2142	
Termon	1960	1960	
Trillick	1884	2073	1969

6.8 Lisburn and Castlereagh

District boundary

6.8.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.8.2 The Assistant Commissioner has included recommendations concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Ballymacoss, White Mountain and Knockmore wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Lisburn and Castlereagh Assistant Commissioner's Report](#).

6.8.3 On reconsideration of the boundary at this point, I am persuaded by the representations on this matter that use of the main road as the boundary line is a strong argument. Such a change is justifiable on the grounds that this is a line which could be said to be more readily identifiable than the lines proposed in my Provisional Recommendations. Achieving readily identifiable boundary lines is desirable under paragraph 14 of the legislation, however, as highlighted by the Assistant Commissioner, the use of the main road as the boundary line would result in two wards with slightly more than 10% of variance above the ward average size for this District.

6.8.4 It is important to note that the '10% variance' approach is my own guidance measure for the range of numbers of electors in each ward which may be considered as being 'substantially the same' within a District to meet the requirements of paragraph 19. The use of 10%, as stipulated in my stated approach to my Provisional Recommendations, is not fixed by the legislation. It is open to me to exercise my discretion and, where possible, I think it is important to be open to considering views as to which line may be more readily identifiable and whether such changes may be permissible even if it takes the number of electors outside the 10% range.

6.8.5 It is clear from the statutory rules that ward electorates are required to be substantially the same only as far as is reasonably practicable having regard to the factors in paragraph 17. It

is also clear that 10% is not a strict measure or target and that 'substantially the same' is a matter for my judgement. Indeed, the statutory test of 'substantially the same' is not to be replaced with another test of my own making. In my view it is the degree of variance in numbers which is the important balancing factor in achieving wards which can reasonably be described as being 'substantially the same'. The use of 10% as a guide is preferred for balancing and for consistency, but it is not a fixed or binding measure.

6.8.6 Ballymacoss ward would result in +11.3% of the average ward size and the Knockmore ward at +12.8% of the average ward size. I am therefore content that the numbers in both ward configurations as set out in the Assistant Commissioner's report would not result in wards which are substantially different to the ward average in this District. Thus, in balancing the factors outlined, it is my decision that I will revise the line as suggested by the Assistant Commissioner on the basis that it is a more readily identifiable boundary line than my proposed line and the change to the boundary results in wards which, in my view, can reasonably be described as having substantially the same number of electors.

6.8.7 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 104519 electors within the district which averages at 2612 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Lisburn and Castlereagh](#).

6.8.8 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 8. Lisburn and Castlereagh

Number of wards – 40	Total electorate – 104519	Average ward size – 2612	
Ward name	Current Electorate⁹	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Ballinderry	2872	2872	
Ballyhanwood	2351	2351	
Ballymacash	2343	2797	
Ballymacbrennan	2374	2374	
Ballymacoss	3590	2806	2907
Beechill	2547	2513	
Blaris	2467	2467	
Cairnshill	2678	2678	
Carrowreagh	3936	2788	
Carryduff East	2709	2624	
Carryduff West	2528	2483	
Derryaghy	2871	2871	
Dromara	2468	2468	
Drumbo	2333	2378	
Dundonald	2393	2393	
Enler	2209	2742	
Galwally	2437	2437	
Glenavy	2743	2743	
Graham's Bridge	2227	2842	
Harmony Hill	2305	2449	

⁹ The manual geocoding process described in Chapter 6 results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date

Hilden	2562	2469	
Hillhall	2766	2766	
Hillsborough	2660	2660	
Knockbracken	2678	2482	
Knockmore	2839	2851	2948
Lagan	2528	2528	
Lagan Valley	2122	2355	
Lambeg	2535	2535	
Lisnagarvey	2344	2793	
Maghaberry	2931	2822	
Magheralave	2835	2691	
Maze	2352	2352	
Moira	2716	2716	
Moneyreagh	2309	2394	
Newtownbreda	2124	2354	
Old Warren	2563	2779	
Ravernet	2396	2396	
Stonyford	2283	2814	
Wallace Park	2651	2847	
White Mountain	3944	2839	2641

6.9 Mid and East Antrim

District boundary

- 6.9.1 In my Provisional Recommendations Report I recommended a correction to the defacement of the district boundary at Upper Road Greenisland and Whiteside's Road in Randalstown on the boundary with Antrim and Newtownabbey District and at Tullykittagh Road on the boundary with Causeway Coast and Glens District. I reaffirm this proposal.
- 6.9.2 The Assistant Commissioner has included a recommendation that a defacement of the district boundary with Causeway Coast and Glens District at Maboy Road is corrected. I recommend this change to the District boundary as set out in the map.

Number and boundaries of wards

- 6.9.3 The Assistant Commissioner has included a recommendation concerning the realignment of ward boundaries in the Ballee & Harryville and Glenwhirry wards. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Mid and East Antrim Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). I recommend this realignment as it follows a historical townland boundary and remains faithful to the statutory rules.
- 6.9.4 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the 40 wards for this District. There is a total of 99421 electors within the district which averages at 2485 electors per ward and my Revised Recommendations balance the electorate across the 40 wards. The revised ward and district boundaries changes that I have proposed can be viewed at [Mid and East Antrim](#).
- 6.9.5 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021 and the electorate per ward in my Proposed and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 9. Mid and East Antrim

Number of wards – 40	Total Electorate - 99421	Average ward size - 2485	
Ward name	Current Electorate¹⁰	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS	Proposed Electorate REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS (N.B. A figure has only been included where there is a change)
Academy	2119	2241	
Ahoghill	2650	2316	
Ardeevin	2581	2311	
Ballee and Harryville	2311	2259	2295
Ballycarry and Glynn	2731	2731	
Ballykeel	2137	2354	
Boneybefore	2373	2479	
Braidwater	2344	2245	
Broughshane	2790	2546	
Burleigh Hill	2217	2713	
Cairncastle	2665	2675	
Carnlough and Glenarm	2346	2346	
Castle	2656	2656	
Castle Demesne	2260	2260	
Craigyhill	2631	2730	
Cullybackey	2061	2259	
Curran and Inver	2477	2477	
Fair Green	2356	2311	
Galgorm	2465	2426	
Gardenmore	2394	2457	

¹⁰ The manual geocoding process described in Chapter 6 results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Glenravel	2533	2535	
Glenwhirry	2362	2644	2608
Gortalee	2532	2536	
Grange	2699	2699	
Greenisland	2552	2557	
Islandmagee	2361	2361	
Kells	2484	2484	
Kilroot	3088	2708	
Kilwaughter	3188	2734	
Kirkinriola	2296	2360	
Love Lane	2421	2421	
Maine	2235	2510	2518
Park	2099	2243	
Portglenone	2324	2324	
Slemish	2361	2424	
Sunnylands	2686	2686	
The Maidens	2473	2473	
Victoria	2913	2691	
Whitehead South	2536	2536	
Woodburn	2703	2703	

6.10 Mid Ulster

District boundary

6.10.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.10.2 I have considered all the consultation responses received and the report of the Assistant Commissioner for this District. The Assistant Commissioner for the District has concluded in his analysis that my provisional proposals for both district and ward boundaries should be affirmed. I agree with the analysis set out by the Assistant Commissioner for this District and I therefore affirm my provisional recommendations for this District. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Mid Ulster Assistant Commissioner's Report](#). The proposed ward and district boundaries for this district can be viewed at [Mid Ulster](#).

6.10.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 40 wards and the table below lists the ward names and their electorates. There is a total of 101427 electors within the district which averages at 2535 electors per ward and my recommended changes are designed to balance the electorate across the district.

6.10.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021, and the electorate per ward in my Provisional and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 10. Mid Ulster

Number of wards – 40	Total Electorate - 101427	Average ward size - 2535
Ward name	Current Electorate¹¹	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL/REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS
Ardboe	2690	2690
Augher and Clogher	2498	2474
Aughnacloy	2501	2501
Ballygawley	2613	2613
Ballymaguigan	2809	2781
Ballysaggart	2846	2639
Bellaghy	2714	2714
Caledon	2686	2686
Castlecaulfield	2567	2567
Castledawson	2583	2611
Coagh	2345	2386
Coalisland North	2556	2667
Coalisland South	2866	2755
Cookstown East	2326	2326
Cookstown South	2323	2330
Cookstown West	2522	2515
Coolshinny	2728	2728
Donaghmore	2618	2547
Draperstown	2179	2290
Fivemiletown	2270	2294
Glebe	2609	2609
Killyman	2403	2608
Killymeal	2873	2668

¹¹ The manual geocoding process described in Chapter 6 results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Lissan	2518	2518
Loughry	2071	2276
Lower Glenshane	2363	2363
Maghera	2370	2370
Moy	2472	2472
Moygashel	2345	2552
Mullaghmore	2763	2763
Oaklands	2384	2384
Pomeroy	2669	2464
Stewartstown	2238	2309
Swatragh	2495	2495
Tamlaght O'Crilly	2611	2611
The Loup	2798	2757
Tobermore	2535	2424
Town Parks East	2493	2493
Valley	2542	2542
Washing Bay	2635	2635

6.11 Newry, Mourne and Down

District boundary

6.11.1 As set out in my Provisional Recommendations, I recommend that the district boundary line should remain unchanged.

Number and boundaries of wards

6.11.2 I have considered all the consultation responses received and the report of the Assistant Commissioner for this District. The Assistant Commissioner for the District has concluded in his analysis that my provisional proposals for both District and ward boundaries should be affirmed. I agree with the analysis set out by the Assistant Commissioner for this District and I therefore affirm my provisional recommendations for this District. The Assistant Commissioner's report can be accessed at [Newry, Mourne and Down Assistant Commission's Report](#). The proposed ward and district boundaries for this district can be viewed at [Newry, Mourne and Down](#).

6.11.3 I recommend that the district should remain comprised of 41 wards and the table below lists the ward names and their electorates. There is a total of 127075 electors within the district which averages at 3099 electors per ward and my recommended changes are designed to balance the electorate across the district.

6.11.4 The electorate per ward as at 4 January 2021, and the electorate per ward in my Provisional and Revised Recommendations are set out in the table below.

Table 11. Newry Mourne and Down

Number of wards – 41	Total Electorate - 127075	Average ward size - 3099
Ward name	Current Electorate¹²	Proposed Electorate PROVISIONAL/REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS
Abbey	2759	3271
Annalong	3111	3111
Ballybot	3582	3351
Ballydugan	2689	2807
Ballynahinch	3058	3058
Ballyward	3223	3223
Bessbrook	3348	3348
Binnian	3029	3029
Burren	3123	3123
Camlough	2936	2936
Castlewellan	2923	2923
Cathedral	2698	2817
Crossgar and Killyleagh	3070	3070
Crossmaglen	2949	2949
Damolly	3138	3369
Derryboy	3028	3028
Derryleckagh	3455	3100
Donard	2753	2860
Drumalane	3486	3355
Drumaness	2996	2996
Dundrum	3120	3120
Fathom	3157	3288
Forkhill	3059	3059

¹² The manual geocoding process described in Chapter 6 results in very small and statistically insignificant differences in the final electorate figures used for the Review, and the figures published by EONI on the enumeration date.

Hilltown	3560	3397
Kilkeel	2572	2847
Kilmore	2926	2926
Knocknashinna	3115	2996
Lecale	3077	2959
Lisnacree	3346	3071
Mayobridge	3559	3402
Mullaghbane	3154	3154
Murlough	3343	3236
Newtownhamilton	2944	2944
Quoile	2902	2902
Rostrevor	3312	3312
Saintfield	3003	3003
St Patrick's	3407	3407
Strangford	3010	3010
Tollymore	3026	3189
Warrenpoint	3237	3237
Whitecross	2892	2892

Chapter 7. Next Steps

- 7.1 The public consultation on my Revised Recommendations is now open. The deadline for written representations is 1st March 2022.
- 7.2 Full details on how to access and respond to the consultation on my Provisional Recommendations is at <https://www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/consultation>.
- 7.3 Once I have considered the representations made in response to these proposals, I will submit my final report to the Department for Communities. The timeline for my Review can be accessed at www.lgbc-ni.org.uk/milestone-timeline.
- 7.4 Finally, I would encourage everyone to participate in the consultation process, either through the online portal at: <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfc/consultation-on-lgbc-revised-recommendations> or by e-mail to: consultation@lgbc-ni.org.uk.

If you need any assistance accessing the proposals or need them in an alternative format please contact my team on info@lgbc-ni.org.uk. I look forward to hearing your views.

Annex 1: Acknowledgments

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