

Crawley Borough Council
Governance Committee
Supplementary Agenda
Monday, 26 March 2018

Anne Maria Brown

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

4 Electoral Review - Ward Patterns

Pages

3 - 38

Report LDS/135 of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is attached.

NOTE: The Chair has agreed that, although this report and information was not available for at least five clear days before the meeting, there are special circumstances justifying its urgent consideration.



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Electoral Review of Crawley Borough Council

Pattern of Wards

April 2018



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INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) are conducting a review of the electoral arrangements of Crawley Borough Council during 2018. The Commission monitors levels of electoral equality between wards within each local authority and conducts reviews where changes in population lead to a reduction in the levels of electoral equality. The aim of a review is to establish ward boundaries that mean each Borough Councillor represents approximately the same number of voters.

The electoral arrangements for Crawley were last reviewed in 2002. Development in the Borough since that time, particularly in Three Bridges Ward has led to electoral inequality between wards and the review by the LGBCE will address this inequality.

The review covers

- The number of councillors to be elected to the council (council size)
- The number, names and boundaries of wards
- The number of councillors to be elected for each ward

The Commission has announced that it is minded that Crawley Borough Council should have 36 borough councillors and has invited proposals on a pattern of electoral wards to accommodate those councillors. This document sets out Crawley Borough Council's response.

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 sets out the criteria that the LGBCE must have regard to in conducting electoral reviews.

The council has developed a proposed pattern of wards which offer the best balance of these statutory requirements which are:

- The need to secure equality of representation
- The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities
- The need to secure effective and convenient local government

BACKGROUND TO CRAWLEY

Crawley is a vibrant town which sits in the heart of the Gatwick Diamond sub region. The town is home to Gatwick Airport and Manor Royal Business District – the largest business park in the Gatwick Diamond and one of the South East's premier mixed activity employment hubs providing almost 10 million square feet of commercial activity. It is home to more than 500 businesses including a host of Blue Chip Global brands. The borough accounts for 40% of business rates collected in West Sussex and is a major centre of employment and wealth creation. Transport links, proximity to London, and good quality leisure and community facilities attract people to Crawley to live, work and visit. Crawley is a relatively prosperous town although there are some big differences between neighbourhoods and there are also pockets of deprivation in most of the neighbourhoods.

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Whilst Crawley has its origins in the Middle Ages or even earlier, the majority of its growth and its character is derived from its designation as a New Town in 1947.

Crawley was one of eight new towns established by the Government after the war to stem the increasing congestion and outward sprawl of London and to provide a better quality of life for Londoners living in the inner, overcrowded areas of the city. The New Town was to provide employment and good quality housing in a green environment. In the beginning nine residential neighbourhoods were envisaged, each based on a village concept, grouped around a town centre with an industrial estate in the North. Every neighbourhood was to have the same structure, though each would develop a character of its own. Each would have a neighbourhood centre with enough shops to meet day to day needs, plus an infant and junior school, church, community centre, large playing field and pub. As Crawley has grown it has continued to be developed in line with the neighbourhood vision. The borough is now home to fourteen neighbourhood areas and is forecast to continue.

The idea of developing a 'neighbourhood' as the foundation stone for a new community and the building block for the provision of local services and facilities is not a new one. It is one which almost all post war British New Towns adopted and developed. However, of all the new towns, Crawley has by far the most clearly defined and continuously maintained neighbourhood structure. To the present day virtually all major additions to the town are planned or conceived in terms of continuing the process of developing neighbourhoods.

Crawley's Neighbourhoods

A neighbourhood in Crawley's case is much more than a name for an area of mainly residential development. It is:

- A well-defined, and largely separate area of consolidated and quite often similar development. It forms an easily perceived and identified area.
- An area provided with its own complete range of facilities and services. It has at its heart a local neighbourhood centre. It has its own primary schools, churches, community buildings, doctor's surgery, playing fields and playing areas and many other facilities. Frequently most, if not all such facilities, are named so as to be specifically identified as being part of the neighbourhood.
- An area normally separated on all sides from the next neighbourhood by major physical barriers such as railway lines, major areas of open space or main roads upon which there is little or no frontage housing development. Frequently such road lines are reinforced by avenues of trees and other planting. In principle, the layout of roads around and within neighbourhoods is designed to avoid unnecessary through-traffic in residential areas.

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The aim of the design and layout of neighbourhoods and the provision of local facilities was, and still is, to create and sustain the local community identity. The fact that the local population identifies first and foremost with the neighbourhood in which they live, rather than Crawley or any other area, suggests that this neighbourhood community objective has been highly successful.

For most people in Crawley, their neighbourhood is their local community. Their local community's representatives are their Local (Borough Council) Ward Councillors. Borough Council Councillors are in most people's eyes not Ward Councillors but Neighbourhood Councillors.

The strong physical separation which exists between neighbourhoods which generally contrasts with the cohesion and unity within neighbourhood areas, makes it very difficult to devise wards crossing neighbourhood boundaries, which have any logic, unity and cohesion.

Development has continued to be based around neighbourhoods. The original nine have now expanded to fourteen neighbourhoods, each continues to have their own facilities and unique character. Building for the 14th neighbourhood, Forge Wood, commenced in 2014, and Kilnwood Vale, a further new neighbourhood immediately adjacent to Crawley's western boundary in the district of Horsham is also under construction.

The importance of the neighbourhoods is illustrated in the Council's corporate branding and logo (as shown on the right). When the logo was redesigned in 2006 one of the drivers was that the Council wanted a design that emphasised and reflected the Borough's diversity of our population and spirits of each of our neighbourhoods. The design was created with 13 differently coloured leaves – one for each of the town's neighbourhoods, echoing the colours used on each neighbourhood street sign. A 14th leaf has subsequently been added with the development of Forge Wood neighbourhood.

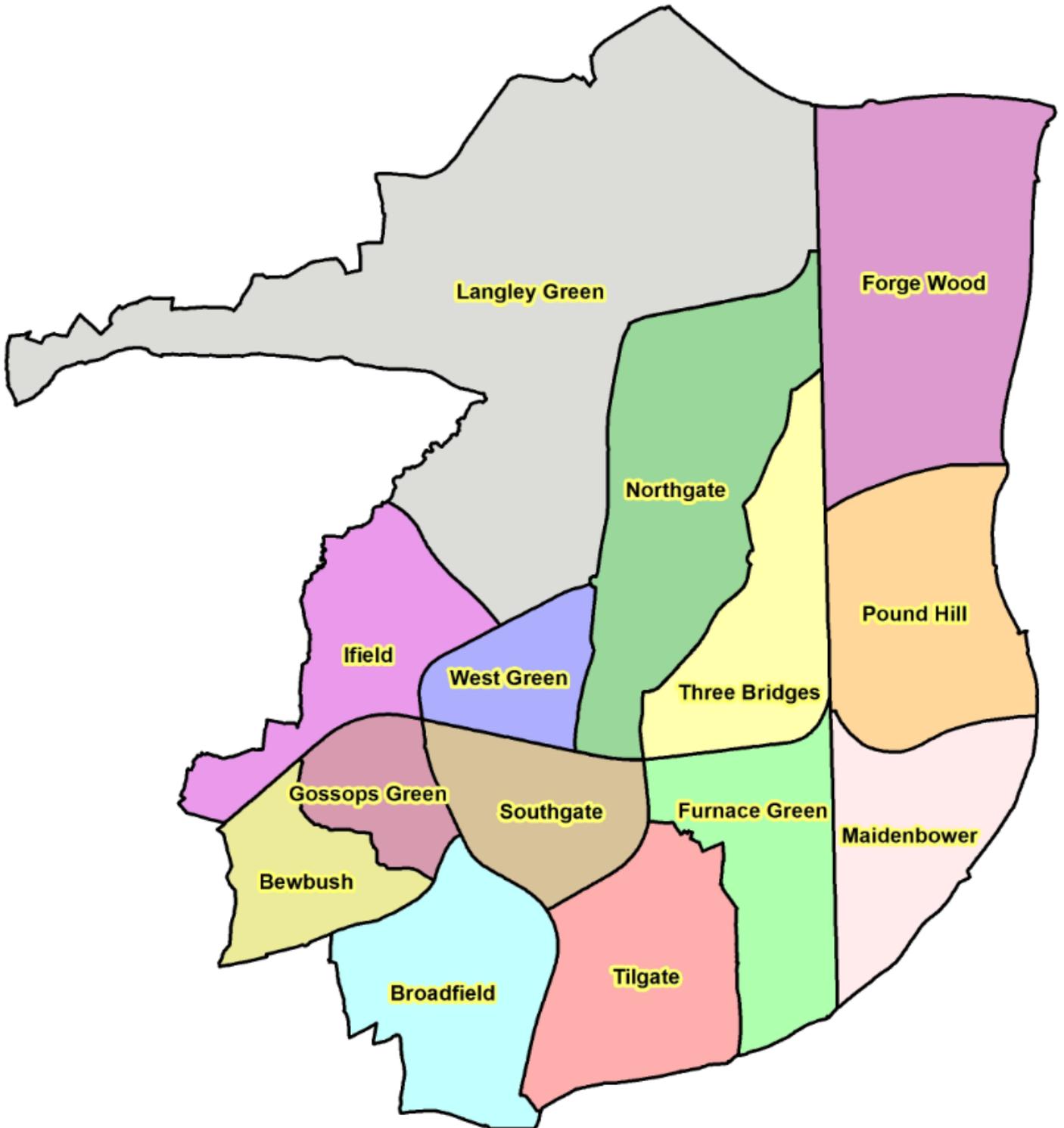


The name of the neighbourhood appears on every road sign which is colour coded according to the neighbourhood. Consequently, every resident knows which neighbourhood they live in and identifies with it. Neighbourhoods are very often quoted by residents in their postal address and is included for each property in the Local Land and Property Gazetteer. It would be very confusing for electors if the ward neighbourhood principle was broken as a result of this review, it would damage the community identities and groups that have grown with Crawley, and would damage the effectiveness of local government and the Council believes that it is not necessary to do so.

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Crawley's Neighbourhoods



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THE COUNCIL'S PROPOSAL

At present Crawley is divided in to 15 wards. The current wards exactly match the town's neighbourhoods, with the exceptions of Pound Hill and Broadfield which are both split into North and South wards due to their size, and the Orchards estate in Ifield which is within Langley Green Ward, in order to maintain electoral equality.

In order to ensure that the new pattern of wards properly reflects both neighbourhood and community identity, it will be important for ward boundaries to align with the neighbourhoods as closely as possible.

Each ward elects either 2 or 3 councillors by thirds so that one third of the councillors are elected each year of a four year cycle, with elections to West Sussex County Council in the fourth year. There are currently 37 councillors. In 2017 Crawley had a total electorate of 79,887 so the average number of electors per councillor was 2159. The electorate for 2023 is forecast to grow to 84801 and the average number of electors per councillor is 2292.

The electorate and the electorate forecast for 2023 for the existing wards and percentage variance from the average number of electors per councillor are set out in the table below.

Name of ward	Number of cllrs per ward	Electorate 2017	Variance 2017	Electorate 2023	Variance 2023
Bewbush	3	6,344	-2%	6,487	-6%
Broadfield North	2	4,661	8%	4,681	2%
Broadfield South	2	4,525	5%	4,528	-1%
Furnace Green	2	4,532	5%	4,532	-1%
Gossops Green	2	3,980	-8%	3,980	-13%
Ifield	3	6,705	4%	6,975	1%
Langley Green	3	5,859	-10%	5,865	-15%
Maidenbower	3	6,680	3%	6,684	-3%
Northgate	2	4,074	-6%	5,180	13%
Pound Hill North	3	5,570	-14%	7,379	7%
Pound Hill South and Worth	3	6,421	-1%	6,474	-6%
Southgate	3	6,528	1%	6,844	0%
Three Bridges	2	5,756	33%	6,460	41%
Tilgate	2	4,537	5%	4,710	3%
West Green	2	3,715	-14%	4,022	-12%
Total	37	79887		84801	

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Wards need to reflect neighbourhoods

The Council has developed a proposed pattern of wards which it considers achieve the best balance of the 3 statutory criteria that govern the LGBCE's conduct of reviews, these criteria are:

- deliver electoral equality where each Borough Councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the borough;
- as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities;
- provide for effective and convenient local government.

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 also states that the LGBCE must have regard to the scheme of elections used by councils when making its recommendations. The Act says that the Commission should have regard to the desirability of recommending the appropriate number of councillors that is returned from each ward. Where a council elects by thirds the appropriate number is three. However, the Commission state in their technical guidance that they will not recommend a uniform pattern of wards if it results in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality or does not reflect communities.

Due to the different size of communities in Crawley a uniform pattern of wards cannot adequately reflect communities. Although Crawley elects councillors by thirds, the council considers that a mix of 2 and 3 member wards will provide an opportunity to deliver the right balance of electoral equality, whilst ensuring that the pattern of wards reflects the interests and identities of local communities, and enables effective and convenient local government.

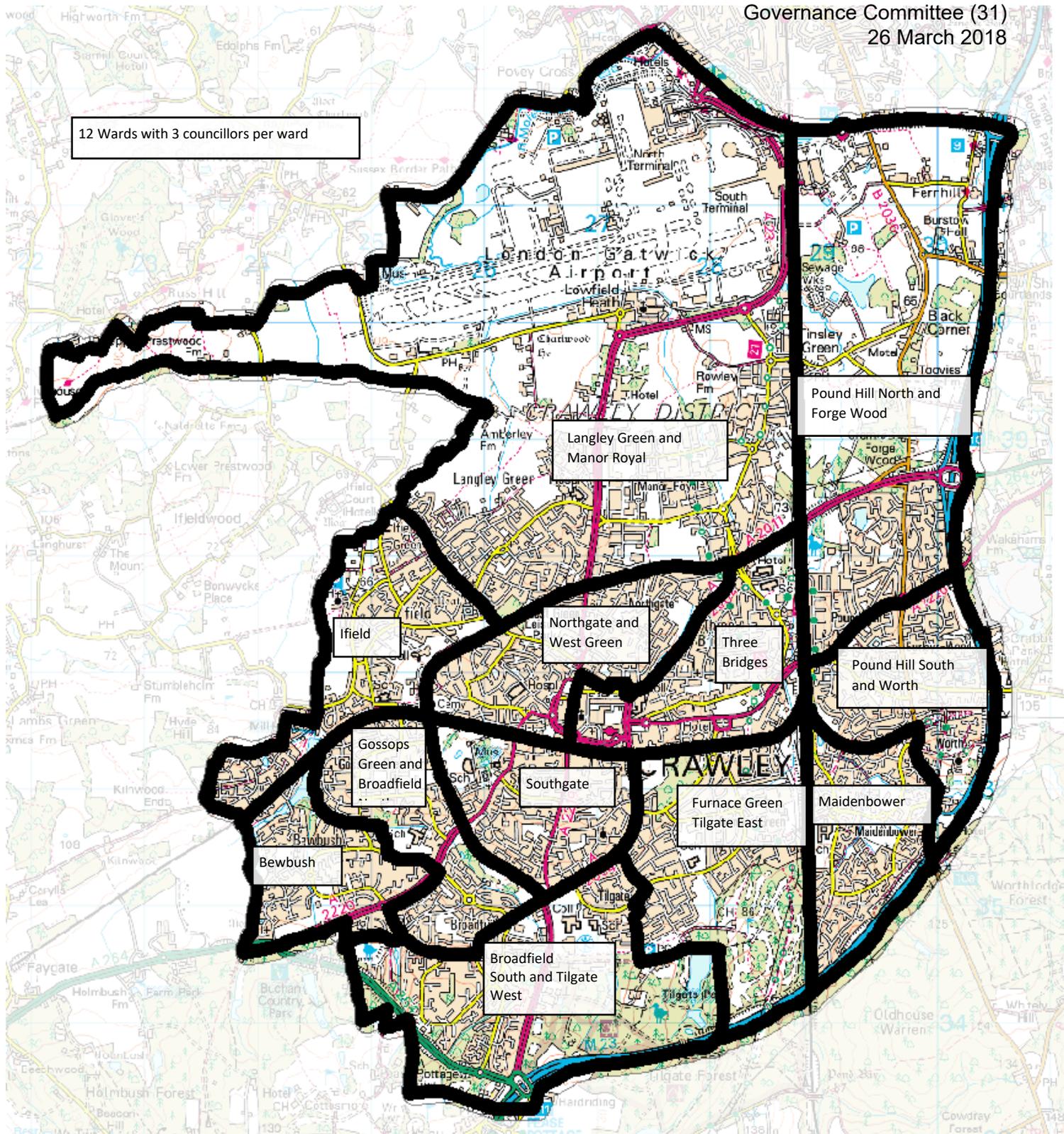
A uniform pattern of wards

Careful consideration was given to whether it would be possible to develop a proposal for a uniform pattern of wards that adequately reflected community identity as well as meeting the Commission's other statutory criteria. The best balance was achieved with the scheme shown below.

Due to the unequal size of the electorate in neighbourhoods across the Town, fulfilling the statutory requirement to provide acceptable levels of electoral equality, the division of neighbourhoods needs to take place to a degree that would not meet the statutory requirement to reflect the identities and interests of local communities. This scheme reflects the best compromise but still involves the division of the communities of Tilgate and Broadfield to a level that would not meet the community interest requirement and which impacts unfavourably on the desirability of adopting a uniform pattern of wards.

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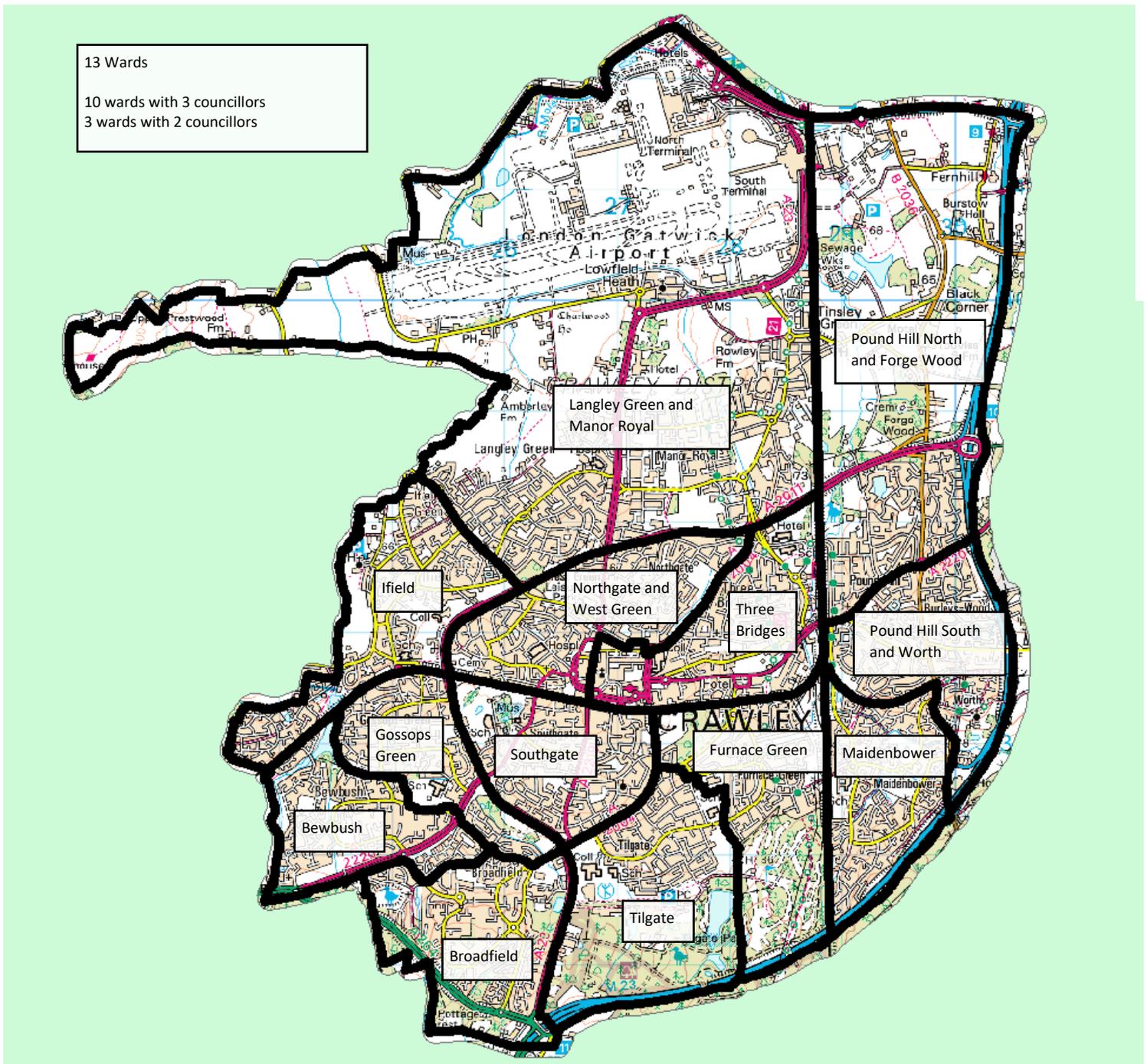
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A scheme that meets all three statutory requirements

The Council's proposal for a mixed pattern of wards with 10 wards served by 3 councillors and 3 wards served by 2 councillors will meet all of the statutory requirements. The scheme ensure that the maximum number of electors are included in a ward that represents their primary community identity and that in all cases levels of variance from the average numbers of electors per councillor are kept to within ten percent.

The 13 proposed wards are shown in detail with a description of how they relate to community identity and the levels of electoral equality forecast in 2023.



Bewbush

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	7472
2023 forecast variance	5.72%
Current electorate	7329
Current variance	+10.09%

Description

The existing Bewbush Ward is served by 3 members and covers the whole of Bewbush neighbourhood. Bewbush neighbourhood is a consolidated identifiable area separated from Broadfield by the A2220, from Ifield by the Arun Valley Railway and from Gossops Green by a large open space and a linear water area – Broadfield Brook.

Neighbourhood Facilities

Bewbush has a central neighbourhood shopping centre at Dorsten Square which as well as shops includes a community centre with a gym and café, and schools. Also centrally located are a medical centre and dentist. The neighbourhood has a central village green with pavilion and an adventure playground. Active community groups include Talk Bewbush and the Bewbush Action Group.

Proposals

It is proposed that all of Bewbush neighbourhood should be included in Bewbush Ward with the addition of 985 electors from the well-defined area bounded by Pelham Drive, Seymour Road and Broadfield Drive in the adjacent part of Broadfield neighbourhood.

St Wilfrid's
Catholic
Comprehensive
School

Gossops
Green

Bewbush Ward

Ifield Mill Pond

Sch

Bewbush

Sch

Broadfield

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	7409
2023 forecast variance	+4.82%
Current electorate	7386
Current variance	+10.95%

Description

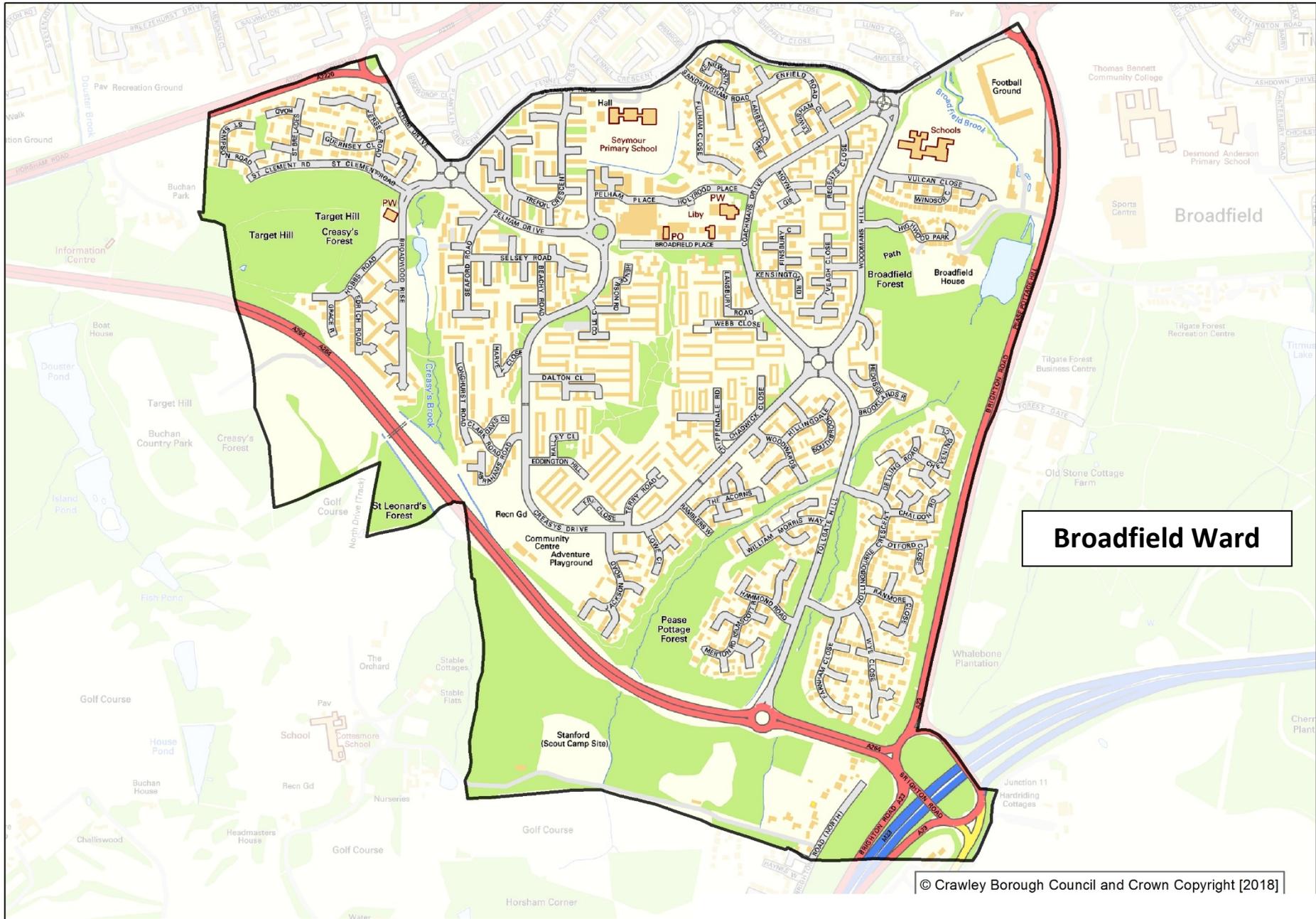
Work on building Broadfield neighbourhood began in 1971 but was not completed until 2000. At the 2002 review the neighbourhood was split into two wards, served by two councillors each. The neighbourhood has clearly identifiable boundaries with the A2220 on the north side, the A23 to the east and the A264 to the south west.

Neighbourhood Facilities

There is a large neighbourhood shopping centre at Broadfield Barton, together with the community centre, church, library and pub. In addition, there are two primary schools, the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, an adventure playground, several parks and Broadfield stadium, which is home to Crawley Town football club. Community Groups include Talk Broadfield, and Broadfield Christian fellowship.

Proposals

To unify Broadfield as a one 3 councillor ward it is proposed to allocate 985 electors from the well-defined area bounded by Pelham Drive, Seymour Road, Broadfield Drive, and the A2220 to Bewbush Ward and 815 electors from the area to the north and east of Broadfield Drive to Gossops Green Ward.



Broadfield Ward

Furnace Green

Number of Councillors	2
2023 forecast electorate	4532
2023 forecast variance	-3.82%
Current electorate	4532
Current variance	+2.12%

Description

Building works for the Furnace Green neighbourhood began in 1962 and were largely complete by 1980. The neighbourhood is bounded on the east by the main London to Brighton railway line with only three pedestrian access points to Maidenbower, to the south by Tilgate Park and the M23, to the north by the Arun Valley Railway line. The western boundary with Tilgate is marked by a band of open space.

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Neighbourhood Facilities

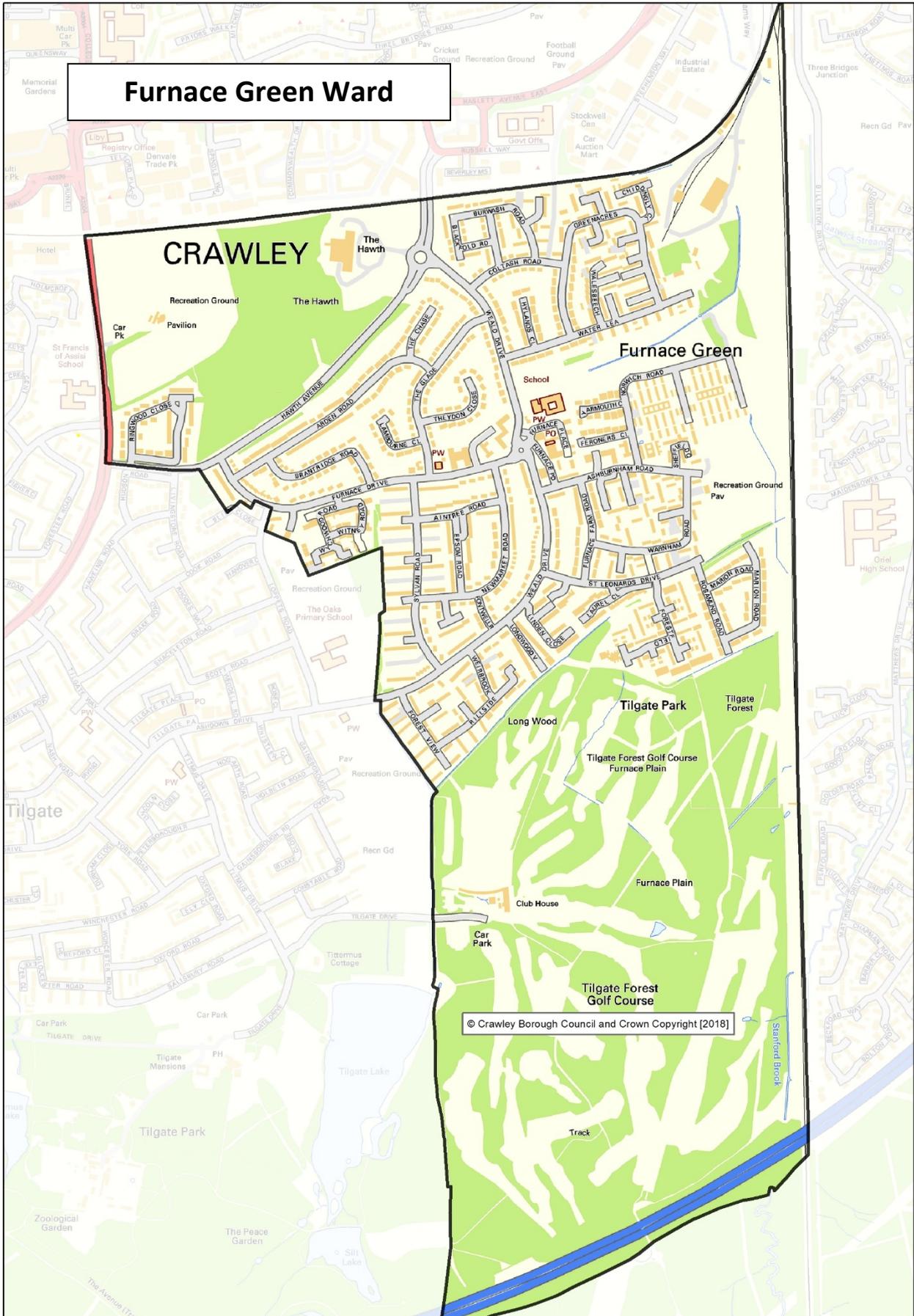
Furnace Green has its own neighbourhood shopping parade, community centre, a pub, two churches, a primary school and doctor's surgery. Also located in the ward is the Hawth Theatre and Arts Centre.

Proposals

It is proposed to retain the existing ward boundary which matches the neighbourhood boundary, served by two councillors and giving good levels of electoral equality.

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Gossops Green

Number of Councillors	2
2023 forecast electorate	4795
2023 forecast variance	+1.76%
Current electorate	4795
Current variance	+8.04%

Description

Gossops Green neighbourhood is a consolidated identifiable area bounded to the north by a railway line with one road and one pedestrian access point. It is bounded on the east by the A23, the south by the A2220, and separated by a large open space from Bewbush Ward.

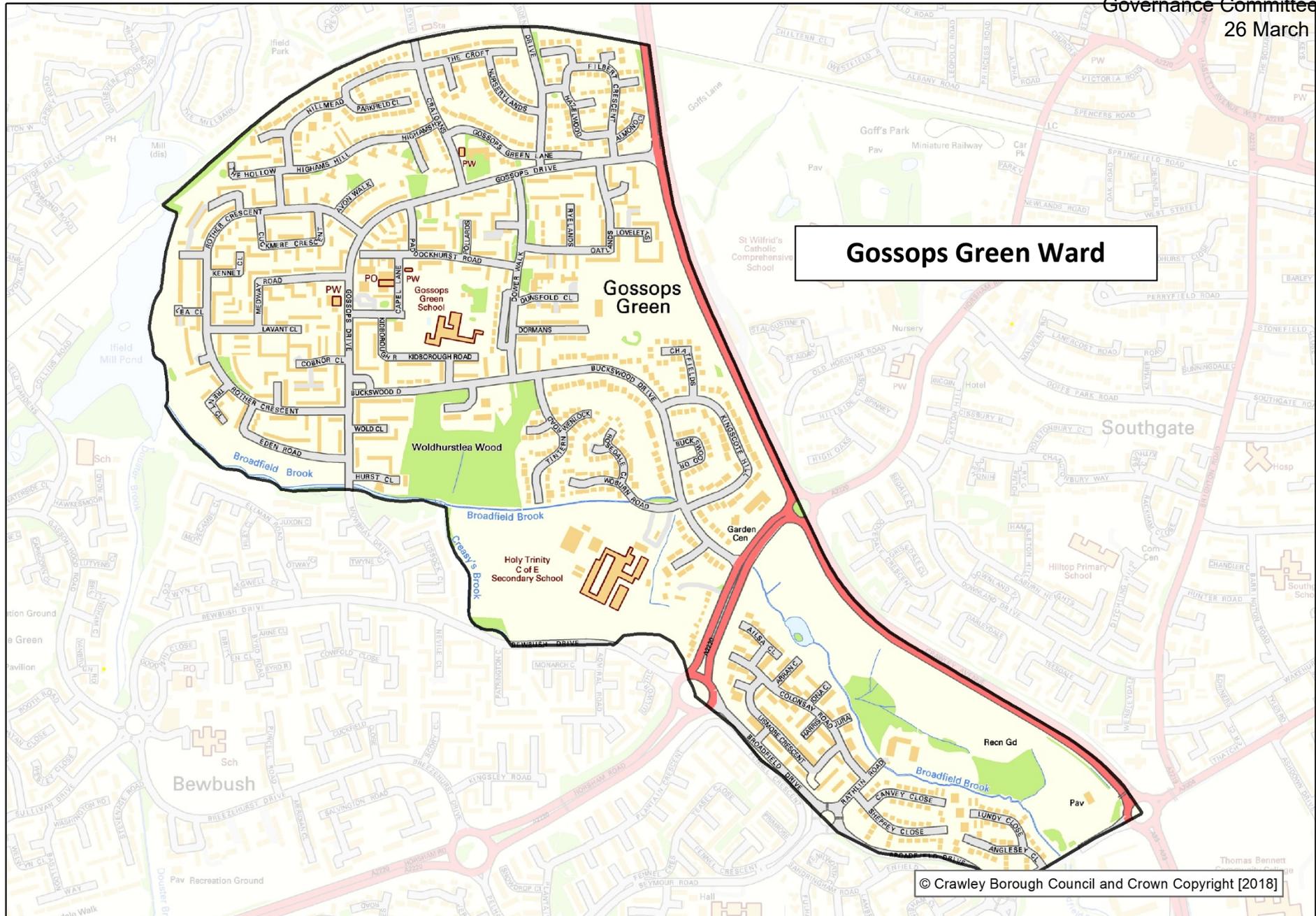
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Neighbourhood facilities

Gossops Green has its own shopping parade, doctor's surgery, community centre, two churches and primary and secondary schools. The neighbourhood community group is the Gossops Community Forum.

Proposals

It is proposed that Gossops Green is served by two Councillors and to maintain an electoral variance of less than 10% to include 815 electors from the north and east of Broadfield Drive from Broadfield.



Gossops Green Ward

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Ifield

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	7290
2023 forecast variance	+3.14%
Current electorate	7020
Current variance	+5.45%

Description

Ifield is one of the most historic areas of the town, being mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. The old village features many historic buildings and is now a conservation area. The bulk of the building for the neighbourhood began in 1956 and was completed 1970, the western part of Ifield was added in a development in the late 1970s. The site of the Ifield Community College will see further housing development, included in the electorate forecast.

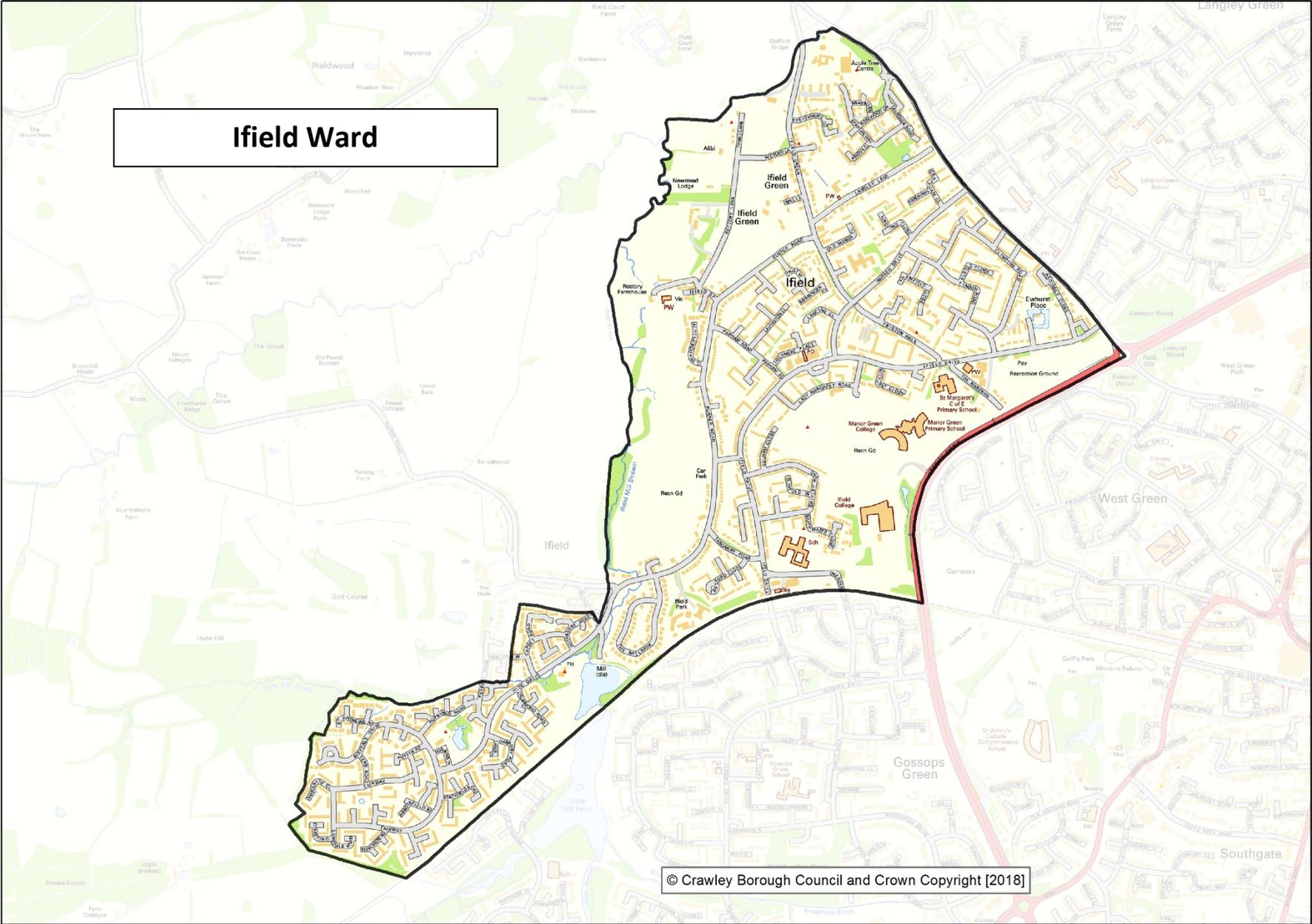
The neighbourhood has strong boundaries being bounded to the east by Ifield Avenue, a main distributor road with no frontage houses, to the south by the dual carriageway A23 and by a railway line. There is only one road and two pedestrian crossing points connecting it to the adjoining neighbourhoods of Bewbush and Gossops Green.

Neighbourhood facilities

Ifield has two neighbourhood shopping centres, the main one in Ifield Drive and another at Ifield West. There is a community centre at both locations, two doctors' surgeries, two primary schools and a secondary school. Neighbourhood community groups includes Talk Ifield and the Ifield Village Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

Proposal

Ifield Ward currently aligns with the neighbourhood with the exception of the Orchards development which was included in Langley Green Ward at the 2002 electoral review to improve electoral equality. It is proposed that the Orchards is now included in Ifield Ward which will give the proposed Ifield Ward a variance of +3.14%.



Langley Green and Manor Royal

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	6852
2023 forecast variance	-3.06%
Current electorate	6520
Current variance	-2.06%

Description

The current Langley Green Ward includes the whole of Langley Green neighbourhood which in addition to the main development includes rural areas to the north and Gatwick airport.

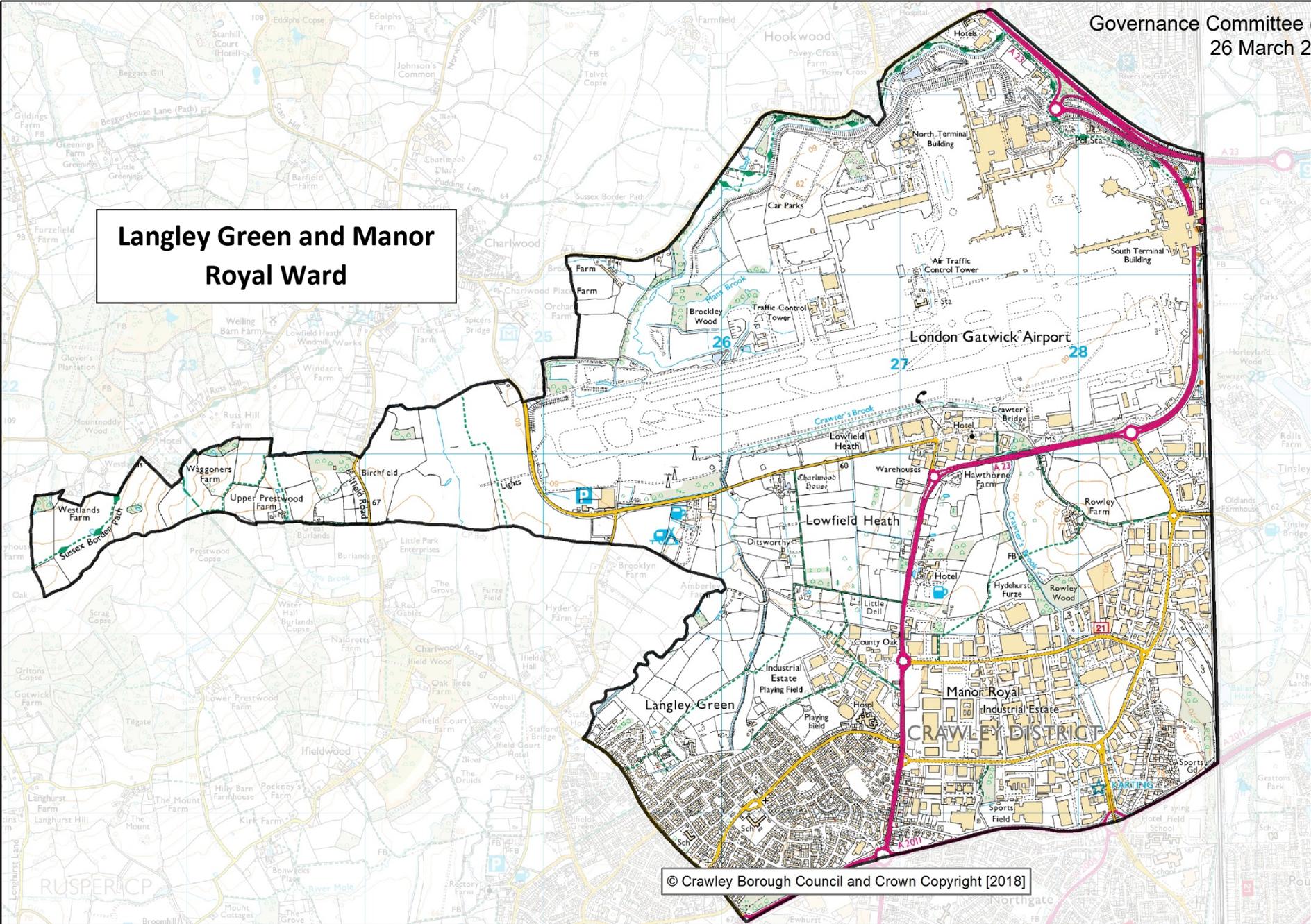
Neighbourhood Facilities

Langley Green has its own shopping parade, two primary schools, a community centre, two churches and one of the town's Mosques. Residents meet at the Langley Green Neighbourhood Forum to discuss neighbourhood issues.

Proposal

To provide good levels of electoral equality it is proposed to join the complete Langley Green neighbourhood with the area of Northgate and Three Bridges to the north of A2011 dual carriage way which comprises the 584 projected electors in the residential properties adjacent to the Manor Royal Business District and the 718 projected electors in the residential area around Tinsley Lane. The proposed ward gives a strongly identifiable boundaries and there is good commonality of interest between the areas close to the industrial estate.

**Langley Green and Manor
Royal Ward**



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Maidenbower

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	6684
2023 forecast variance	-5.43%
Current electorate	6680
Current variance	+0.35%

Description

The development of Maidenbower began in 1989. There are very strong natural boundaries – the London to Brighton railway line to the west, the Balcombe Road to the east and the Worth Way to the north.

Neighbourhood Facilities

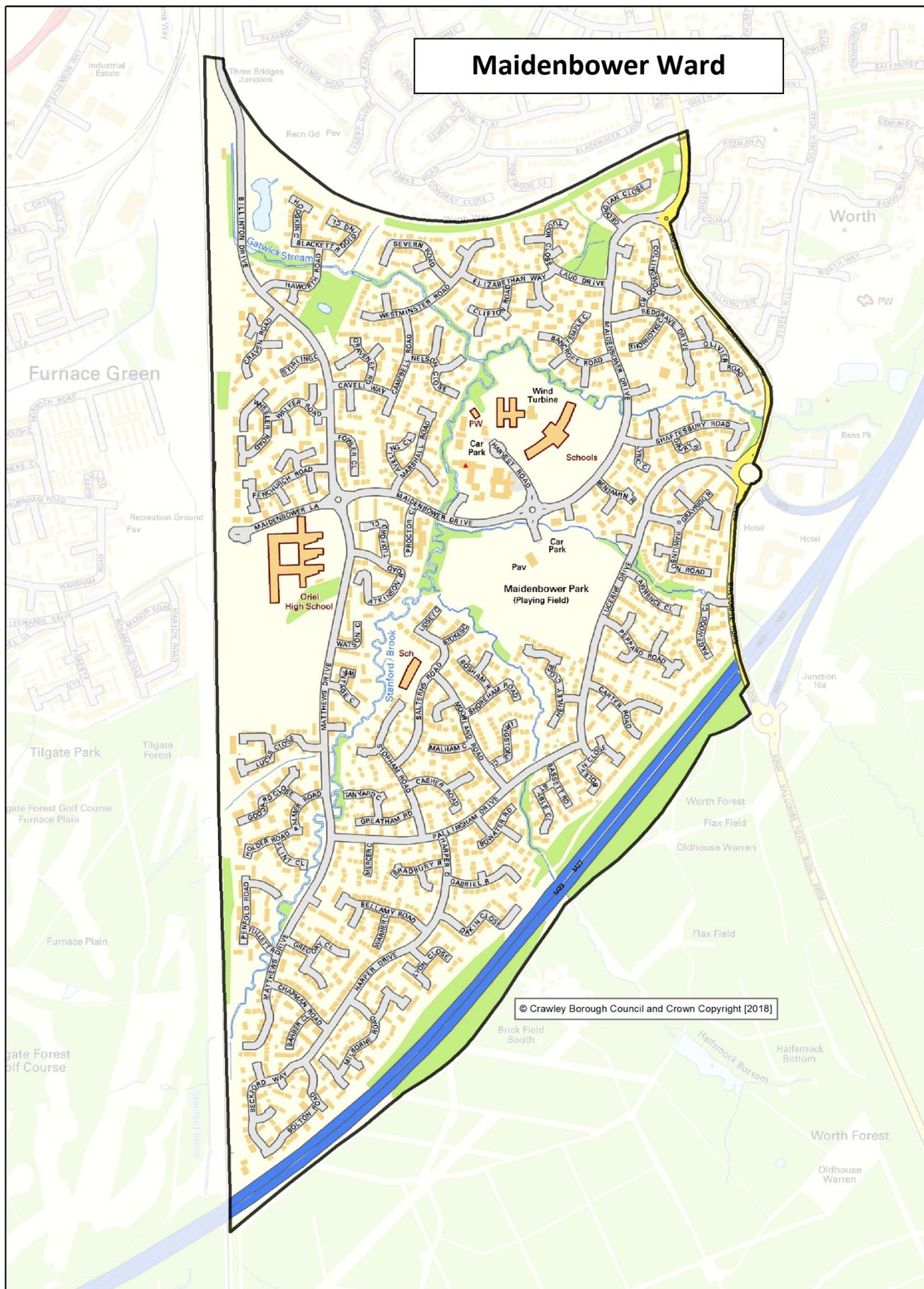
At the centre of Maidenbower there is a shopping centre, community centre, two primary schools, a secondary school, a medical centre and large playing fields with a newly built pavilion. A neighbourhood pub is located in what used to be the farmhouse when Maidenbower was farmland. Neighbourhood issues are discussed at the very active on-line Maidenbower Forum.

Proposal

Maidenbower has strong natural boundaries, a clear community identity and good levels of electoral equality. No changes are proposed

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Northgate and West Green

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	7604
2023 forecast variance	+7.58%
Current electorate	7090
Current variance	+6.50%

Description

New Town construction began in Northgate in 1949 and was complete by 1954, nearly all of the residential part of the neighbourhood is contained in the area south of the dual carriage way A2011 Crawley Avenue and to the north of the town centre. The neighbourhood is separated from Three Bridges by the A2004 Northgate Avenue to the east. The Manor Royal Business District lies in the north of the neighbourhood and Crawley Town Centre in the south. Significant residential development is forecast for Crawley Town Centre.

West Green neighbourhood is a consolidated and identifiable area and is bounded on the south side by a railway line, on the north and west sides by the A23 dual carriageway and on the eastern side by the A2219 and Crawley Town Centre. A significant part of the neighbourhood dates from the mid Victorian era. Work on the new town section began in 1949 and was completed in 1952 with several further subsequent developments.

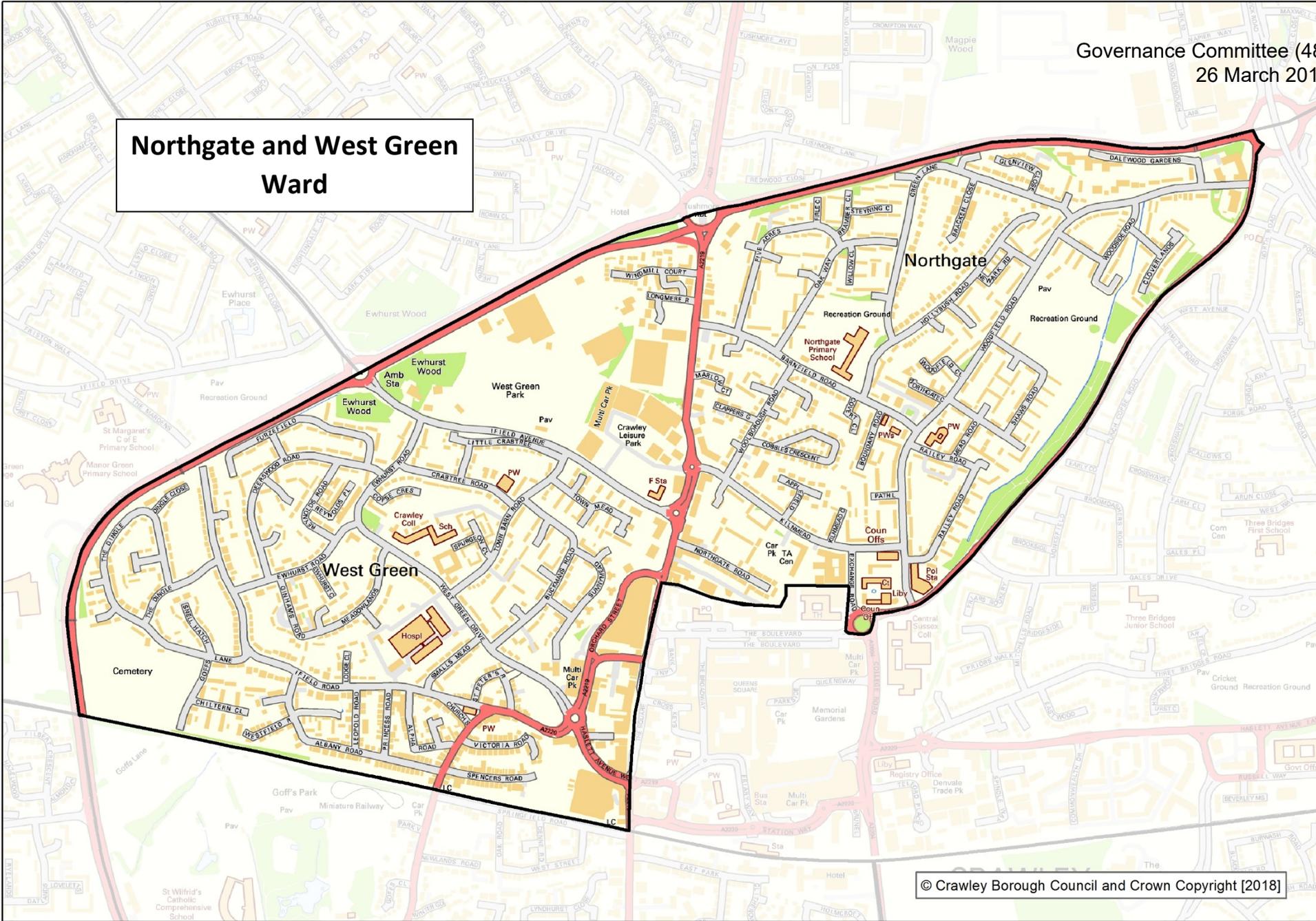
Neighbourhood Facilities

Northgate has its own neighbourhood centre with a parade of shops, two churches, doctor's surgery, dentist, and a primary school. West Green has a shopping parade in Ewhurst Road, a primary school, and a church community centre. Community groups include the Northgate Matters group and the West Green Community Forum.

Proposals

It is proposed to retain the whole of West Green neighbourhood and for a ward combined with the established residential part of Northgate neighbourhood excluding the Manor Royal Business District and Crawley Town Centre. Both have a distinctly separate character from the rest of Northgate neighbourhood and the significant recent and proposed developments in the Town Centre area are still developing as communities. This proposal creates a ward with acceptable levels of electoral equality without dividing the established communities.

**Northgate and West Green
Ward**



Pound Hill North and Forge Wood

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	7379
2023 forecast variance	+4.40
Current electorate	5570
Current variance	-16.33%

Description

Pound Hill neighbourhood and the new neighbourhood Forge Wood comprises of several areas developed separately. Forge Wood, Crawley's newest neighbourhood, is the area to the north of the A2011 Crawley Avenue, separated from Three Bridges to the west by the London to Brighton railway and the M23 to the east. Forge Wood, is currently being developed and when complete will form a community of around 1900 homes built around a central community space. The northern part of the neighbourhood is of a largely rural character. Pound Hill is the area to the south of the A2011, separated from Three Bridges by the London to Brighton Railway

Neighbourhood facilities

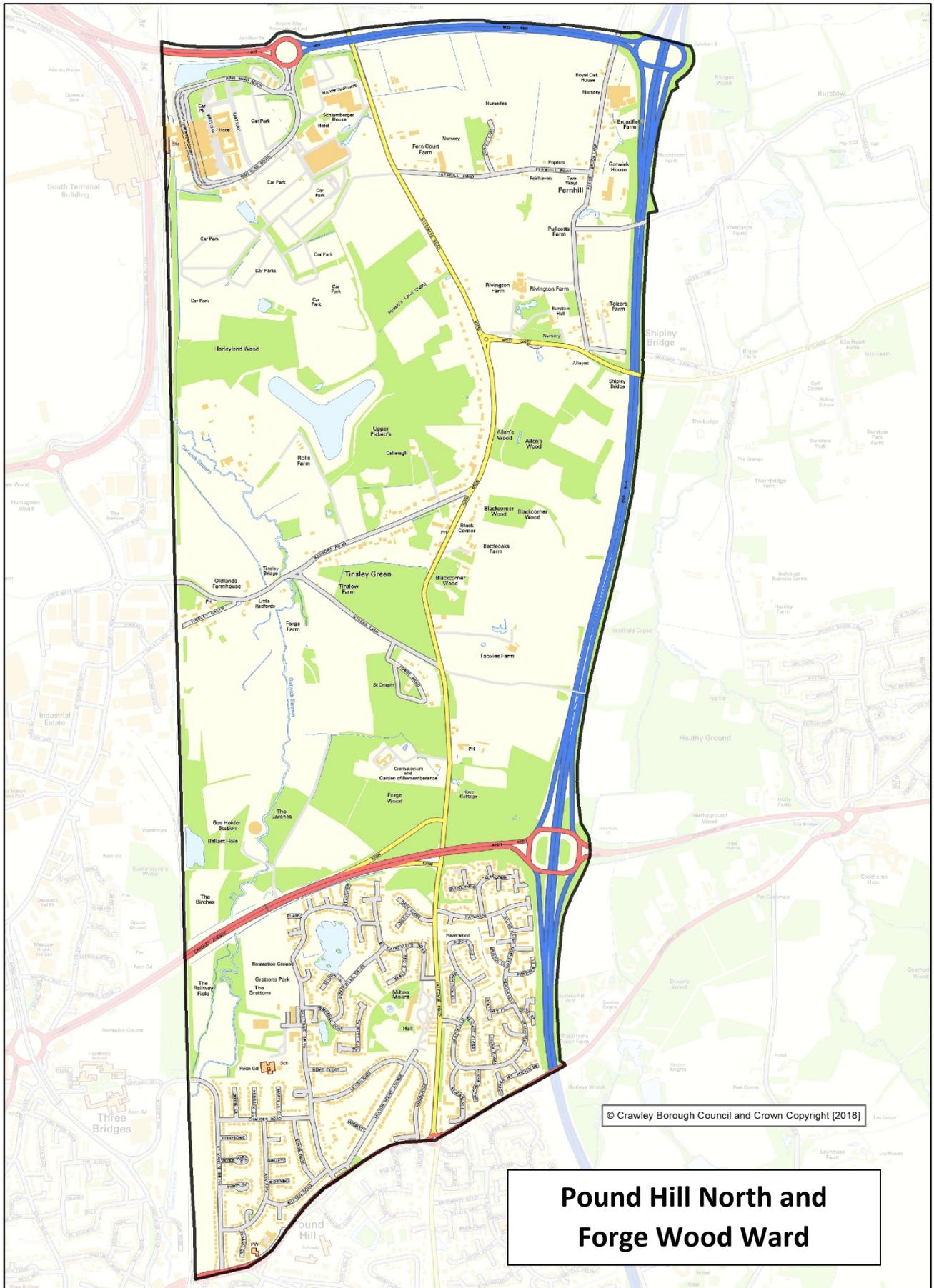
Pound Hill North has its own local centre at Peterhouse Parade with shops, a pub, open space and Primary school. There is another small community centre and shop to the east of the Balcombe Road. A new primary school for Forge Wood opened in 2016. There will be a community centre at the heart of the Forge Wood development. Active community groups include Pound Hill North Residents Association and the Forge Wood Residents' Group.

Proposal

It is proposed that the existing Pound Hill North Ward is retained and renamed Pound Hill North and Forge Wood to reflect the identity of the new neighbourhood.

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Pound Hill South and Worth

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	6474
2023 forecast variance	-8.40%
Current electorate	6421
Current variance	-3.55%

Description

The existing Pound Hill South and Worth Ward is formed of the area of Pound Hill to the south of the A220 Copthorne Road. The southern part of the ward, particularly to the south of the Worth Way is known locally as Worth.

Neighbourhood facilities

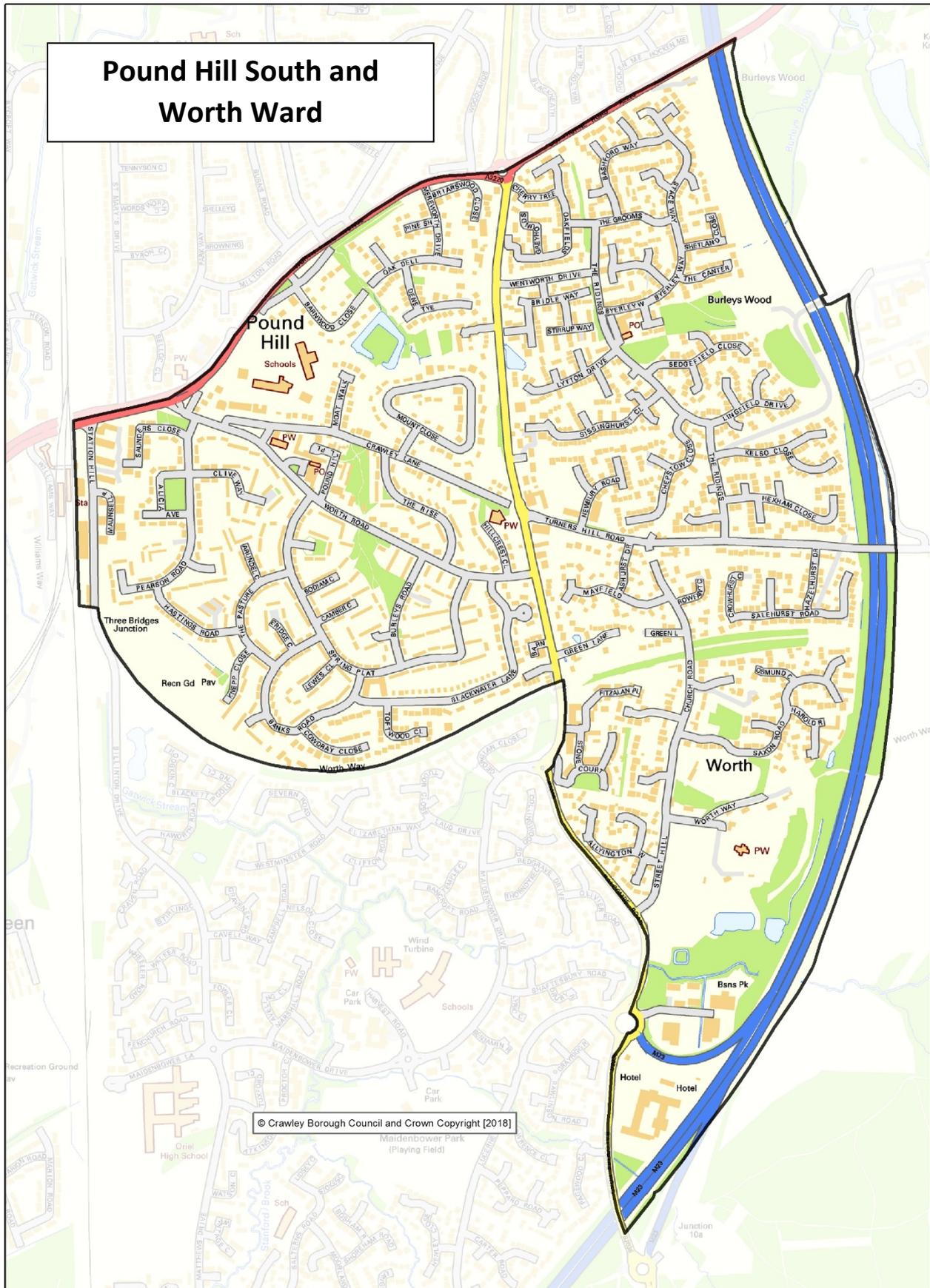
Pound Hill South has a shopping parade in Worth Road together with a community centre, a pub and two churches.

Proposals

It is proposed that the existing Pound Hill South and Worth Ward boundary is retained.

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Southgate

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	6844
2023 forecast variance	-3.17%
Current electorate	6528
Current variance	-1.94%

Description

Page 3
Southgate neighbourhood situated to the south of Crawley Town Centre contains many homes that predate Crawley New Town. Construction of new town housing began in the neighbourhood 1955 and continued into the 1970s and there has been much subsequent housing development. The neighbourhood has very clear boundaries: the Arun Valley railway line to the north; the dual carriageway A23 to the west and the A2004 Southgate Avenue to the east and south.

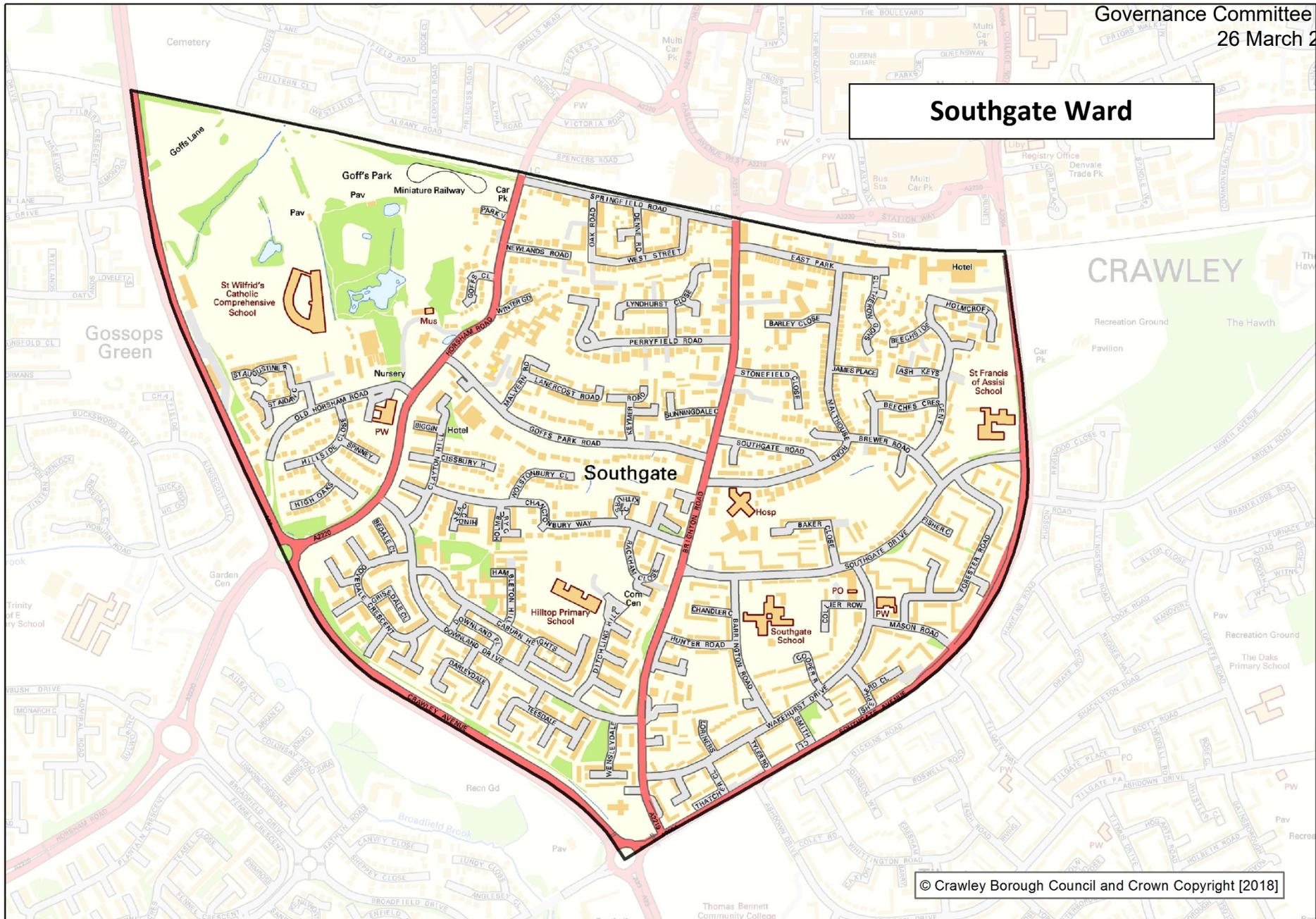
Neighbourhood facilities

The neighbourhood shopping is at Wakehurst Drive and has shops, a pub, a church and a nearby community centre. The neighbourhood also has its own medical centre, three primary schools and a secondary school, two playing areas and a large public park. The Southgate Community Forum has been established by residents to discuss neighbourhood matters.

Proposals

It is proposed that the existing Southgate Ward boundary is retained.

Southgate Ward



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Three Bridges

Number of Councillors	3
2023 forecast electorate	6756
2023 forecast variance	-4.41%
Current electorate	5479
Current variance	-17.70%

Description

Three Bridges, which derives its name from the several historic bridges spanning local streams, was a village before Crawley New Town was created, most of the housing surrounding the Victorian Railway Station. Work began on the new neighbourhood in 1951 and much of the housing dates from the 1950s and 60s.

Page 35 There has also been significant development in recent years, notably Pembroke Park at the south of the neighbourhood. In the main the boundaries are consolidated and identifiable being bounded on the eastern side by the London to Brighton railway, of the southern side by the Arun Valley Railway and the A2004 Northgate and Manor Royal Business District to the west.

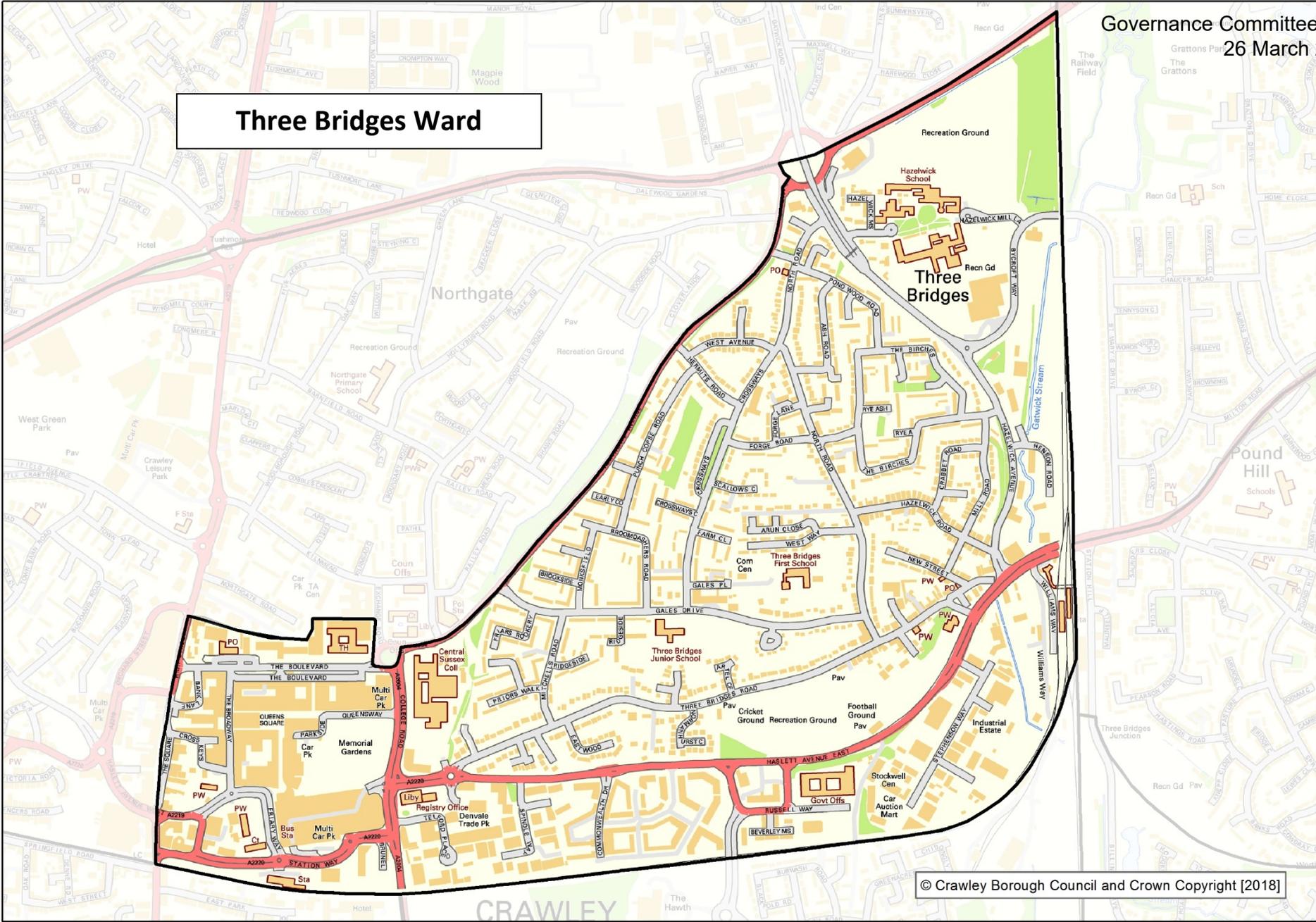
Neighbourhood facilities

The main neighbourhood shopping parade is at Gales Drive and includes a church and a community centre. There are also a number of shops close to Three Bridges Railway station, pubs and primary and secondary schools. Community groups include Three Bridges Neighbourhood Forum and the Tinsley Lane Residents' Association.

Proposals

It is proposed to join the Crawley Town Centre to Three Bridges Ward. The significant recent and future developments in the town centre are still forming an identity. These developments will be part of an area that adjoins the southern part of Three Bridges and the housing will have some similarity in nature with that recently developed Pembroke Park at the south of neighbourhood. The area surrounding Tinsley Lane, to the north of the neighbourhood is separated from the rest of Three Bridges by the A2011 dual carriageway. Due to its proximity with the Manor Royal Business district and the resulting commonality of interest with the residential area in Manor Royal to the east of the A23 London Road it is proposed to include both of these areas in the Langley Green and Manor Royal Ward.

Three Bridges Ward



Tilgate

Number of Councillors	2
2023 forecast electorate	4710
2023 forecast variance	-0.04%
Current electorate	4537
Current variance	2.23%

Description

Tilgate is a consolidated and identifiable area and mainly comprises of the new town development completed in 1958. There are strong boundaries, the dual carriageway A23 to the west, the A2004 to the north, a continuous band of open space to the east and to the south it stretches into Tilgate Park.

Neighbourhood Facilities

Tilgate neighbourhood has a central shopping parade, a pub, three churches, a doctor's surgery, a community centre, primary and secondary schools, and two large playing fields which separate Tilgate from Furnace Green. There are many local clubs based at Tilgate Park. Residents meet at the Tilgate Community Forum every two months to discuss neighbourhood issues. The neighbourhood contains the town's main sports centre, K2 Crawley.

Proposals

It is proposed to retain the existing ward boundary which matches the neighbourhood boundary, served by two councillors and giving good levels of electoral equality.

Tilgate Ward

