

Stevenage Borough Council**Personal Details:****Name:** Jim Callaghan**E-mail:** [REDACTED]**Postcode:** [REDACTED]**Organisation Name:** Stevenage Labour Party**Comment text:**

Please find attached the Review submission from Stevenage Labour Party. As I am unable to embed a zip file into a .pdf I will also send a zip file containing the shape files of the proposed warding scheme under separate cover.

Uploaded Documents:

[https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1645984980 Stevenage+Labour+Group%2C+LGBCE+Review+Submission%2C+Feb+2022.pdf](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1645984980%20Stevenage+Labour+Group%2C+LGBCE+Review+Submission%2C+Feb+2022.pdf)

Stevenage Borough Council Labour Group
Electoral Review Stage 2 Submission – Warding Arrangements

1. Introduction

This review has been necessitated by three Stevenage wards currently exceeding their optimal mean by >10%, with a further three wards being >10% below their optimal mean.

In order to future-proof this review, the LGBCE have requested that proposed ward boundaries are based on the projected electorate for 2027. A number of planned developments in the town are anticipated to increase the size of the electorate by just over 5,000 voters within the next five years. If the ward boundaries remained unchanged this would lead to a substantial imbalance, with two wards in particular - Bedwell and Old Town - being 46% and 23% respectively over the mean. Electoral equality can therefore only be achieved with significant changes to the current ward boundaries.

Stevenage Labour Group's primary concern is to achieve a fair balance across the Borough Council area. The Commission has already advised that it is minded to recommend that 39 councillors should be elected to the council in future - the same as current arrangements. Our submission ensures uniformity by proposing thirteen wards with three Members per ward. This also facilitates elections by thirds, maintaining current practice, although it is recognised that it will be necessary to hold all-out Borough Council elections in May 2024.

Despite the wholesale nature of changes required in two of the wards, this submission respects the requirements to adhere to natural boundaries – as a New Town these consist mainly of major roads and green spaces – whilst also maintaining strong community identities.

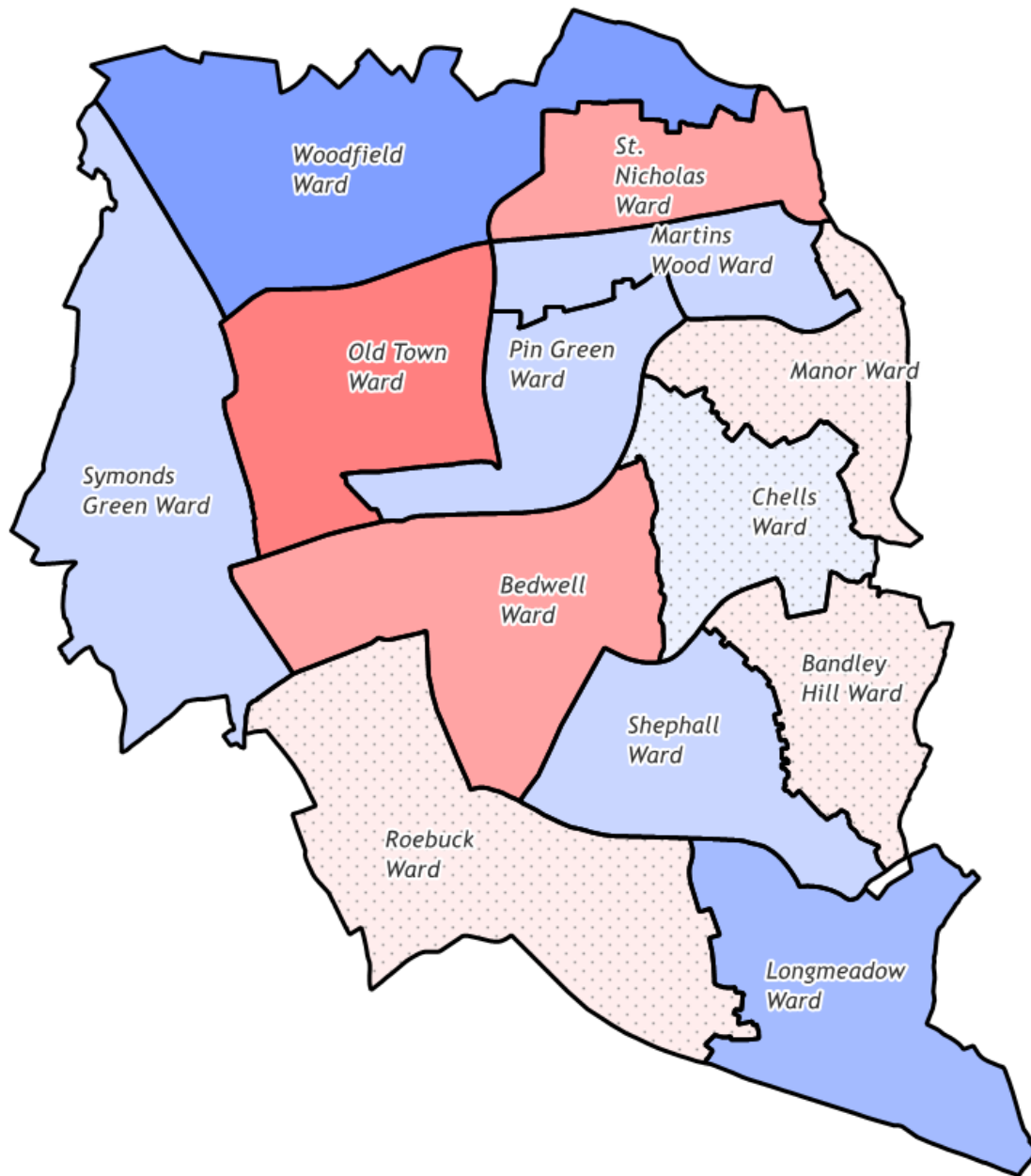
A zip file containing the shape files of our proposed warding scheme has been submitted as a separate document alongside this proposal. The scenario can also be viewed on Statmap here:

https://rds.statmap.co.uk/map/map.html?login=stevenage1_viewer&scenario=CLP_V_4&sid=5c257e85aba1922dcc8f6c66a3d9ad10

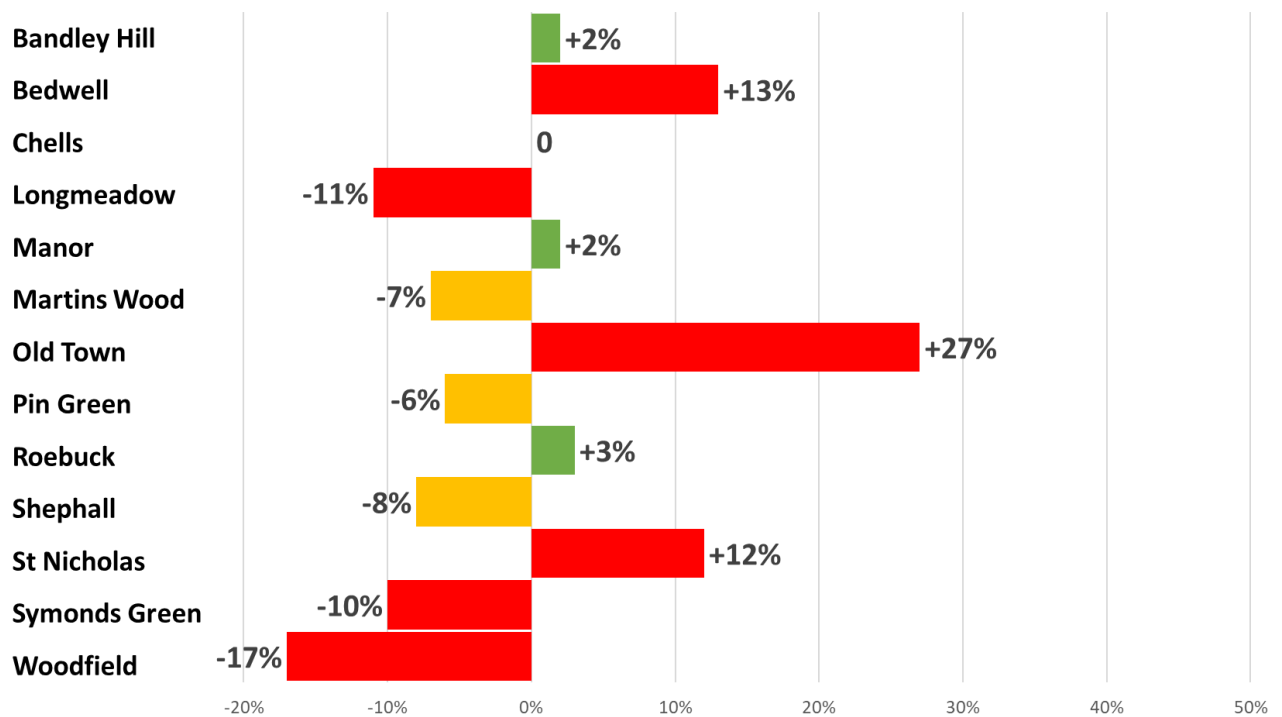
Detailed commentary on each ward change follows in this document.

Jim Callaghan
Chair, Stevenage Constituency Labour Party
27 February 2022

2. Current Ward Boundaries:



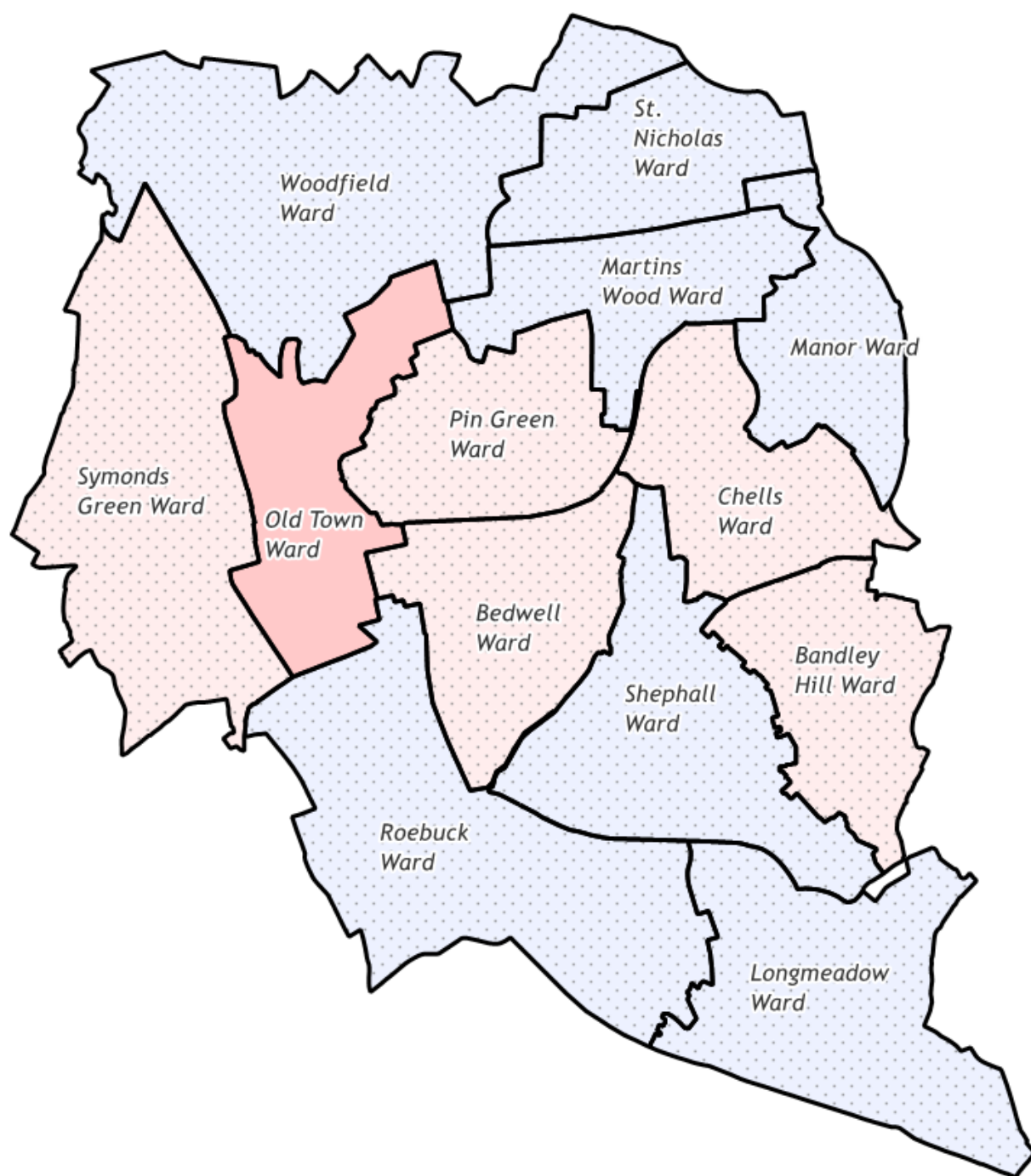
3. Current Ward Variances (2021 Electorate):



4. Projected Ward Variances (2027 Electorate):

Ward	Elector count (Deviation)	Difference	Councillors: 39
Bandley Hill	5114 (-307)	-5.7%	3
Bedwell	7900 (+2479)	+45.7%	3
Chells	5044 (-377)	-6.9%	3
Longmeadow	4733 (-688)	-12.7%	3
Manor	5170 (-251)	-4.6%	3
Martins Wood	4727 (-694)	-12.8%	3
Old Town	6687 (+1266)	+23.4%	3
Pin Green	4918 (-503)	-9.3%	3
Roebuck	5323 (-98)	-1.8%	3
Shephall	4715 (-706)	-13.0%	3
St. Nicholas	5642 (+221)	+4.1%	3
Symonds Green	5454 (+33)	+0.6%	3
Woodfield	5040 (-381)	-7.0%	3

5. Proposed Ward Boundaries:



6. Proposed Ward Variances:

Ward	Elector count (Deviation)	Difference	Councillors: 39
Bandley Hill Ward	5481 (+60)	+1.1%	3
Bedwell Ward	5461 (+40)	+0.7%	3
Chells Ward	5537 (+116)	+2.1%	3
Longmeadow Ward	5371 (-50)	-0.9%	3
Manor Ward	5365 (-56)	-1.0%	3
Martins Wood Ward	5312 (-109)	-2.0%	3
Old Town Ward	5747 (+326)	+6.0%	3
Pin Green Ward	5599 (+178)	+3.3%	3
Roebuck Ward	5306 (-115)	-2.1%	3
Shephall Ward	5260 (-161)	-3.0%	3
St. Nicholas Ward	5354 (-67)	-1.2%	3
Symonds Green Ward	5433 (+12)	+0.2%	3
Woodfield Ward	5241 (-180)	-3.3%	3

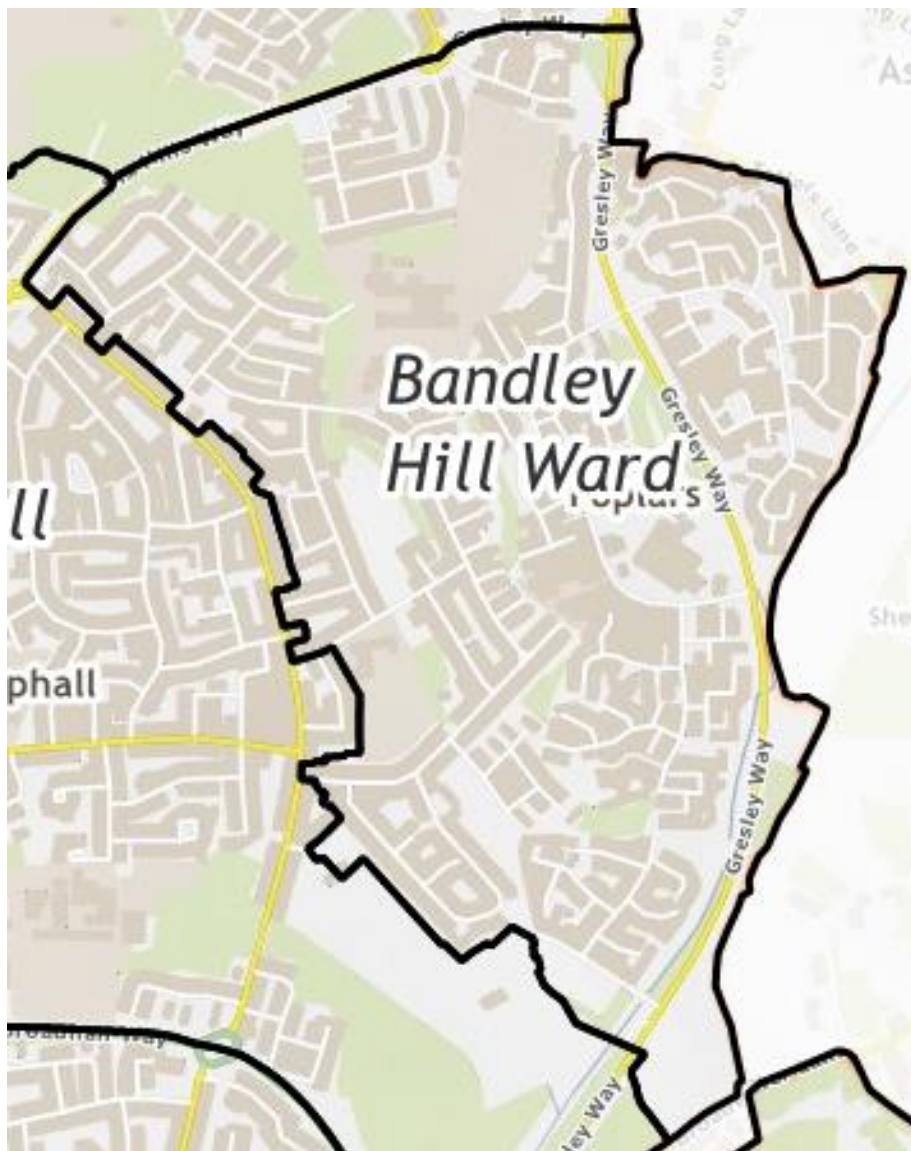
This submission achieves the requirement to attain electoral equality across wards, with an average variance of just 2.1% and a maximum of 6.0%.

7. Warding Proposals

In drafting these suggested boundary changes we have endeavoured to ensure that the community and neighbourhood identity of each existing ward is maintained. We believe that this has been achieved and therefore intend to retain the current ward names.

7.1 Bandley Hill Ward

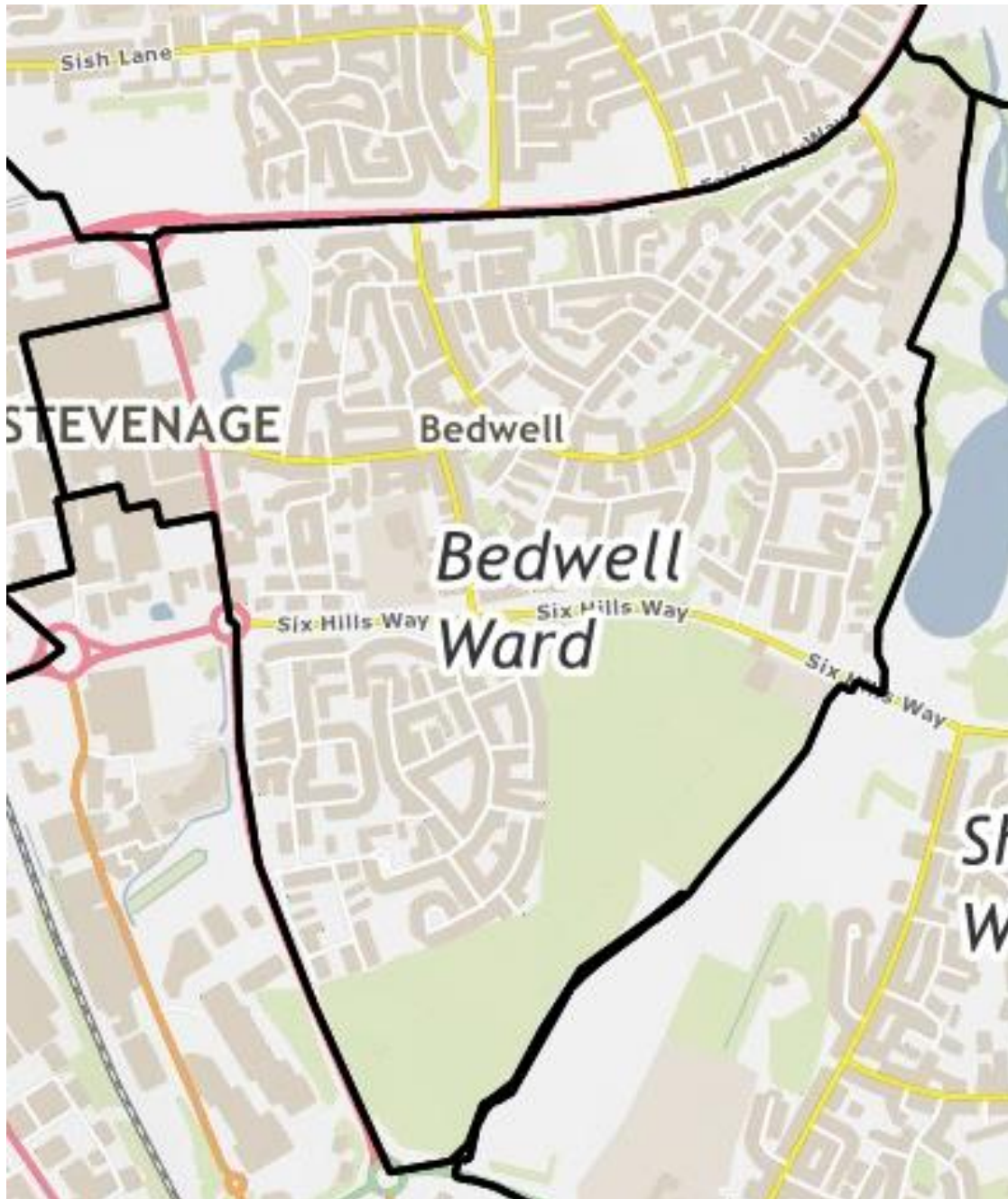
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5481	3	1827	+1.1%



In moving from -5.7% to +1.1% Bandley Hill remains largely unchanged. Marlborough Road, Wellington Road, Cromwell Road and Barham Road to the north have been brought into the wards. These all sit south of the natural boundary of Six Hills Way, delivering consistency with the rest of the ward. Two smaller roads to the south west, Ridlins End and Foxfield have been ceded to Shephall.

7.2 Bedwell Ward

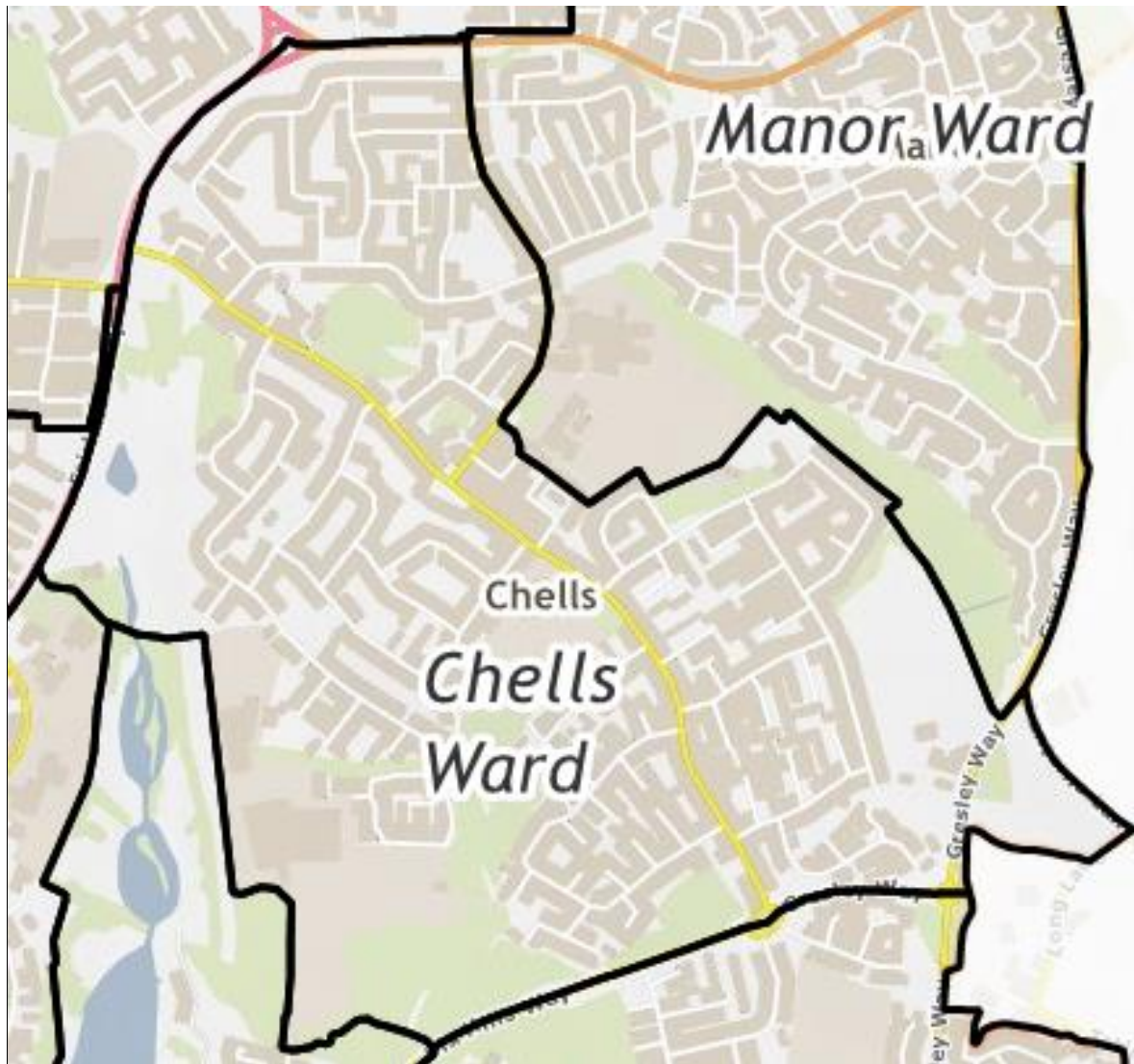
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5461	3	1820	+0.7%



The planned developments to the west of the current ward presented one of the major challenges in moving Bedwell from +45.7% to just +0.7%. To achieve this it is proposed that the new Town Centre developments are shared with two other wards, Roebuck and Old Town. In doing so the integrity of one of the oldest wards in Stevenage is retained, with the boundaries east of Monkwood Way, south of Fairlands Way and east of Fairlands Valley Park, Millennium Wood and Monks Wood being unchanged.

7.3 Chells Ward

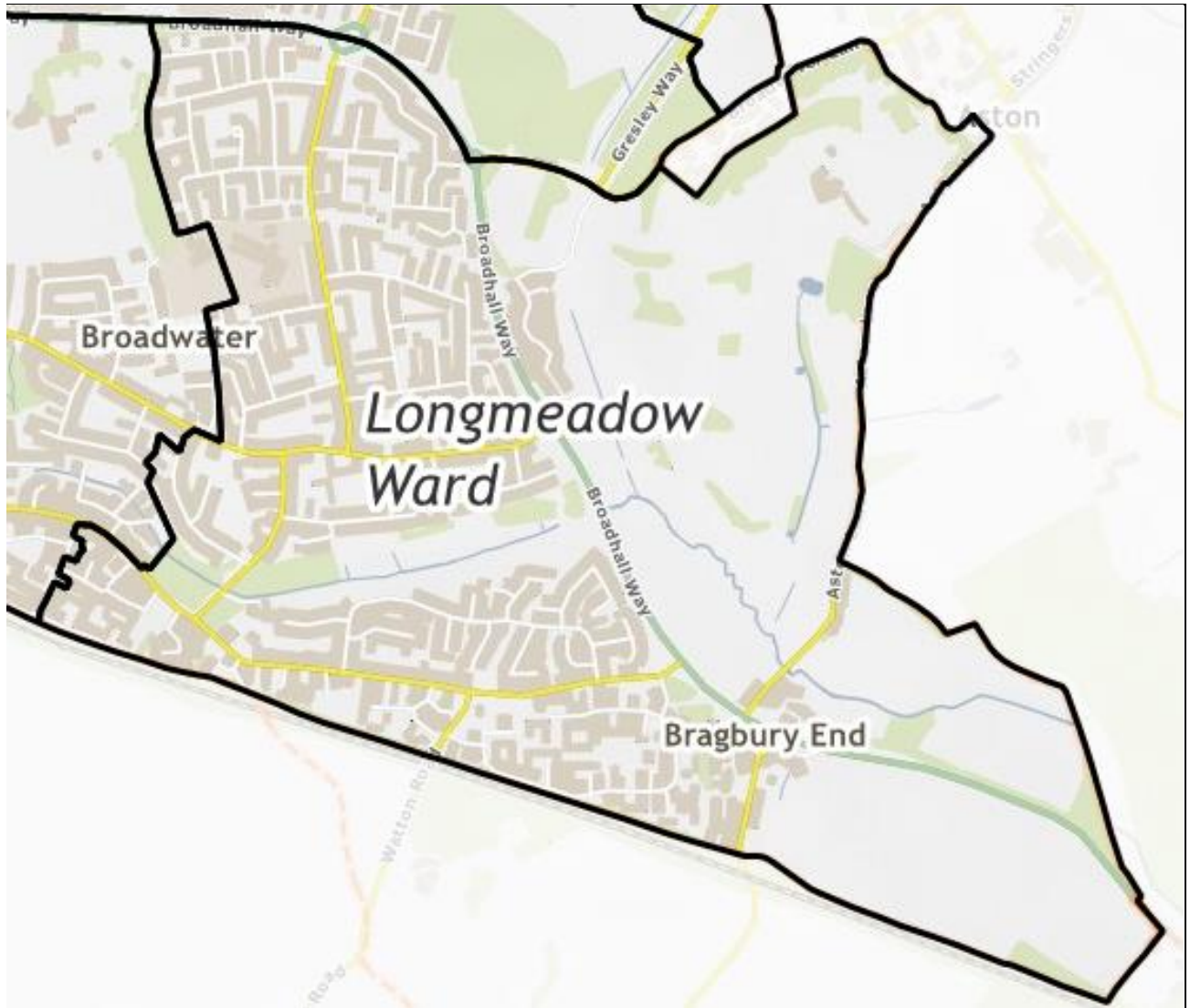
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5337	3	1779	+2.1%



Chells ward moves from -6.9% to +2.1% by bringing in all properties south of Fairlands Way, east of Mobbsbury Way and north of Chells Way, providing further consistency with the main road boundaries. As these are populous areas, the smaller roads of Marlborough, Wellington, Cromwell and Barham have been ceded to Bandley Hill and Keller Close, Brittain Way and Aylward Drive have been ceded to Shephall.

7.4 Longmeadow Ward

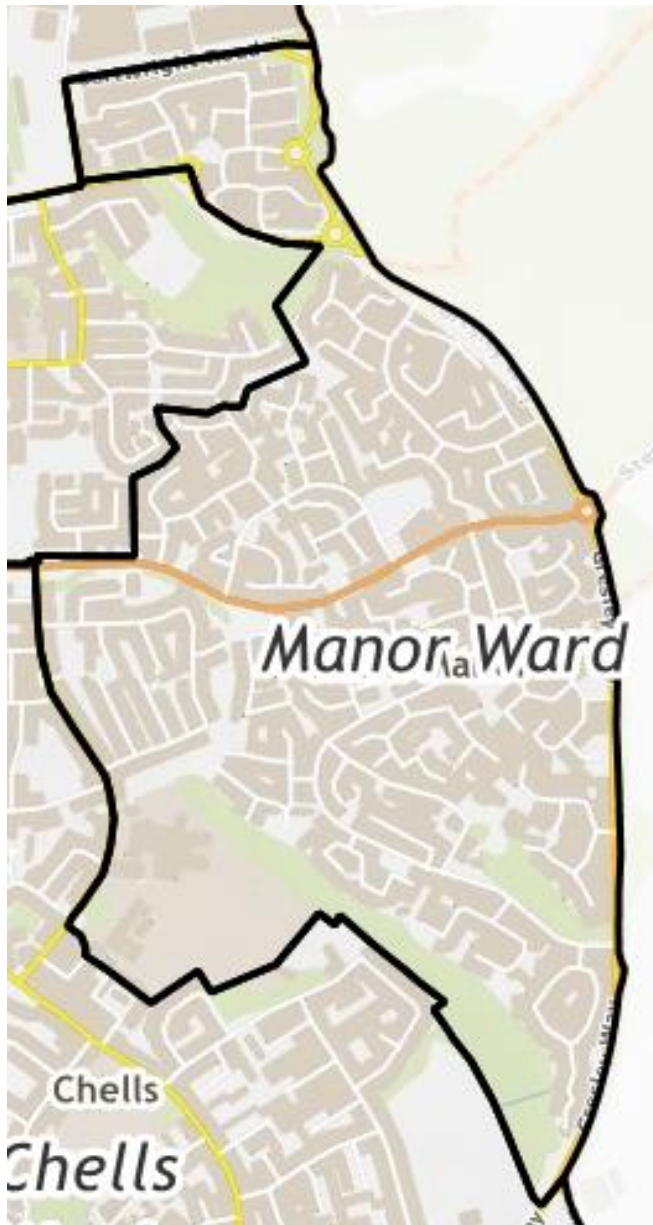
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5371	3	1790	-0.9%



Sitting furthest south in the town and bordering just two other wards, it is difficult to redress the projected -12.7% imbalance while respecting clear natural boundaries. Electoral Equality of just 0.9% has nonetheless been achieved by bringing in whole road groups from neighbouring Roebuck. These are Tintern Close, Braemar Close, Spencer Way, Ashdown Road, Brook Drive and Tye End.

7.5 Manor Ward

Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5365	3	1788	-1.0%



Manor ward requires increased representation to bring it from a projected -4.6% position to just -1.0%. Having ceded properties south of Fairlands Way, east of Mobbsbury Way and north of Chells Way to Chells ward, we have brought in Doncaster Close, Ayr Close, Julia Gate, Apollo Way, Pacatian Way, Tacitus Close, Alexander Gate, Marcus Close, Fortuna Close and Emperors Gate from Martins Wood ward. These roads form part of the “Roman” development built in the mid-1990s and now share the same ward with the rest of the same development to the east. Nobel School and Lodge Farm Primary School remain within the ward.

7.6 Martins Wood Ward

Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5312	3	1771	-2.0%



As one of the central wards, bordering six others, there is greater scope for correcting the projected -12.8% imbalance to -2.0%. The current boundary extends east to Grace Way, but excludes parts of Vardon Road. This is corrected under the proposed scenario. Having ceded the anomaly of the “Roman” development to Manor, Martins Wood now extends south to encompass Douglas Drive and those parts of Vardon Road to the west of Verity Way, consistent with the north of the ward, as well as Webb Rise to the west of Fairlands Way.

7.7 Old Town Ward

Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5747	3	1916	+6.0%



The recognised need to share the new Town Centre developments requires the Old Town ward boundary to move south across Fairlands Way to east of the A1072/Gunnells Wood Road and north of Six Hills Way. This brings in the Marshgate, Staples, BHS, SG1 Phases 1, 2, 3, Matalan and Leisure Park developments. As these properties add to the projected +23.4% 2027 imbalance, loss of properties to the north of the ward is inevitable. All properties east of Letchmore Road, other than Letchmore Road itself, are moved into Pin Green. To the north, Essex Road, Franklins Road, The Grange, Old Swann Court and Shire Court and the north part of Church Lane are moved into Woodfield.

Although Woodfield is a relatively new ward, having been created in the 1998 Electoral Review, it encompasses some of the town's older properties, pre-dating the creation of the New Town. Moving the Edwardian Essex Road and even earlier Grange and Victorian parts of Church Lane into this ward is a sympathetic move.

Properties south of Sish Lane and north of Fairlands Way are already in Pin Green ward. Moving those properties north of Sish lane and east of Letchmore road consolidates this trend.

Perhaps the most controversial element of this ward's redrawn boundaries is the inclusion of the Town Centre developments. Aside from being unavoidable if we are to achieve electoral balance, it could be claimed that a precedent was set when the newer/modern developments of Monument Court and Townsend Mews were included within the Old Town.

Although radical, this proposal reduces the projected imbalance from +23.4% to +6.0%.

7.8 Pin Green Ward

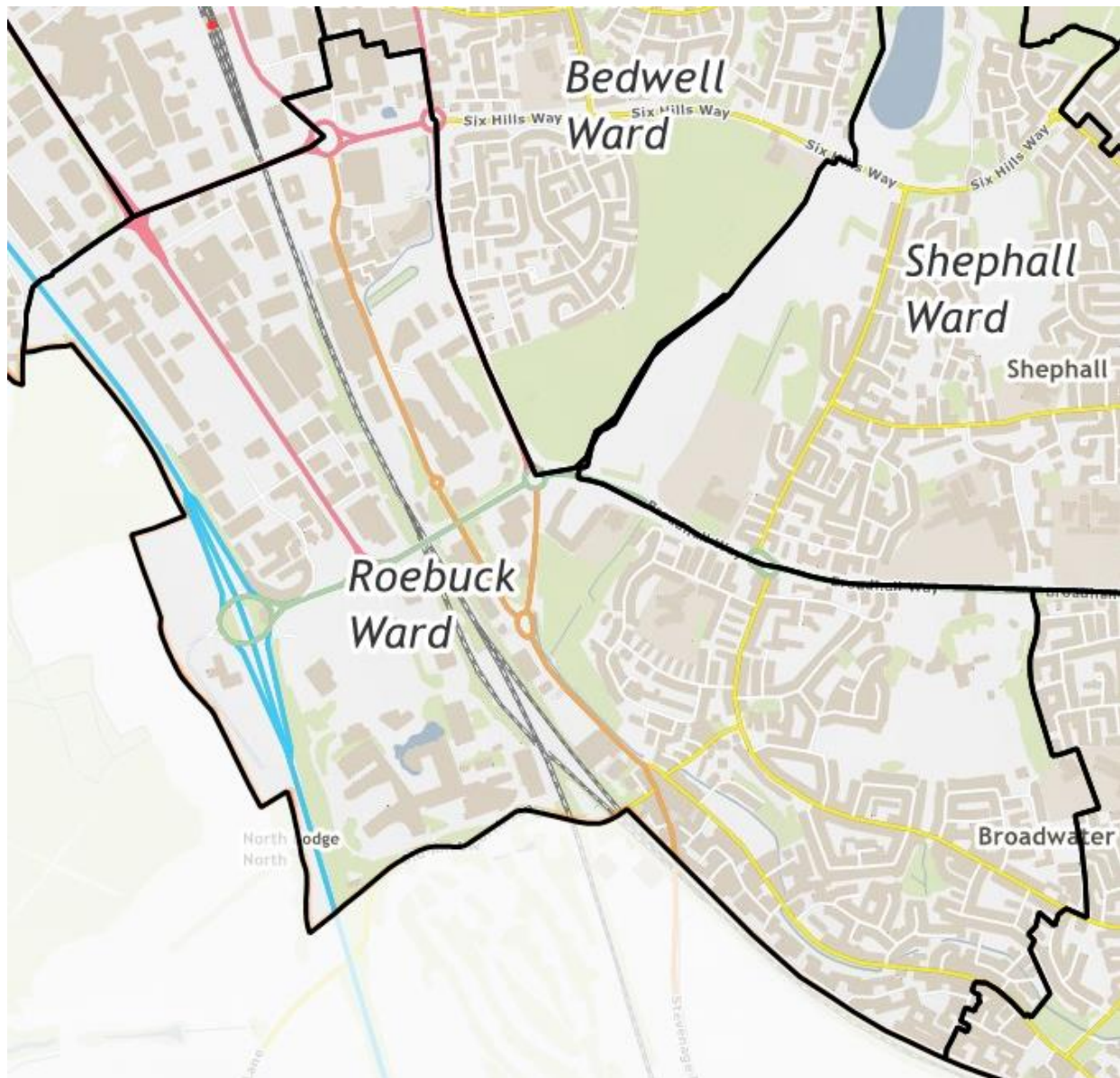
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5599	3	1866	+3.3%



The projected shortfall of -9.3% is mainly redressed by taking in the parts of the Old Town east of Letchmore Road and north of Sish Lane. This maintains consistency with the south of the ward, which continues to be bordered by Fairlands Way. Ceding Douglas Drive and those parts of Vardon Road to the west of Verity Way, as well as correcting the anomaly at the west end of Vardon Road reverses the shortfall to a positive tolerance of +3.3%. The culturally important area of Pin Green, including Hampson Park, remains within the ward.

7.9 Roebuck Ward

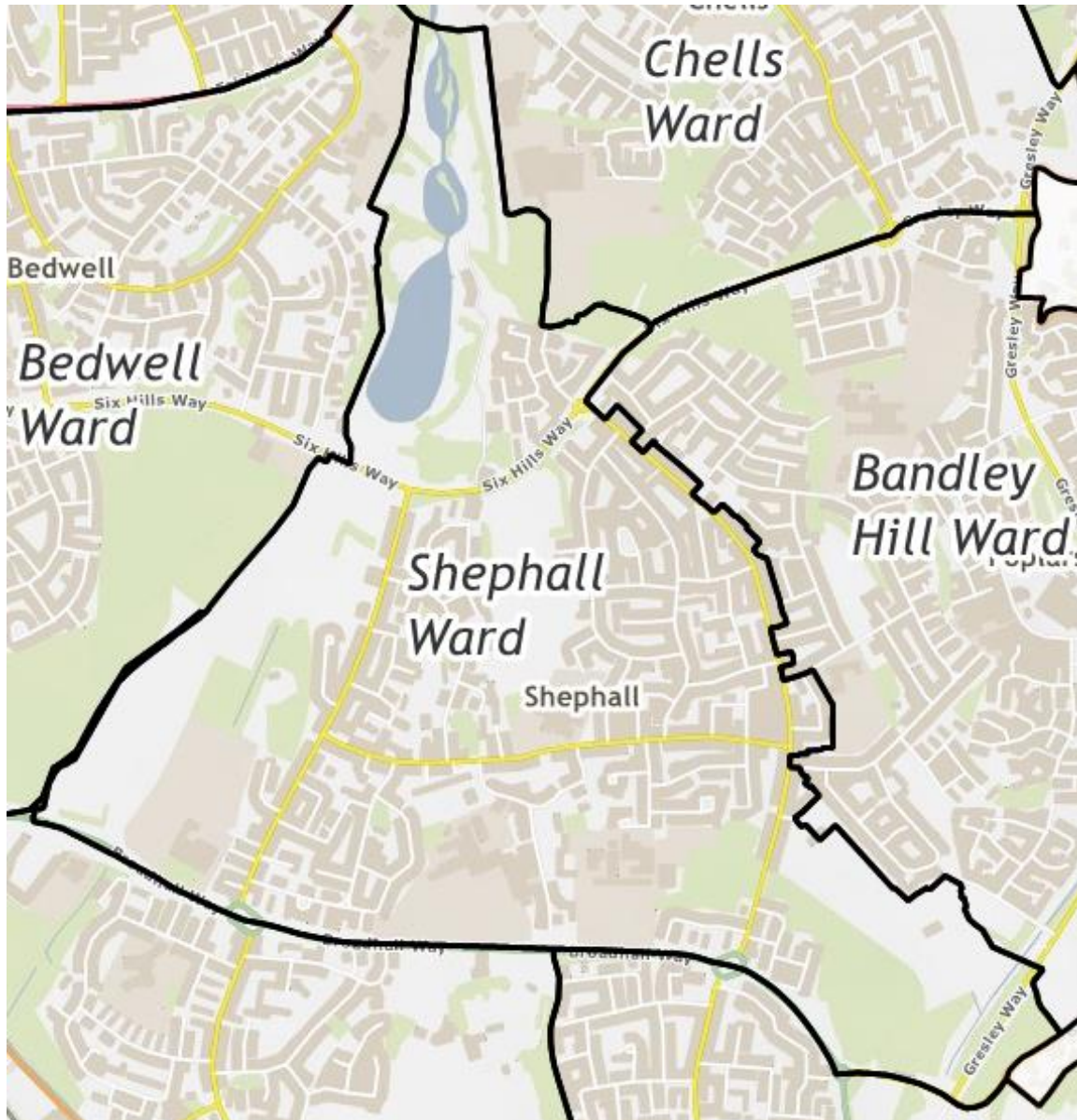
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5306	3	1769	-2.1%



Although Roebuck ward's projected variance changes little, from -1.8% to -2.1%, this belies the alterations that were necessary to accommodate the expansion of Longmeadow to the south and parts of the Town Centre developments to the north. These changes aside, the ward boundaries remain largely unaltered.

7.10 Shephall Ward

Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5260	3	1753	-3.0%



Little change has been required to the Shephall boundaries to move from -13.0% to -3.0%. Although this has required the ward to extend north of Six Hills Way to encompass Keller Close, Brittain Way and Aylward Drive, these roads are otherwise isolated by the natural boundaries of Witshire's Spring and Fairlands Valley Park to the west, and Abbott's Grove and Ashtree Wood to the north. The inclusion of Foxfield and Ridlins end to the east brings those properties bordering Shephall Way itself into the ward.

7.11 St Nicholas Ward

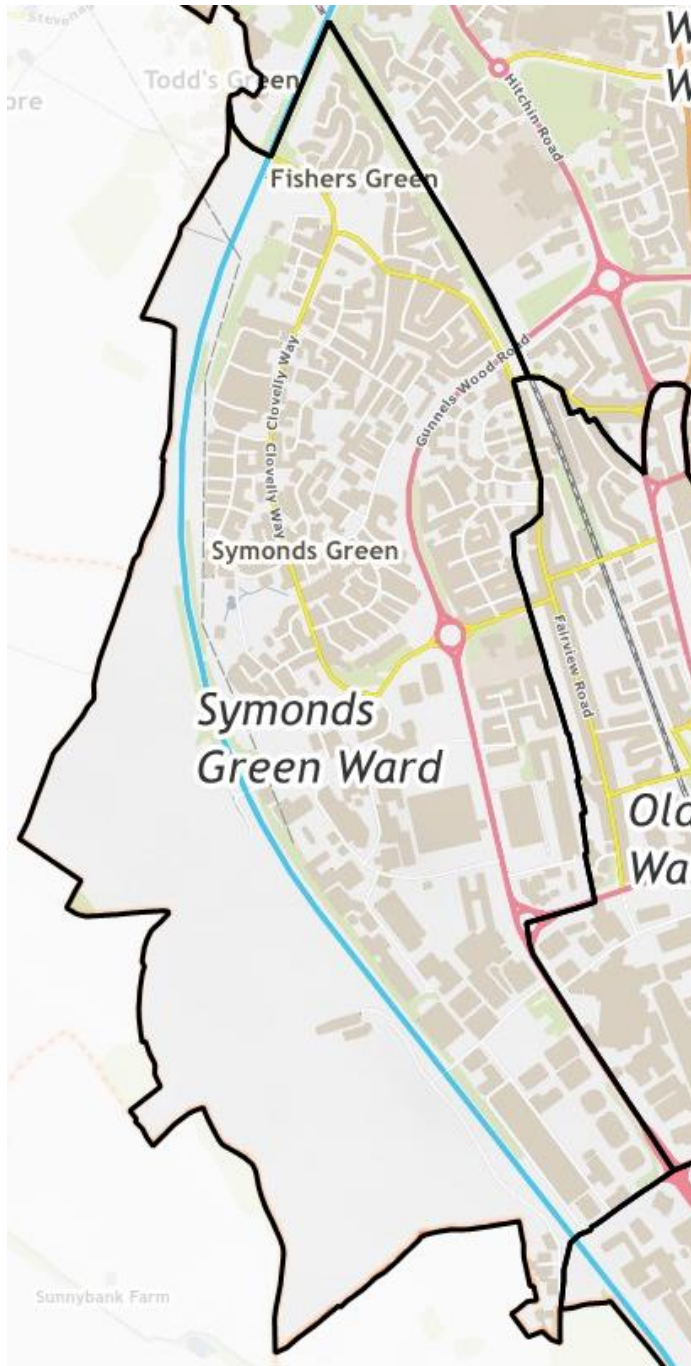
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5354	3	1785	-1.2%



Since the creation of Woodfield in 1996, St Nicholas ward has suffered the oddity of having Salisbury Road, Lincoln Road and Winchester Close hived off from the rest of the ward, despite being part of the larger “Cathedral” development that was built at the same time. Those roads, together with the recreation ground to the north, which is locally known as St Nicholas Park, are moved into the ward. To the west, Guildford Close and Iona Close, which sit within the boundaries of Great Ashby Way and Canterbury Way are also brought into the ward. To the far east of the ward, the more recent development of Chrysalis Park south of Cartwright Road is moved into Manor. This brings the projection from +4.1% to -1.2%.

7.12 Symonds Green Ward

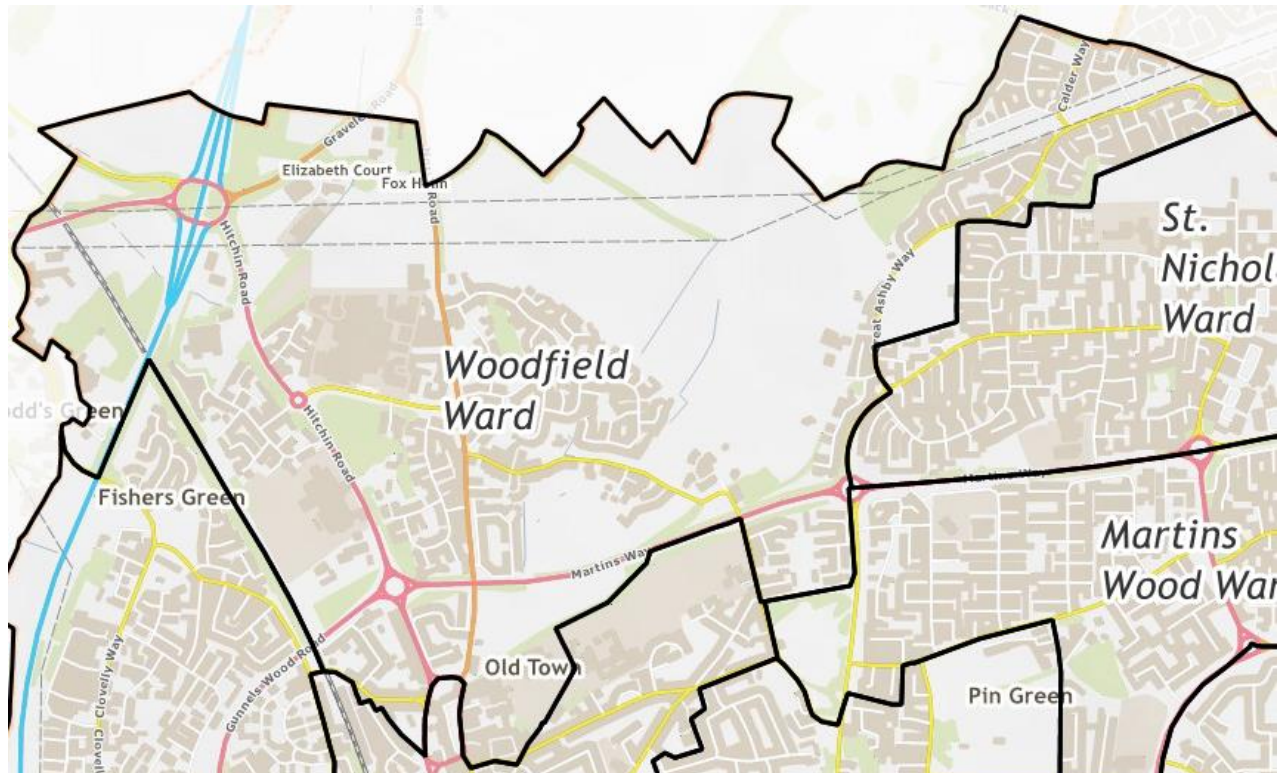
Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5433	3	1811	+0.2%



The proposed West of Stevenage development means that Symonds Green boundaries remain unchanged, other than moving the small number of properties in Todds Green into Woodfield. This adjusts the projected +0.6% variance to just +0.2%

7.13 Woodfield Ward

Electorate Numbers	Members	Electorate to Member Ratio	Electoral Equality
5241	3	1747	-3.3%



The major change to Woodfield is to extend the ward boundaries south to encompass the older properties of Essex Road (Edwardian) The Grange (18thC) and Church Lane (Victorian). Franklins Road has also been moved into the ward, as the only access into that development is via the North Road, the rest of which is already in Woodfield. The ceding of Iona Close, Guildford Close, Salisbury Road, Lincoln Road and Winchester Close to St Nicholas brings the projected variance in from -7.0% to -3.3%

Stevenage Borough Council

Personal Details:

Name: Jim Callaghan

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: Stevenage Labour Party

Comment text:

Following my submission of the Review proposal from Stevenage Labour Party, I have uploaded the zip file containing the shape files of the proposed warding scheme.

Uploaded Documents:

Download (https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1645985131_STE_WARDS_1+2022-02-27+16-38-24.zip)