



## Standards and General Purposes Committee agenda supplement

Date: Thursday 17 November 2022

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury  
HP19 8FF

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
<b>4 Buckinghamshire Electoral Review</b> To consider the attached report and appendices.		<b>3 - 26</b>

Contact Officer: Nick Graham, Service Director, Legal and Democratic / Glenn Watson, Principal Governance Officer.

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Clare Gray - [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

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# Report to Standards and General Purposes Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>17 November 2022</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Buckinghamshire Electoral Review</b>
<b>Relevant councillor(s):</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Author and/or contact officer:</b>	Nick Graham, Service Director, Legal and Democratic. Contact officer Glenn Watson, Principal Governance Officer.
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) to adopt the recommendations made by the Electoral Review Working Group, as set out in Annex 1.
- (2) to recommend Council that these should form the Council's response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's consultation on proposed wards for Buckinghamshire Council

## **Reason for decision:**

The Committee has been asked to make recommendations to Council on the Local Government Boundary Commission's proposed wards for Buckinghamshire Council. The Electoral Review Working Group has assisted the Committee by recommending certain changes which it believes would achieve a better balance of the statutory criteria. The Committee is asked to adopt these recommendations and commend them to Council.

## **1. Background:**

1.1 On 2 August 2022, the Local Government Boundary Commission published its proposed pattern of wards for Buckinghamshire Council to apply from the Council elections in 2025. This followed a public consultation earlier this year during which the Commission received submissions from various sources, including this Council. In the event, the Commission did not follow this Council's submission. As such, Council agreed that the Committee should advise Council on the appropriate response to the current

consultation. The Commission is proposing a pattern of 51 wards with, variously, one, two or three member representation, achieving 98 members overall. The Commission's proposals can be found on their [website here](#).

1.2 The Commission will consider any comments on its proposals. However, it is not seeking detailed alternative submissions. Rather, the Commission is minded to implement the pattern of wards it has proposed and is seeking comments on their practicality. The Commission has invited views specifically on 10 of its proposals. This is where the Commission feels it may not have the level of local evidence it might otherwise wish.

1.3 In approaching its work, the Electoral Review Working Group invited all members to comment on the Commission's proposals. It then addressed itself as follows:

- A) Reviewing each of the 10 proposals on which the Commission invited comment;
- B) Reviewing any other refinement suggested by local members

1.4 The Group's recommendations are listed on Annex 1. Maps illustrating the recommendations, as appropriate, are at Annex 2.

## **2. Recommendations of the Working Group**

2.1 The Working Group was mindful only to suggest changes where they substantially improved upon the Commission's own proposal. In most cases, the suggested change actively builds on the Commission's working assumptions that:

- A) Parishes be kept whole where possible
- B) Rural wards are not too geographical spread out and diverse
- C) Electoral variance is within acceptable limits
- D) Urban and rural areas should not be mixed unless there are clear community identity reasons

2.2 In one instance (Chiltern Ridges), the Group felt that the Commission's ward was too large, diverse and artificial. It has therefore recommended that the constituent parishes be located instead, as appropriate, in Chesham North, Chesham South or Chalfont St Giles & Little Chalfont Wards.

2.3 In three cases, the Group has recommended that the Commission's individual wards be merged with another in the interests of community identity while retaining electoral variance:

- A) Grendon Underwood with Steeple Claydon
- B) Horwood with Winslow
- C) Newton Longville with Quainton

2.4 In other cases, the Group is proposing a modification to the Commission's proposals in the interests of community identity.

- A) Buckingham Ward: the addition of Leckhampstead Parish (from Horwood Ward)

- B) Iver and Gerrards Cross & Denham: recognition that New Denham has no connection with the Commission’s proposed Iver Ward; and that Denham Parish should be kept whole within the Gerrards Cross & Denham. Similarly, the parish boundary for Gerrards Cross should be restored and kept whole.
- C) Little Marlow Parish: to remain whole (e.g. within Chiltern Villages) rather than split as proposed by the Commission
- D) Penn, Tylers Green & Loudwater and Beaconsfield: transfer of certain areas (of the former) which more clearly identify with Beaconsfield. An additional benefit is a reduction in the Commission’s currently excessive variance for Penn, Tylers Green & Loudwater
- E) Terriers & Amersham Hill and Totteridge & Bowerdean: transferring certain polling districts and amending councillor numbers to achieve one 3 member ward and one 1 member ward (instead of two 2 member wards). The resulting wards to be Terriers & Totteridge (3) and Bowerdean (1).

2.5 The Working Group considered other proposals but felt that concentrating on these key areas where community identity could be improved, would be more advantageous. A proposal to create a one-member ‘West of Wycombe Villages’ ward out of the two-member Chiltern Villages Ward; and a proposal to form a two-member ward by merging the Commission’s one-member Wing and Birtton & Kingsbrook proposals were not endorsed as no consensus had been reached between local members in either case. It was noted that members could in any event make a personal suggestion directly to the Commission.

### 3. Next steps

3.1 The Committee’s recommendations will be considered by Council on 30 November. If approved, they will form the basis of the response to the Commission’s consultation.

3.2 The Commission’s revised timetable then envisages the following. None of these further steps involve input from the Council, unless the Commission wish to query any of the recommendations made to it before final publication.

<b>Final report</b> We publish the Commission’s recommendations	28 February 2023
<b>Order laid in Parliament</b> This makes the recommendations law	Spring 2023
<b>Effective date</b> The new arrangements apply to elections after this date	May 2025

#### **4. Legal and financial implications**

- 4.1 This report does not contain any financial implications. At present, the Council is participating in a consultation on the future electoral boundaries of the Council. There is no cost in responding to the consultation and any outcome will not be effected until the election of 2025.
- 4.2 In considering these recommendations, the Committee is fulfilling the delegation granted to it by Council. The Council is a statutory consultee to the electoral review.

#### **5. Corporate implications**

- 5.1 The outcome of the electoral review will shape the nature of the Council's elected member representation from the May 2025 elections and as such will have significant corporate implications at that time. For now, there are no current corporate implications.

## Electoral Review of Buckinghamshire Council

### Recommendations of the Electoral Review Working Group in response to the Commission's warding proposals

The Electoral Review Working Group recommends the Committee to adopt the following comments in response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's proposed wards for Buckinghamshire Council.

**A. Wards on which the Commission specifically invited comment:**

The Commission had specifically invited comment on 10 of its proposed wards. The Working Group has considered each one.

Commission's Proposed Ward	Working Group Recommendation
Aylesbury North West	No comment - endorse the Commission's proposed ward
Buckingham	<p>Propose to the Commission that their proposal for Buckingham Ward be amended to include Leckhampstead Parish for community identity reasons, the parish having much more in common with Buckingham than Winslow.</p> <p>Even though this would lead to a marginally excessive variance, it would improve the community identity of the Ward overall.</p> <p>Electoral variance (including Leckhampstead): 11.3% for 3 member ward.</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>
Chiltern Ridges	Propose to the Commission that the following changes be made, in the interests of community identity, all of which give electoral equality. The Working Group is concerned that the Commission's proposed ward is too large and does not reflect communities.

Commission's Proposed Ward	Working Group Recommendation												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="629 280 999 316">Parish</th> <th data-bbox="1010 280 1886 316">Ward to be included in:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 316 999 360">Chartridge Parish</td> <td data-bbox="1010 316 1886 360" rowspan="4">Chesham North (becomes 3 member)  12,573 (-7.3%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 360 999 405">The Lee Parish</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 405 999 481">Cholesbury cum St Leonards Parish</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 481 999 526">Ashley Green Parish</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 526 999 683">Latimer and Ley Hill Parish</td> <td data-bbox="1010 526 1886 683">Chesham South (2 member)  9,658 (6.8%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="629 683 999 882">Chenies</td> <td data-bbox="1010 683 1886 882">Chalfont St Giles &amp; Little Chalfont (3 member)  12,734 (-6.1%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Parish	Ward to be included in:	Chartridge Parish	Chesham North (becomes 3 member)  12,573 (-7.3%)	The Lee Parish	Cholesbury cum St Leonards Parish	Ashley Green Parish	Latimer and Ley Hill Parish	Chesham South (2 member)  9,658 (6.8%)	Chenies	Chalfont St Giles & Little Chalfont (3 member)  12,734 (-6.1%)	
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Flackwell Heath and the Wooburns	<p>Comment to the Commission that the important point is to keep Little Marlow Parish whole, in keeping with the Commission's approach generally, as to do otherwise would not reflect community identity. This should be the case even if Little Marlow comes within the proposed ward for Chiltern Villages.</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>												
Gerrards Cross & Denham	<p>Propose to the Commission that the important point is to keep both Denham and Gerrards Cross Parishes whole, with their boundaries restored, in keeping with the Commission's approach generally, as to do otherwise would not reflect community identity. This should be the case even if variances would be exceeded. The greatest harm would be to split off New Denham from the</p>												



Commission's Proposed Ward	Working Group Recommendation
	<p>parish (New Denham has no connection in practice with Iver Ward) and to compromise the parish boundary for Gerrards Cross.</p> <p>Leave it to the Commission to resolve.</p>
Marsh & Micklefield	Endorse the Commission's proposal for Marsh & Micklefield Ward.
Penn, Tyler's Green & Loudwater	<p>Propose to the Commission that certain areas of Penn, Tylers Green &amp; Loudwater actually identify more with Beaconsfield. Recommend the transfer of these streets. This would also have the benefit of eliminating the Commission's otherwise excessive variance for Penn, Tylers Green &amp; Loudwater.</p> <p>The proposed transfer would achieve electoral equality for both wards:</p> <p>Beaconsfield: 10.6% for a two member ward.  Penn, Tylers Green &amp; Loudwater: 5.5% for a two member ward.</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>
Steeple Claydon	<p>Propose to the Commission that their Steeple Claydon and Grendon Underwood Wards be merged to form a single ward with 2 members. This would better reflect community identity; would achieve more effective local governance; and would meet electoral equality.</p> <p>8,584. (-5.1%) for a two member ward. See plan at Annex 2.</p>
Terriers & Amersham Hill	Propose an amendment to the Commission, to improve community identity, creating a three member ward to be called "Terriers & Totteridge" – by transferring the polling districts WG2 and WH2 to a new "Bowerdean" ward, and receiving WW and WX (from the same).

Commission's Proposed Ward	Working Group Recommendation
	<p>-6.8% for a three member ward.</p> <p>NB This also includes moving Terriers Farm to Hazlemere Ward. Hazlemere would have a variance of -3.3% variance for a two member ward.</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>
Totteridge & Bowerdean	<p>Propose an amendment to the Commission, to improve community identity, creating a <u>one</u> member ward to be called "Bowerdean" – transferring polling districts WW and WX to the new "Terriers &amp; Totteridge" and receiving WG2 and WH2 from the same.</p> <p>-6% for a one member ward</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>

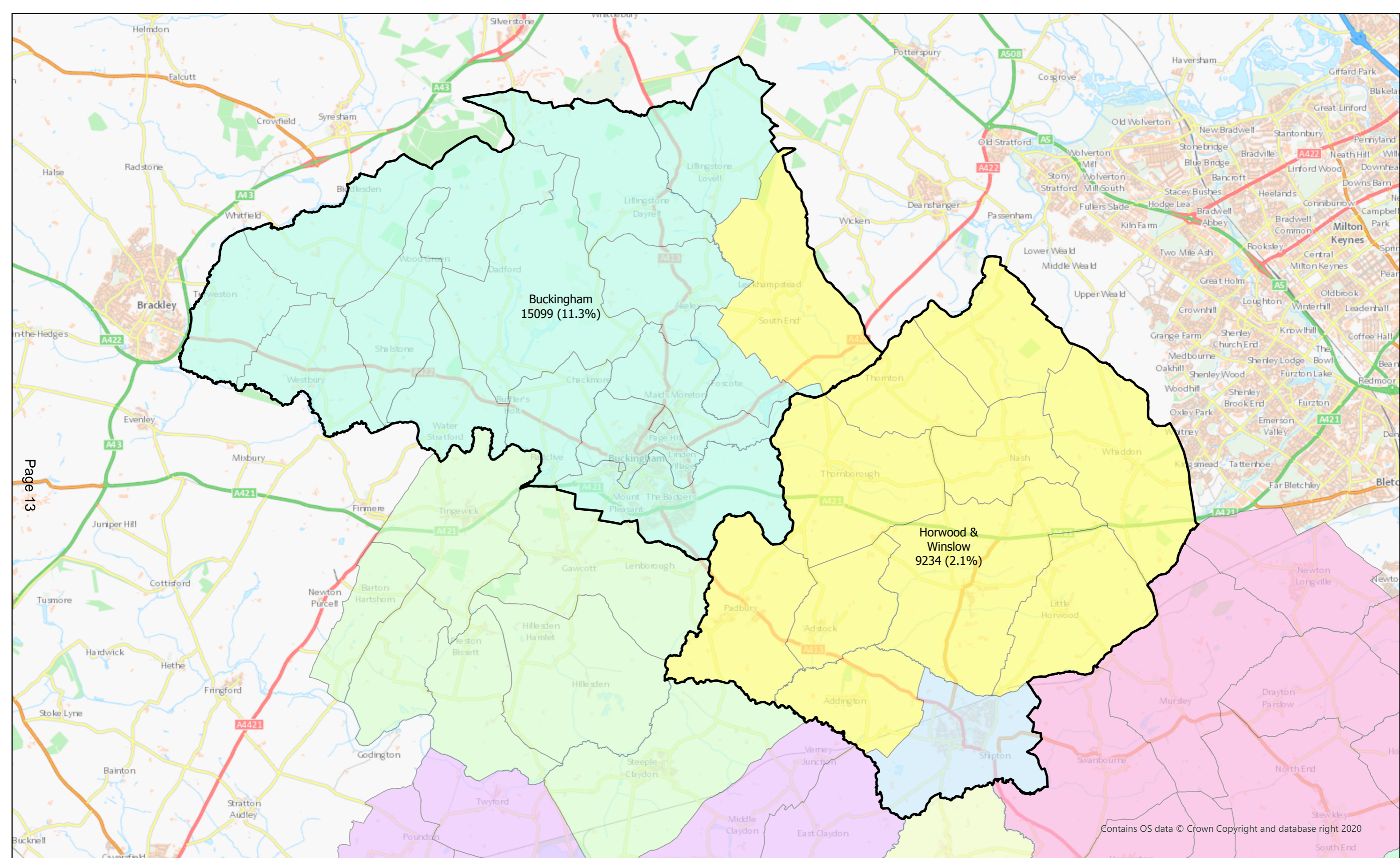
### B. Ward member proposals endorsed by the Group

In response to a consultation of all members, a small number of amendments were proposed by ward members. The Working Group recommends the Committee to adopt the following:

Commission's Proposed Ward	Local Member Proposal	Working Group recommendation
Horwood (1 member, 6%) and Winslow (1 member, 2%)	<p>Cllrs Cornell, Chilver, Goss and Sir B Stanier suggested that the Commission's proposed wards for Horwood and Winslow be merged into a single <u>two</u> member ward, in the interests of community identity.</p> <p>Electoral variance would be achieved.</p>	<p>Propose to the Commission that its potential wards for Horwood and Winslow be merged to form a single two member ward in the interests of community identity. This continues to achieve electoral equality. NB Leckhampstead parish to move into Buckingham as proposed above.</p>

Commission's Proposed Ward	Local Member Proposal	Working Group recommendation
		<p>2.1% variance for a two member ward (assuming the transfer of Leckhampstead out of this ward).</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>
<p>Newton Longville + Quainton (2 member = Newton Longville, 0%; 1 member, Quainton, -5%)</p>	<p>Cllr Gomm suggested that the Commission's proposed wards of Newton Longville and Quainton be merged to form a single <u>three</u> member ward for community identity reasons, given the farming and rural commonalities of these communities.</p> <p>He proposed the new name of: "Swanbourne and Rural Villages".</p> <p>This would achieve electoral variance.</p>	<p>Propose to the Commission that its potential wards of Newton Longville and Quainton be merged to form a single three-member ward with the suggested name of '<b>Swanbourne and Rural Villages</b>'.</p> <p>-1.2% variance for a three member ward.</p> <p>See plan at Annex 2.</p>

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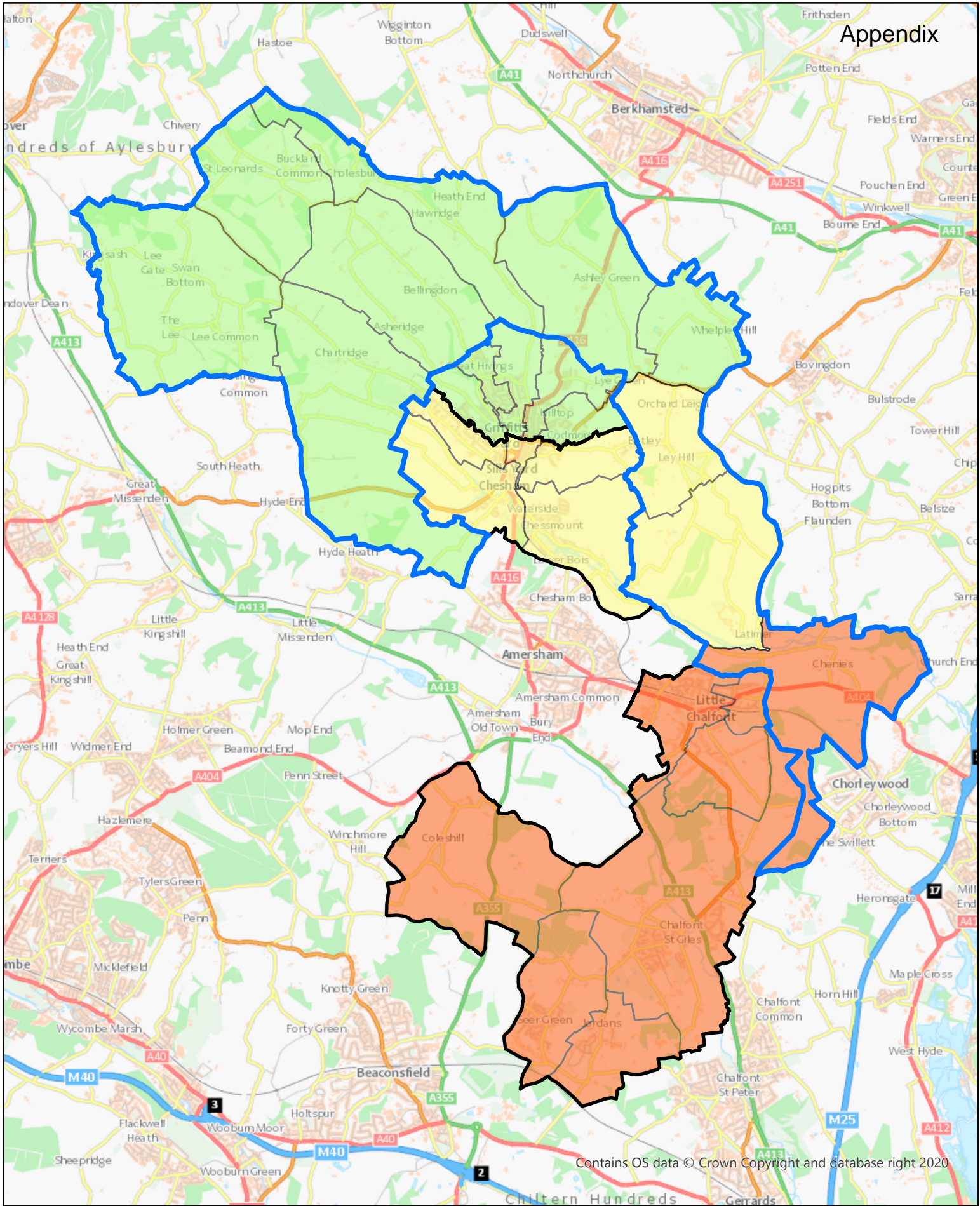
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# Buckingham Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal

Black outline = Leckhampstead moving to Buckingham, Horwood merging with Winslow to create 2 member ward

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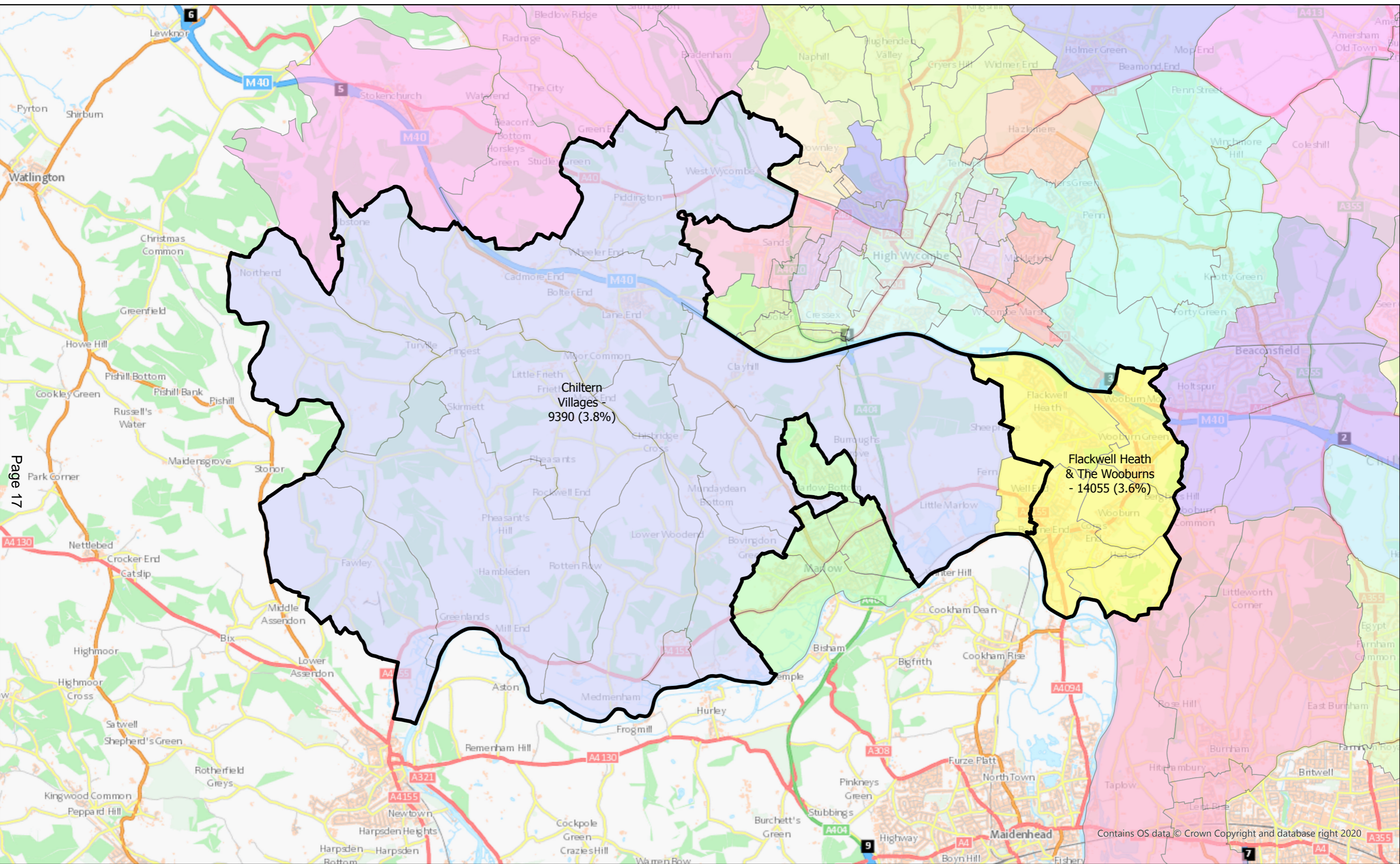
## Chiltern Ridges Split Proposal

- Green - Chesham North, 12573 (-7.3% - 3 member)
- Yellow - Chesham South, 9658 (6.8% - 2 member)
- Red - Chalfont St Giles & Little Chalfont, 12734 (-6.1% - 3 member)

Blue outline - LGBC Chiltern Ridges proposal

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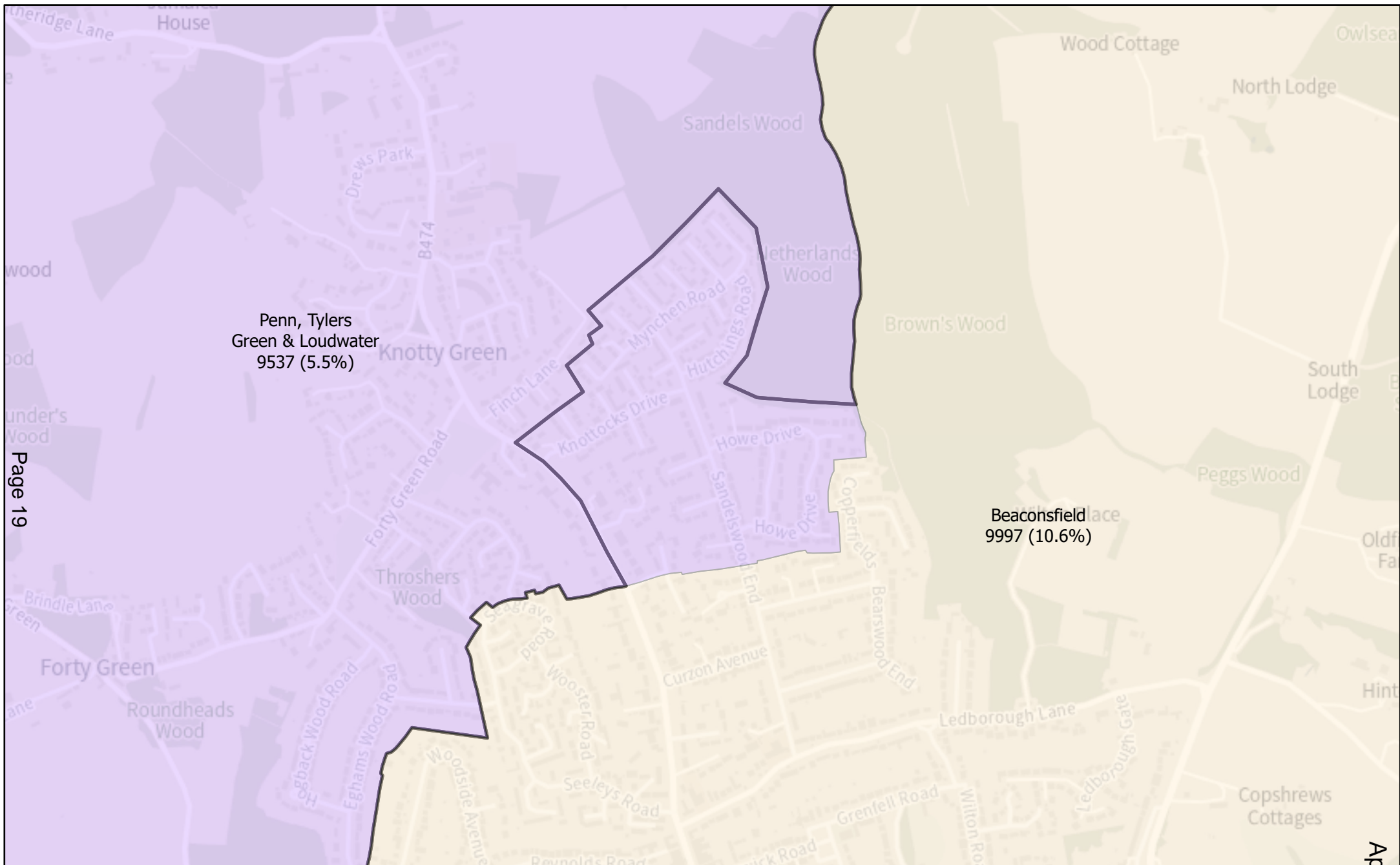




# Flackwell Heath & The Wooburns Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal  
 Black outline = Little Marlow CP moving to Chiltern Villages

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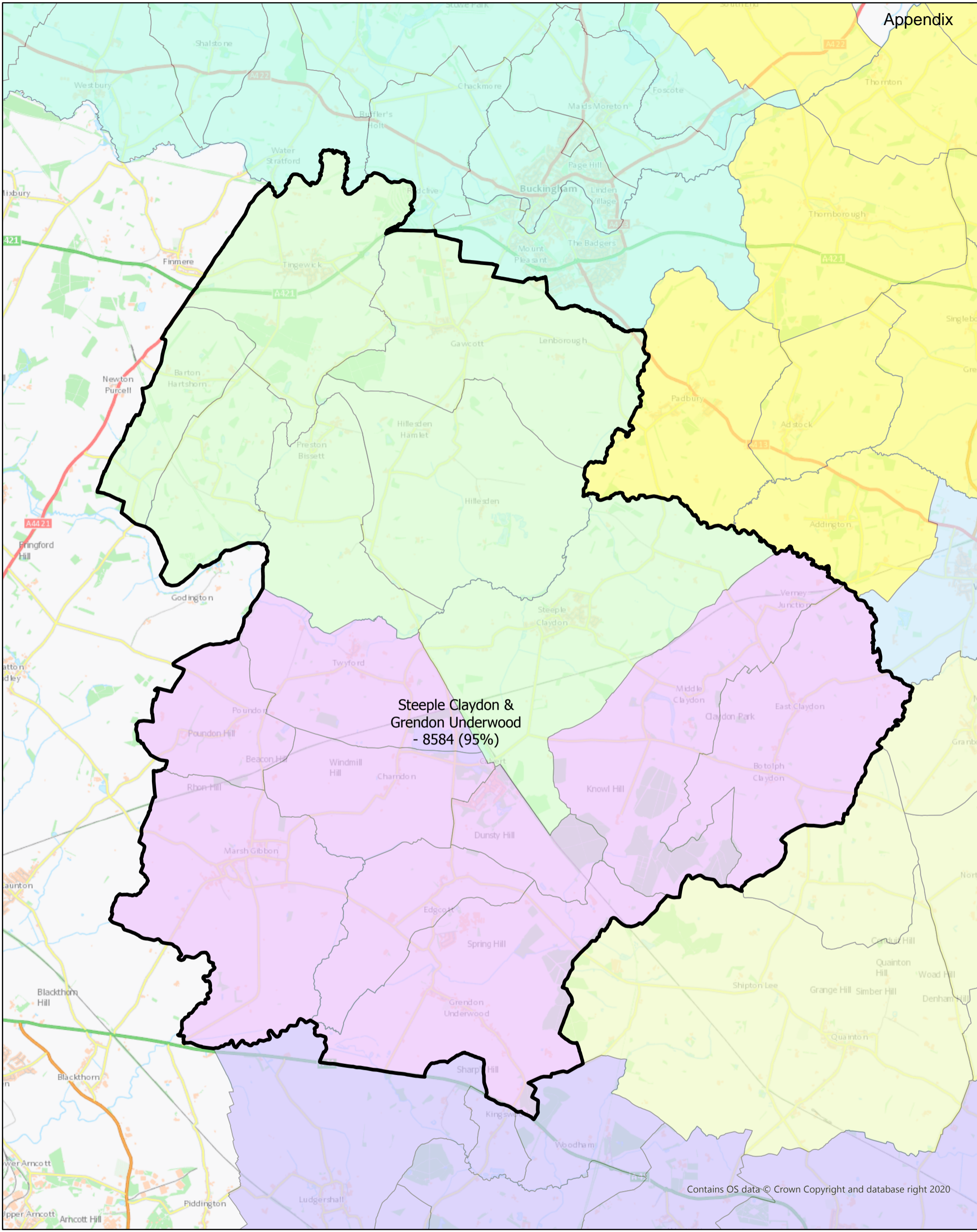


## Penn, Tylers Green & Loudwater Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal

Black outline = Council proposal to transfer an area to Beaconsfield

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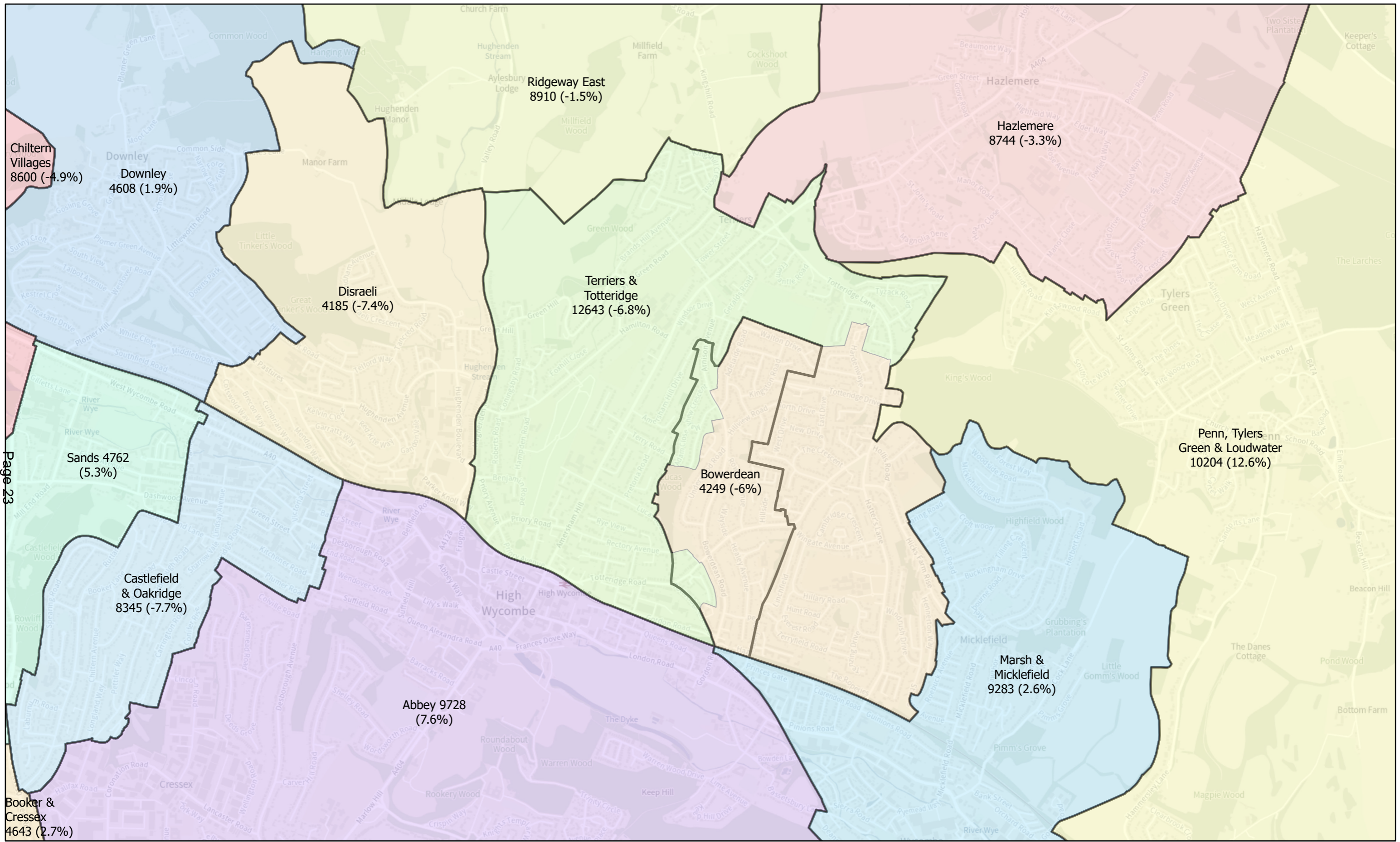
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# Steeple Claydon Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal

Black outline = Combined Steeple Claydon & Grendon Underwood ward.

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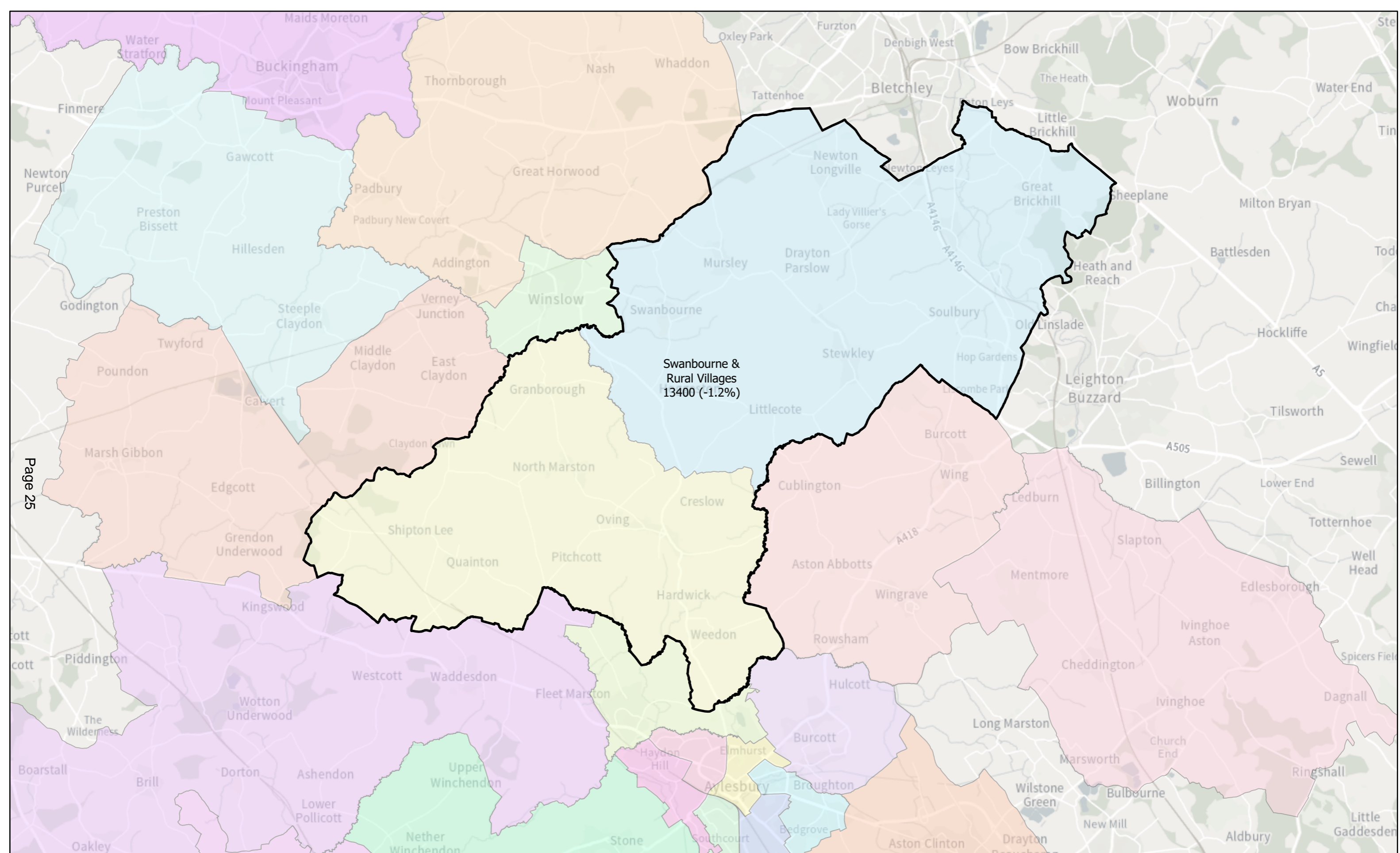
# Terriers & Amersham Hill Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal

Black outline = Council proposal

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# Swanbourne & Rural Villages Proposal

Colour wash = current LGBC proposal  
 Black outline = Council proposal to merge Quinton & Newton Longville

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