

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

November 1998

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for South Derbyshire.

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Local Government Commission for England

24 November 1998

Dear Secretary of State

On 2 December 1997 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of South Derbyshire under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in June 1998 and undertook a ten-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 86 and 87) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in South Derbyshire.

We recommend that South Derbyshire District Council should be served by 36 councillors representing 17 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

We note that you have now set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government - In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the District Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of South Derbyshire on 2 December 1997. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 30 June 1998, after which we undertook a ten-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in South Derbyshire because:

- **in 13 of the 19 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and five wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2002 electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 15 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in eight wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraphs 86 and 87) are that:

- **South Derbyshire District Council should be served by 36 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 17 wards, two fewer than at present;**
- **the boundaries of all the existing wards should be modified;**
- **elections for the whole council should continue to take place every four years.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each district councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 11 of the 17 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **Due to localised increases in electorate, the number of electors per councillor is forecast to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in all but one ward by 2002.**

Recommendations are also made for changes to parish council electoral arrangements which provide for:

- **revised parish council electoral arrangements for the parishes of Elvaston and Hatton;**
- **an increase in the number of parish councillors for Stenson Fields Parish Council.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 4 January 1999:

**The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Review
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

*Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Aston	3	Aston ward (the parishes of Aston upon Trent, Elvaston, Shardlow & Great Wilne, Swarkestone and Weston upon Trent); Ticknall ward (part – the parish of Barrow upon Trent)	Map 2
2 Church Gresley (Swadlincote)	2	Gresley ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
3 Etwall	2	Etwall ward (part – the parishes of Ash, Burnaston and Etwall); Hilton ward (part – the parish of Egginton); North West ward (part – the parishes of Bearwardcote and Radbourne)	Map 2
4 Hartshorne & Ticknall	2	Hartshorne ward (the parish of Hartshorne); Ticknall ward (part – the parishes of Calke, Smisby and Ticknall)	Map 2
5 Hatton	1	Hatton ward (part – the proposed parish wards of Central, Heathway, Hoon, School, South and Yew Tree of Hatton parish)	Maps 2 and A3
6 Hilton	2	Hilton ward (part – the parishes of Hilton and Marston on Dove)	Map 2
7 Linton	2	Linton ward (the parishes of Castle Gresley, Cauldwell and Linton); Walton ward (part – the parishes of Drakelow and Rosliston)	Map 2
8 Melbourne	2	Melbourne ward (part – the parish of Melbourne)	Map 2
9 Midway (Swadlincote)	3	Midway ward (part); Newhall ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
10 Newhall & Stanton (Swadlincote)	3	Gresley ward (part); Midway ward (part); Newhall ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
11 North West	1	Hatton ward (part – the parish of Hoon and the proposed Hatton North parish ward of Hatton parish); North West ward (part – the parishes of Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Osleston & Thurvaston, Sutton on the Hill and Trusley)	Map 2

Figure 1 (continued):
 The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
12 Repton	2	Repton ward (the parishes of Brethby, Newton Solney and Repton); Melbourne ward (part – the parish of Stanton by Bridge); Ticknall ward (part – the parishes of Foremark and Ingleby)	Map 2
13 Seales	2	Netherseal ward (the parishes of Coton in the Elms, Lullington and Netherseal); Overseal ward (the parish of Overseal); Walton ward (part – the parishes of Catton and Walton upon Trent)	Map 2
14 Stenson	2	Ticknall ward (part – the parishes of Stenson Fields and Twyford & Stenson)	Map 2
15 Swadlincote	3	Gresley ward (part); Newhall ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
16 Willington & Findern	2	Etwall ward (part – the parish of Findern); Willington ward (the parish of Willington)	Map 2
17 Woodville	2	Swadlincote ward (part); Woodville ward (the parish of Woodville)	Map 2 and large map

Note: The proposed wards in Swadlincote (Church Gresley, Midway, Newhall & Stanton and Swadlincote) are the only entirely unparished wards of the district, with the proposed Woodville ward containing the remaining part of the unparished area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of South Derbyshire. We have now reviewed all the districts in Derbyshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England.

2 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996, supplemented in September 1996 and updated in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 2 December 1997, when we wrote to South Derbyshire District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. Our letter was copied to Derbyshire County Council, the Derbyshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the district, Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published notices in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 9 March 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

5 Stage Three began on 30 June 1998 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for South Derbyshire*, and ended on 7 September 1998. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

6 South Derbyshire comprises a mixture of urban and rural areas, contains 50 parishes and covers around 33,000 hectares. The district lies to the south of the city of Derby, to the west of Leicestershire and to the north and east of Staffordshire. In addition to its parished area, South Derbyshire also contains the unparished area of Swadlincote in the southern part of the district, an area which contains about a third of the total electorate.

7 The Council presently has 34 councillors who are elected from 19 wards (Map 1 and Figure 2). Four wards each return three councillors, seven wards return two councillors each, whilst the remaining eight wards return a single councillor each. The whole Council is elected together every four years.

8 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the district average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

9 Since the last electoral review, there has been a significant increase in electorate in the district, with around 30 per cent more electors than two decades ago. Growth in the district is projected to continue, with the electorate forecast to increase by nine per cent from 59,239 to 64,627 by 2002.

10 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,742 electors, which the District Council forecasts would increase to 1,901 by the year 2002 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to the significant increase in electorate over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 13 of the 19 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average and in five wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Hilton ward where the councillor represents 36 per cent more electors than the district average.

Figure 2:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Aston	2	3,660	1,830	5	4,639	2,320	22
2 Etwall	2	3,812	1,906	9	4,160	2,080	9
3 Gresley	3	6,061	2,020	16	6,354	2,118	11
4 Hartshorne	2	2,835	1,418	-19	2,929	1,465	-23
5 Hatton	1	2,026	2,026	16	2,187	2,187	15
6 Hilton	1	2,364	2,364	36	3,994	3,994	110
7 Linton	2	3,121	1,561	-10	3,145	1,573	-17
8 Melbourne	2	3,908	1,954	12	4,025	2,013	6
9 Midway	3	5,345	1,782	2	5,672	1,891	-1
10 Netherseal	1	1,416	1,416	-19	1,465	1,465	-23
11 Newhall	3	5,063	1,688	-3	5,123	1,708	-10
12 North West	1	1,482	1,482	-15	1,593	1,593	-16
13 Overseal	1	1,632	1,632	-6	1,683	1,683	-11
14 Repton	2	2,958	1,479	-15	3,041	1,521	-20
15 Swadlincote	3	3,676	1,225	-30	3,923	1,308	-31
16 Ticknall	2	4,275	2,138	23	4,657	2,329	23
17 Walton	1	1,356	1,356	-22	1,390	1,390	-27
18 Willington	1	2,024	2,024	16	2,171	2,171	14
19 Woodville	1	2,225	2,225	28	2,476	2,476	30
Totals	34	59,239	—	—	64,627	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,742	—	—	1,901	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on South Derbyshire District Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1997, electors in Swadlincote ward were relatively over-represented by 30 per cent, while electors in Hilton ward were relatively under-represented by 36 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

11 During Stage One we received representations from South Derbyshire District Council, the Conservative Group on the Council, South Derbyshire Conservative Association, Etwell & District Branch Labour Party, Mr Mark Todd MP, two parish councils and two district councillors. In the light of these representations and the evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for South Derbyshire*. Our draft recommendations are summarised at Appendix B.

12 Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's scheme, which achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and took account of the projected increase in electorate. However, we moved away from the District Council's scheme in one area (the north-western part of the district). We proposed that:

- (a) South Derbyshire District Council should be served by 36 councillors, two more than at present, representing 16 wards;
- (b) the boundaries of all existing wards should be modified;
- (c) the whole council should continue to be elected together every four years.

Draft Recommendation

South Derbyshire District Council should be served by 36 councillors representing 16 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

13 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 11 of the 16 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with none of the wards expected to vary by more than 10 per cent by 2002.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

14 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 15 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of South Derbyshire District Council and the Commission.

South Derbyshire District Council

15 The District Council supported the majority of our draft recommendations, including our proposals to increase the council size from 34 members to 36 and that there should be no change to the current practice of whole-council elections. However, it opposed our proposed two-member Hatton & North West ward, preferring instead that this area be served by two single-member wards. It also put forward minor boundary modifications to our proposed wards in Swadlincote in order to provide boundaries which, in its view, would better reflect community identities.

16 The Council supported our draft proposal that Hatton parish be warded for parish council electoral purposes. It also proposed that Elvaston parish should be served by an additional four parish councillors and be split into two parish wards.

South Derbyshire District Council Conservative Group

17 The Conservative Group on the Council supported the majority of our proposals, although it opposed a two-member Hatton & North West ward. The Group proposed that two single-member wards should be created in this area from the constituent parishes of the two-member ward, with the exception of Ash parish which it proposed should be included in Etwall ward. It supported our proposal to split Hatton parish into seven parish wards and additionally proposed that Hartshorne parish be warded to create three parish wards.

Etwall & District Branch Labour Party

18 The Etwall & District Branch Labour Party opposed our proposed two-member Hatton & North West ward, preferring instead for two single-member wards to continue to serve the parishes in this area.

Member of Parliament

19 Mark Todd MP supported a number of our proposed wards but opposed others. He put forward alternative proposals for the area comprising our Linton, Newhall & Stanton and Seales wards, resulting in the area to the south of Swadlincote being served by an additional district councillor compared to our draft recommendations (forming a council size of 37). In the Hatton/Hilton area he put forward two alternative schemes. His first set of proposals for this area endorsed those put forward by the District Council, and his second set involved the Council's single-member Hatton ward and two-member Hilton ward being combined to form a three-member Hatton & Hilton ward. He also put forward revisions to our proposed Aston and Etwall wards.

Parish Councils

20 Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton and Sutton on the Hill parish councils opposed our proposed two-member Hatton & North West ward, preferring that the north west parishes be included in a single-member ward. Hatton Parish Council also opposed our proposed two-member Hatton & North West ward, although it supported our proposal to ward the parish. It commented that a single-member Hatton ward and a single-member North West ward, with the latter including a new North parish ward of Hatton parish, would "establish cohesive, harmonious communities who share common problems and common objectives".

21 Netherseal Parish Council opposed our proposed Seales ward, preferring instead for no change to be made to the existing Netherseal ward. It stated that “if necessary” it would support the establishment of a ward comprising the parishes of Catton, Coton in the Elms, Lullington, Netherseal and Rosliston. Overseal Parish Council also opposed our proposed Seales ward, preferring instead for it (Overseal) to be the sole parish in a single-member ward. Stenson Fields Parish Council supported our proposals and additionally proposed that the parish be served by an extra parish councillor.

Other Representations

22 Derbyshire County Council supported the majority of our proposed wards although it put forward different arrangements for Findern and Willington parishes. It would prefer that each of the two parishes be represented by a single councillor, in order to avoid “substantial complication and rearrangement” when the Commission reviews the electoral divisions of Derbyshire County Council. One local resident opposed our proposals for Aston and Stenson wards, proposing instead that Barrow upon Trent and Swarkestone parishes be transferred from the former ward into the latter, with the number of councillors serving the wards remaining as put forward under our draft proposals (three and two respectively).

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

23 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for South Derbyshire is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

24 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

25 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

26 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require

particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

27 At Stage One South Derbyshire District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2002, projecting an increase in the electorate of nine per cent from 59,239 to 64,627 over the five-year period from 1997 to 2002. It expected much of the growth to be in the Elvaston and Hilton areas. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

28 During Stage Three, we received representations from Mark Todd MP and Overseal Parish Council regarding the District Council’s projected electorates. Mr Todd stated that a ward which encompasses the Church Gresley area of Swadlincote should be “the smallest in electorate terms of the urban group” due to the “massive growth allowed for in the Local Plan”.

29 We are only empowered to take into account electorate projections for five years ahead, and at Stage One the District Council informed us that only 150 of the 1,000 houses which had been agreed in principle for the Church Gresley area are likely to be completed by 2002. We cannot propose a ward which is over-represented at that time, with the aim of taking into account residential developments which may take place beyond 2002. Should we put forward such a ward we would not be following the legislation guiding our work.

30 Overseal Parish Council stated that “there was no real attempt to predict the 2002 electorates”. It cited examples where proposed developments in the parish “are realistically expected to be approved shortly” and stated that “this would increase the electorate almost exactly to the district average” (thus justifying a separate district councillor for the parish).

31 We carefully considered the representations we received on electorate projections, having sought the advice of the District Council. The District Council included evidence in its Stage One submission detailing its methodology for calculating the projected electorate totals for each ward in the district. We remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates available.

Council Size

32 Our *Guidance* indicates that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a borough or district council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

33 South Derbyshire District Council is at present served by 34 councillors. At Stage One the representations received indicated a consensus for a council size of 36. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 36 members, an increase of two.

34 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our proposal to increase the size of the council and we received only one other representation regarding council size. Mark Todd MP proposed that the area to the south of Swadlincote be served by five councillors overall, one more than under our draft recommendations.

35 Mr Todd’s proposals for a 37-member council size would produce substantially worse levels of electoral equality than under our draft recommendations. We calculated that three of his proposed wards would vary by more than 20 per cent from the district average number of electors per councillor by 2002. We recognise that this level of electoral inequality may well stem, at least in part, from alternative views of electorate growth in

the area but, as indicated earlier, we have concluded that the District Council’s projections are the best currently available.

36 Given the relatively high levels of electoral inequality provided by Mr Todd’s proposals, and the general consensus for a council size of 36, we have decided to confirm as final our draft recommendation for a council size of 36.

Electoral Arrangements

37 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Swadlincote (four wards) and Woodville ward;
- (b) Linton, Netherseal, Overseal and Walton wards;
- (c) Hartshorne, Repton and Ticknall wards;
- (d) Aston and Melbourne wards;
- (e) Etwall, Hatton, Hilton, North West and Willington wards.

Swadlincote (four wards) and Woodville ward

38 Swadlincote is the only unparished area of the district and is currently served by 12 district councillors returned from four three-member wards: Gresley; Midway; Newhall; and Swadlincote. The number of electors per councillor in each of the four wards is currently 16 per cent above, 2 per cent above, 3 per cent below and 30 per cent below the district average respectively (11 per cent, 1 per cent, 10 per cent and 31 per cent by 2002). Woodville ward comprises solely the parish of that name and returns a single councillor, with the number of electors per councillor in the ward being 28 per cent above the district average, projected to be 30 per cent above by 2002.

39 As part of our draft recommendations we proposed that the combined Swadlincote and Woodville areas should continue to be served by 13 councillors, but that ward boundaries should be modified to form three three-member wards and two two-member wards. We proposed that part of Swadlincote should be placed in the same district ward as Woodville parish to form a two-member Woodville ward; that the existing three-member

Newhall ward should be reconfigured and consequently renamed Newhall & Stanton; and that a revised Gresley ward should return two members and be renamed Church Gresley. We also proposed revised three-member wards of Midway and Swadlincote. Our proposals were broadly based on those submitted by the District Council, although we proposed modifications between the Church Gresley and Swadlincote wards in order to provide an improved level of electoral equality in the former ward.

40 Under our proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Church Gresley, Midway, Newhall & Stanton, Swadlincote and Woodville wards would be 5 per cent above, 8 per cent above, 6 per cent above, 6 per cent above and 4 per cent below the district average respectively (4 per cent above, 5 per cent above, 2 per cent below, 2 per cent above and 5 per cent below by 2002).

41 At Stage Three we received representations from the District Council, the Conservative Group, Derbyshire County Council and Mark Todd MP. The District Council supported our proposals in this area, although it put forward minor boundary modifications between some of the wards in order to better reflect local community identities. The County Council supported each of our proposed wards in this area.

42 Mr Todd broadly accepted our proposals, although he contended that the Church Gresley area should be over-represented in relation to the other wards in the town due to the “massive growth” which, he stated, is projected for the area. As detailed earlier in this chapter (see paragraph 29), we are not able to propose the creation of a district ward which is over-represented in order to take into account future residential developments beyond the five-year period. We remain satisfied with the electorate projections provided by the District Council.

43 Mr Todd also argued that the Stanton area of our proposed Newhall & Stanton ward should be included in a new single-member Castle Gresley & Stanton ward, along with Castle Gresley parish. Despite the areas being linked by the A444 road, we do not consider that Stanton shares closer ties with Castle Gresley than with Swadlincote. Although Stanton is separated from Swadlincote by a comparatively small area of open land and by Newhall Wood, we are satisfied that it shares close links with the town, given the geographical proximity of the two areas and that the B5353 road

leads directly into the town from just south of Stanton. Moreover, most of the population within Castle Gresley parish is some considerable distance from the Stanton area.

44 Mr Todd’s proposals would necessitate modifications to wards throughout Swadlincote, and given that we have received general support for our proposals which secure reasonable levels of electoral equality in the town, we believe it would be inappropriate for us to modify them substantially. Furthermore, Mr Todd’s proposed Castle Gresley & Stanton ward would initially be 15 per cent below the district average, projected to be 22 per cent below by 2002 (on a council size of 37) - a high level of electoral inequality.

45 The Conservative Group also put forward an alternative proposal for this area, stating that “it remains our contention that Stanton by Newhall is not part of the Swadlincote Urban core”, proposing instead that it should be included in a Southern Parishes ward. It generally supported our other proposals in the town.

46 Under the Conservative Group’s proposed Southern Parishes ward, which would place the Stanton area in a ward with the parishes of Catton, Cauldwell, Coton in the Elms, Drakelow, Lullington, Netherseal, Rosliston and Walton upon Trent, a reasonable level of electoral equality would result. The number of electors per councillor in the ward would be 5 per cent below the district average by 2002. Despite the level of electoral equality which this proposal would provide, we remain of the view that our draft recommendations for this area are the more appropriate (see also later paragraphs). The proposal to place the Stanton area with rural parishes would not, we believe, better reflect community identities and interests than our draft proposals.

47 We carefully examined the modifications to our draft proposals put forward by the District Council, and concluded that they would generally better reflect community identities and secure more recognisable boundaries. The suggested boundary modifications would affect a minimal number of electors and therefore the number of electors per councillor in each of the proposed wards as put forward under our draft recommendations would change only slightly. The revised Midway, Newhall & Stanton and Swadlincote wards would vary by 9 per cent, 5 per cent and 6 per cent from the district average respectively (6 per cent, 2 per cent and 2 per cent by 2002).

48 Given the reasonable levels of electoral equality

that such modifications to our draft proposals would provide, we propose to confirm our draft proposals, with the Council's suggested modifications, as final. Full details of our proposed boundaries in this area are illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

Linton, Netherseal, Overseal and Walton wards

49 These four wards are located to the south of Swadlincote. Linton ward returns two councillors and comprises the parishes of Castle Gresley, Cauldwell and Linton. The other three wards in this area are all single-member wards. Netherseal ward comprises the parishes of Coton in the Elms, Lullington and Netherseal; Overseal ward comprises solely the parish of that name; and Walton ward comprises the parishes of Catton, Drakelow, Rosliston and Walton upon Trent. The area is presently over-represented. The number of electors per councillor in the four wards is currently 10 per cent below, 19 per cent below, 6 per cent below and 22 per cent below the district average respectively (17 per cent, 23 per cent, 11 per cent and 27 per cent by 2002).

50 As part of our draft recommendations we proposed that this area should be served by one less councillor overall and that each of the present four wards should be modified. Under our proposals the Walton ward would be disbanded, with Drakelow and Rosliston parishes being included in an expanded (two-member) Linton ward. Catton and Walton upon Trent parishes would be included in a new two-member Seales ward, along with the parishes of Coton in the Elms, Lullington, Netherseal and Overseal. Under our proposals the number of electors per councillor in the Linton and Seales wards would be 13 per cent and 16 per cent above the district average respectively. However, due to projected electorate growth elsewhere in the district, the levels of electoral equality in both these wards would improve by 2002, to 5 per cent and 9 per cent above the average respectively.

51 During Stage Three we received representations regarding this area from the District Council, the Conservative Group, Derbyshire County Council, Mark Todd MP, Netherseal Parish Council and Overseal Parish Council. The District Council and the County Council expressed support for our draft proposals.

52 The Conservative Group opposed our draft recommendations for this area, instead reiterating the majority of its Stage One proposals. As discussed above, it argued that the parishes of Catton, Cauldwell, Coton in the Elms, Drakelow, Lullington, Netherseal, Rosliston and Walton upon Trent, as well as the Stanton area of Swadlincote, should form a new two-member Southern Parishes ward. It also proposed that Castle Gresley parish should form part of a two-member Castle ward together with part of Swadlincote.

53 The Group departed from its Stage One proposals for the parishes of Overseal and Linton, suggesting that each parish should form a separate single-member ward. The majority of its proposals would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality, across the district. However, for the reasons detailed in our draft recommendations report and earlier in this chapter (see paragraph 46) we have decided not to adopt the Group's proposals as part of our final recommendations.

54 In addition to Mr Todd proposing a single-member Castle Gresley & Stanton ward (including the Stanton area of Swadlincote – as described above) he suggested that the parishes of Cauldwell, Drakelow, Linton, Rosliston and Walton upon Trent should form a new two-member Linton ward, and that the parishes of Catton, Coton in the Elms, Lullington, Netherseal and Overseal should form a two-member Seales ward. Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the Castle Gresley & Stanton, Linton and Seales wards would be 15 per cent below, 1 per cent above and 3 per cent below the district average respectively (22 per cent below, 6 per cent below and 9 per cent below by 2002).

55 Netherseal Parish Council argued against the parish being included in a two-member ward with the parish of Overseal, preferring instead that no change be made to the present single-member Netherseal ward. This proposal would result in Netherseal ward being over-represented by 14 per cent initially, projected to be 18 per cent by 2002. It stated additionally that should it not be possible to retain the present arrangement, it would prefer for the Netherseal ward to be expanded to include the parishes of Catton and Rosliston. However, this proposal would result in the number of electors per councillor in a modified Netherseal ward varying by 18 per cent above the district average initially (13 per cent by 2002) with similar imbalances existing in a modified Linton ward.

56 Overseal Parish Council opposed our proposed two-member Seales ward, preferring instead for the parish to be served alone by a single councillor. The remaining parishes in the proposed two-member Seales ward would form a separate single-member ward. We are sympathetic to the views expressed by Overseal Parish Council as, under a council size of 36, the parish merits its own district councillor. However, such an arrangement would not be compatible with reasonable levels of electoral equality in other wards in this area, due to settlement patterns in the surrounding parishes. For this reason we are unable to adopt the proposal.

57 We have stated earlier in this chapter our reasons for confirming as final the draft recommendations in Swadlincote, subject to some minor boundary adjustments. This is important in the context of Overseal. Our final recommendation that the Stanton area should be included in a ward with the Newhall area of Swadlincote (rather than with Castle Gresley parish or other parishes to form a Southern Parishes ward) limits the options to the south of the urban area. Should Overseal parish form a single-member ward on its own, the number of electors per councillor in the remainder of our proposed Seales ward – the parishes of Catton, Coton in the Elms, Lullington, Netherseal and Walton upon Trent – would, if that area formed a separate single-member ward, vary by 32 per cent from the average (24 per cent by 2002). Improving electoral equality in that ward could only be achieved by modifying the proposed Linton ward, which would then itself have a considerably worse level of electoral equality.

58 In our view, the consequences of modifying our draft recommendations in this area would be too great in terms of electoral inequality or community identities. Having considered alternative configurations of parishes for this southern part of the district, we concur with the District Council and the County Council and propose that our draft recommendations be confirmed as final.

Hartshorne, Repton and Ticknall wards

59 These three wards are located to the north of Swadlincote and each returns two district councillors. Hartshorne ward comprises solely the parish of that name; Repton ward comprises the parishes of Bretby, Newton Solney and Repton; and Ticknall ward comprises the parishes of Barrow upon Trent, Calke, Foremark, Ingleby,

Smisby, Stenson Fields, Ticknall and Twyford & Stenson. The number of electors per councillor in the three wards is currently 19 per cent below, 15 per cent below and 23 per cent above the district average respectively (23 per cent, 20 per cent and 23 per cent by 2002).

60 As part of our draft recommendations we adopted the Council's scheme and proposed the following: that Stanton by Bridge parish (currently in Melbourne ward) should be transferred into an expanded two-member Repton ward along with Foremark and Ingleby parishes; that Calke, Smisby and Ticknall parishes should be included in a new two-member Ticknall & Hartshorne ward, along with Hartshorne parish; that Stenson Fields and Twyford & Stenson parishes should comprise a new two-member Stenson ward; and that Barrow upon Trent parish should be included in a revised Aston ward (as discussed later in this chapter).

61 Under our proposals the number of electors per councillor in a revised Repton ward and new Stenson and Ticknall & Hartshorne wards would be 1 per cent below, 9 per cent below and 9 per cent above the district average respectively (7 per cent, 7 per cent and 3 per cent by 2002).

62 At Stage Three we received representations from the District Council, the Conservative Group, Derbyshire County Council, Mark Todd MP, Stenson Fields Parish Council and one local resident. The District Council supported our draft proposals for these three wards although it suggested that the proposed Ticknall & Hartshorne ward should be renamed Hartshorne & Ticknall to reflect the greater number of electors living in Hartshorne. The County Council, Mr Todd and Stenson Fields Parish Council also supported our proposals for these three wards, with the parish council additionally proposing that it should be served by an extra parish councillor. This proposal is discussed at the end of this chapter.

63 The Conservative Group opposed our proposal for a two-member Ticknall & Hartshorne ward and instead proposed that the area should be represented by two single-member wards. Under its proposal, Hartshorne parish would be split into three parish wards. New Cathedrals and Goseley parish wards would form a single-member Goseley & Midway district ward, and a new Village parish ward would form part of a single-member Hartshorne & Ticknall district ward together with

the parishes of Smisby and Ticknall. The number of electors per councillor in these two single-member wards would be 6 per cent below and 24 per cent above the district average respectively (13 per cent and 19 per cent by 2002).

64 We have not been convinced that warding Hartshorne parish and creating two single-member district wards for this area would better reflect community identities than our own proposals. Although it may be that the Goseley and Lower Midway areas of Hartshorne parish share closer ties with Swadlincote than they do with the remaining area of Hartshorne parish, we have not been persuaded that these areas share sufficiently close ties *with each other* to merit their combination as a single-member ward. Additionally neither ward would have a reasonable level of electoral equality.

65 We received, as an appendix to the District Council's Stage One submission, a letter it had received from Hartshorne Parish Council which stated that "it is not appropriate to ward the parish". We have also received support for the creation of a two-member Ticknall & Hartshorne ward from the District Council, the County Council and Mr Todd. We have therefore decided to confirm the ward boundaries for the Hartshorne area as put forward under our draft recommendations.

66 We received a representation from a local resident who opposed our proposals for part of this area, suggesting instead that the parishes of Barrow upon Trent, Stenson Fields, Swarkestone and Twyford & Stenson should form a two-member Barrow & Stenson Fields ward (with a modified Aston ward returning three councillors). She stated that this would "create a geographically cohesive ward" and that a Barrow & Stenson Fields ward would better reflect community identities compared to our draft recommendations. Under her proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the two-member ward would be within 10 per cent of the district average both initially and by 2002. The number of electors per councillor in the remaining Aston ward, however, would initially be 29 per cent below the average, projected to improve slightly to 17 per cent below by 2002. These proposals would therefore provide significantly higher levels of electoral inequality in this area by 2002 than our draft recommendations.

67 Given the support we have received for our proposals, and the reasonable levels of electoral equality which they provide by 2002, we are content to confirm them as final subject to a minor

modification. We support the proposal that the Ticknall & Hartshorne ward should be renamed Hartshorne & Ticknall given the distribution of the electorate in the ward. Details of the Stenson Fields Parish Council's proposal in relation to its parish council electoral arrangements are discussed at the end of this chapter.

Aston and Melbourne wards

68 These wards currently return two councillors each, with Aston ward comprising the parishes of Aston on Trent, Elvaston, Shardlow & Great Wilne, Swarkestone and Weston on Trent; and Melbourne ward comprising the parishes of Melbourne and Stanton by Bridge. The number of electors per councillor in Melbourne ward is currently 12 per cent above the district average (6 per cent by 2002), while Aston ward is currently 5 per cent above the district average, projected to be 22 per cent above by 2002. This is principally due to the extensive development forecast for the ward, particularly in Elvaston parish where the electorate is projected to increase by more than 700.

69 As our draft recommendations for this area, we proposed that Barrow upon Trent parish should be transferred from the neighbouring Ticknall ward into a revised Aston ward, and that Stanton by Bridge parish should be transferred from the Melbourne ward into a revised Repton ward (as detailed earlier). Due to the level of projected growth in this area, we proposed that the revised Aston ward should return three district councillors. The number of electors per councillor in the three-member Aston ward and two-member Melbourne ward would be 17 per cent below and 13 per cent above the district average respectively (6 per cent and 7 per cent by 2002).

70 At Stage Three we received representations from the District Council, the Conservative Group, Derbyshire County Council, Mark Todd MP and one local resident. The District Council supported our draft proposals for these wards and additionally proposed that Elvaston parish should be warded for parish council electoral purposes. The Conservative Group and the County Council also supported our draft proposals for these two wards. However Mr Todd opposed our proposals and alternatively put forward that the parishes of Elvaston and Shardlow & Great Wilne should form a single-member Derwent-side ward, and that the parishes of Aston upon Trent, Barrow upon Trent, Swarkestone and Weston upon Trent should form a two-member Trent-side ward.

71 Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Derwent-side ward would initially be 1 per cent above the district average, although it would be 34 per cent above by 2002 due to the projected growth principally in Elvaston parish. The number of electors per councillor in a Trent-side ward would be 23 per cent below the average initially, projected to be 22 per cent by 2002.

72 As discussed above, a local resident opposed our proposed Aston ward and instead proposed that the parishes of Barrow upon Trent and Swarkestone be included in a ward with Stenson Fields and Twyford & Stenson parishes to form a new two-member ward, with the remaining Aston ward continuing to be served by three councillors. She regarded our proposed Aston ward as being detrimental to local ties, principally due to its geographical size, stating that the parishes in the west of the ward have no links with those in the east. Under her proposals, the number of electors per councillor in a three-member Aston ward would initially be 29 per cent below the district average, projected to be 17 per cent by 2002. As mentioned earlier, the number of electors per councillor in a two-member Barrow & Stenson Fields ward would be 8 per cent above the district average (9 per cent by 2002).

73 Given the high levels of electoral inequality which would result from the schemes put forward by Mr Todd and the local resident, we have decided

not to adopt either as our final recommendations for this area. Our draft proposals provide reasonable levels of electoral equality by 2002 without, on our understanding, having a significant impact on local community identities and we therefore confirm them as final. The District Council's proposal that Elvaston parish should be warded at parish level is discussed at the end of this chapter.

Etwall, Hatton, Hilton, North West and Willington wards

74 The electoral variances, number of councillors and constituent parishes in these five wards are detailed in Figure 3.

75 This area is projected to account for nearly half of the total growth for the district, with an additional 2,300 electors forecast to be resident in the area by 2002. As part of our draft proposals, we proposed that this area as a whole should be served by two additional councillors and that each of the five wards should be modified. Our proposals were as follows:

- a revised two-member Etwall ward comprising the parishes of Bearwardcote, Burnaston, Egginton, Etwall and Radbourne, with the number of electors per councillor being 10 per cent below the district average (8 per cent by 2002);

*Figure 3:
Etwall, Hatton, Hilton, North West and Willington Wards*

Present ward	Number of councillors	Constituent parishes	Electoral variance %	
			1997	2002
Etwall	2	Ash, Burnaston, Etwall and Findern	9	9
Hatton	1	Hatton and Hoon	16	15
Hilton	1	Egginton, Hilton and Marston on Dove	36	110
North West	1	Barton Blount, Bearwardcote, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Osleston & Thurvaston, Radbourne, Sutton on the Hill and Trusley	-15	-16
Willington	1	Willington	16	14

- a new two-member Hatton & North West ward comprising the parishes of Ash, Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Hatton, Hoon, Osleston & Thurstaston, Sutton on the Hill and Trusley, with the number of electors per councillor being 5 per cent above the district average (3 per cent by 2002);
- a revised two-member Hilton ward comprising the parishes of Hilton and Marston on Dove, with the number of electors per councillor initially being 43 per cent below the district average. However, due to the projected electorate growth in the ward this would improve significantly to 3 per cent by 2002; and
- a new two-member Willington & Findern ward comprising the parishes of those names, with the number of electors per councillor being 4 per cent above the district average (equal to the average by 2002).

76 During Stage Three we received representations from the District Council, the Conservative Group, Derbyshire County Council, Etwall & District Branch Labour Party and Mark Todd MP. We also received submissions from the parish councils of Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Hatton and Sutton on the Hill. The District Council, the Conservative Group, Etwall & District Branch Labour Party and the six parish councils all opposed our proposal to create a two-member Hatton & North West ward, preferring that the ward should be split into two single-member wards. Each argued that Hatton parish has a significantly different identity to the parishes in the north-west of the district and that to include it in the same district ward as more 'rural' north-western parishes would be detrimental to local identities and interests.

77 The County Council supported our proposals, with the exception of those for a two-member Willington & Findern ward, where it preferred that our proposed ward be split into two single-member wards comprising the parishes of those names. It stated that our proposal "would lead to substantial complication and rearrangement" when the county divisions of Derbyshire are reviewed in the future. However, the number of electors per councillor in its two proposed wards would be 14 per cent below and 23 per cent above the district average respectively. Given the high level of electoral inequality which would result from this proposal, we are not adopting it as our final recommendation.

78 Mr Todd also opposed the two-member Hatton & North West ward, putting forward two alternative schemes for this area. His first proposal was an endorsement of the two single-member wards put forward by, among others, the District Council. The second involved a single-member Hatton ward and two-member Hilton ward being combined to form a new three-member ward. Hoon parish separates Hatton parish from Marston on Dove parish, and consequently Hoon would also be included in the three-member ward. Under his second proposal, the number of electors per councillor in the three-member Hatton & Hilton ward and single-member North West ward would be 21 per cent below and 3 per cent below the district average respectively (6 per cent and 4 per cent by 2002).

79 Mr Todd's proposal for a three-member Hatton & Hilton ward would provide better levels of electoral equality in Hatton by 2002 than under our draft proposals. However, we have received a number of representations in support of a single-member Hatton ward, comprising that part of Hatton which lies to the south of the A511 road, and we do not consider that the three-member ward would better reflect local community interests.

80 We acknowledge the arguments against our proposed two-member Hatton & North West ward, and the contention that two single-member wards for the area would better reflect local community identities. We have been persuaded that the part of Hatton parish which lies to the south of the A511 road has a distinct (more urban) identity to the northern part of the parish and the North West parishes. In view of this, we now propose that the majority of Hatton parish be represented by its own district councillor.

81 We acknowledge the views put to us by the Conservative Group in respect of the close ties that Ash parish has with the existing Etwall ward. We agree that, given the close geographical proximity that Ash village has with the town of Etwall, it would be a better reflection of local ties to retain the parish in Etwall district ward.

82 We therefore propose, as modifications to our draft recommendations for this area, a single-member Hatton ward comprising the proposed parish wards of Central, Heathway, Hoon, School, South and Yew Tree (of Hatton parish), and a single-member North West ward comprising the parishes

of Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Hoon, Osleston & Thurstaston, Sutton on the Hill and Trusley, together with the proposed North parish ward of Hatton parish. We also propose that Ash parish should be retained in Etwall ward, rather than be included in North West ward.

83 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the two-member Etwall, single-member Hatton, two-member Hilton, single-member North West and two-member Willington & Findern wards would be 9 per cent below, 13 per cent above, 43 per cent below, 6 per cent below and 4 per cent above the district average respectively (7 per cent, 12 per cent, 3 per cent, 7 per cent and equal to the average by 2002). Our proposed Hilton ward has a high level of electoral inequality initially, but due to the significant levels of growth in the ward over the next five years, this ward would have a good level of equality by 2002.

84 We acknowledge that our single-member Hatton ward would have relatively high level of electoral inequality both initially and in 2002. However we regard such an imbalance as being acceptable, given the evidence of local community identities. The ward would also have a clearly identifiable northern boundary. Details of the proposed parish warding arrangements for Hatton parish are detailed at the end of this chapter, and on Map A3 at Appendix A.

Electoral Cycle

85 In the initial stage of the review we did not receive any proposals for change to the District Council's electoral cycle. In our draft recommendations report, therefore, we proposed that the present system of whole-council elections in South Derbyshire be retained. At Stage Three no representations were received to the contrary, and we therefore confirm our draft recommendation as final.

Conclusions

86 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our draft recommendations report, we have decided substantially to endorse our initial proposals, subject to the following minor amendments:

- (a) in Swadlincote we propose minor boundary modifications between each of the four wards in order to better reflect community identities;
- (b) in the north-west of the district, we propose a single-member Hatton ward, comprising part of the parish of the same name, and a single-member North West ward comprising the remaining part of Hatton parish, Hoon parish and the parishes comprising the current North West ward with the exception of Bearwardcote and Radbourne parishes. Under our proposal, Ash parish would be retained in Etwall ward rather than be transferred into a ward with the parishes surrounding Hatton.

87 We conclude that, in South Derbyshire:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 34 to 36;
- (b) there should be 17 wards, two fewer than at present;
- (c) the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) whole-council elections should continue to be held every four years.

88 Figure 4 (overleaf) shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 and 2002 electorate figures.

89 As Figure 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 13 to six, with only one ward, Hilton, varying by more than 20 per cent from the district average. Due to projected development in the district, this level of electoral equality would improve further by 2002, by which time only one ward (Hatton) would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

South Derbyshire District Council should comprise 36 councillors serving 17 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2, Appendix A and the large map inserted at the back of this report. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

Figure 4:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1997 electorate		2002 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	34	36	34	36
Number of wards	19	17	19	17
Average number of electors per councillor	1,742	1,646	1,901	1,795
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	13	6	15	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	5	1	8	0

Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

90 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district.

91 At Stage Three the District Council proposed that Elvaston parish should be served by four additional parish councillors and be split into two parish wards, with each ward served by five parish councillors. The Council also included, as an appendix to its Stage Three submission, a representation from Elvaston Parish Council expressing its support for the increase in the size of the parish council and the proposed warding of the parish. The District Council put forward a proposed boundary between the two parish wards; however, neither the District Council nor the Parish Council put forward any names for the proposed wards.

92 We contacted the District Council and the Parish Council following the close of Stage Three regarding possible names for the two proposed parish wards. The District Council had no preference for particular names for the parish wards. We suggested to the Parish Council that the parish wards could be named Boulton Moor and Elvaston and it had no objection to this proposal.

93 We also conferred with the Parish Council regarding the proposed number of parish councillors to be returned from each parish ward. In its submission, the Parish Council stated that “the parish council has repeatedly tried to involve the residents of Boulton Moor in parish affairs but without success”. We therefore suggested that, given that the residents in this area have yet to take a full active role in parish affairs, a new Boulton Moor parish ward should instead be served by three parish councillors, rather than five. The overall number of parish councillors would therefore only be increased from six to nine.

94 We have decided on the following final recommendation.

Final Recommendation

Elvaston Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, rather than the present six, and be split into two parish wards: Boulton Moor and Elvaston, with the former parish ward served by three parish councillors and the latter served by six parish councillors. Details of the proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated on Map A2 at Appendix A.

95 Hatton Parish Council currently has 10 councillors and is unwarded. At Stage One, the Parish Council proposed that it be divided into seven new parish wards: Central, Heathway, Hoon, North, School, South and Yew Tree. Under its proposals, Central and School wards would be served by two councillors each and the remaining wards would each be served by a single councillor, representing a reduction in the size of the parish council of one.

96 The District Council endorsed the Parish Council's proposal. As our draft recommendations, we adopted the Parish Council's proposed parish warding arrangements, although we included the parish as a whole in a proposed two-member Hatton & North West district ward.

97 During Stage Three, Hatton Parish Council supported our proposed parish warding arrangements. By way of support for a single-member North West district ward, the District Council, the Conservative Group and others also supported the creation of parish wards in Hatton.

98 We therefore confirm as final our draft proposal that Hatton parish should be represented by one less parish councillor, bringing the total to nine, and should be split into seven parish wards. The new North parish ward would be included in the North West district ward, while the remaining six new parish wards would be included in the single-member Hatton district ward.

Final Recommendation

Hatton Parish Council should comprise nine parish councillors, one fewer than at present, representing seven parish wards: Central, Heathway, Hoon, North, School, South and Yew Tree. Central and School wards should return two parish councillors each, and the remaining five wards should return a single councillor each. North ward should be coterminous with that part of Hatton parish that lies within North West district ward. The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated on Map A3 in Appendix A.

99 During Stage Three, the Conservative Group proposed that Hartshorne parish should be warded for parish council electoral purposes, stating that "the parish of Hartshorne has developed into three distinct areas". It proposed that the parish should retain its existing level of representation, with a new Cathedrals parish ward being served by seven parish councillors, and new Goseley and Village parish wards each being served by four parish councillors.

100 As an appendix to its Stage One submission the District Council included a letter from Hartshorne Parish Council, which had written to the District Council as part of its own consultation. The Parish Council stated that "the current arrangements provide convenient and effective local government and it is [therefore] not appropriate to ward the parish". We would not wish to impose a parish warding arrangement on any parish without receiving the support of a number of local sources, including ideally the District Council and the Parish Council. Given that the Parish Council has expressed a preference for not being warded and that the District Council has not commented positively on the proposal, we have decided to reject the Conservative Group's proposals.

101 During Stage Three, Stenson Fields Parish Council proposed that the parish should be served by one additional parish councillor, increasing the

council from 10 members to 11. It stated that “at least one additional councillor is required for this parish due to the increasing number of electors”. Stenson Fields parish is projected to increase by 320 electors by 2002, and the current average number of electors per parish councillor in the parish is 290. We concur with the Parish Council that, given the projected increase in the size of the electorate over the next five years, an increase in the size of the parish council would be appropriate and we therefore endorse this proposal as our final recommendation.

Final Recommendation

Stenson Fields Parish Council should be served by 11 parish councillors, one more than at present.

¹⁰² In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district, and in the absence of any representations to the contrary we are confirming this as final.

Final Recommendation

For parish councils, whole-council elections should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that of the District Council.

Figure 5:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for South Derbyshire

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Aston	3	4,079	1,360	-17	5,077	1,692	-6
2 Church Gresley (Swadlincote)	2	3,440	1,720	5	3,733	1,867	4
3 Etwall	2	2,999	1,500	-9	3,357	1,679	-7
4 Hartshorne & Ticknall	2	3,586	1,793	9	3,699	1,850	3
5 Hatton	1	1,852	1,852	13	2,003	2,003	12
6 Hilton	2	1,879	940	-43	3,498	1,749	-3
7 Linton	2	3,723	1,862	13	3,774	1,887	5
8 Melbourne	2	3,733	1,867	13	3,850	1,925	7
9 Midway (Swadlincote)	3	5,359	1,786	9	5,686	1,895	6
10 Newhall & Stanton (Swadlincote)	3	5,208	1,736	5	5,268	1,756	-2
11 North West	1	1,545	1,545	-6	1,663	1,663	-7
12 Repton	2	3,246	1,623	-1	3,341	1,671	-7
13 Seales	2	3,802	1,901	16	3,909	1,955	9
14 Stenson	2	2,992	1,496	-9	3,324	1,662	-7
15 Swadlincote	3	5,220	1,740	6	5,467	1,822	2
16 Willington & Findern	2	3,433	1,717	4	3,584	1,792	0
17 Woodville	2	3,143	1,572	-4	3,394	1,697	-5
Totals	36	59,239	—	—	64,627	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,646	—	—	1,795	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on South Derbyshire District Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

6. NEXT STEPS

103 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in South Derbyshire and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

104 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

105 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Review
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for South Derbyshire: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for South Derbyshire.

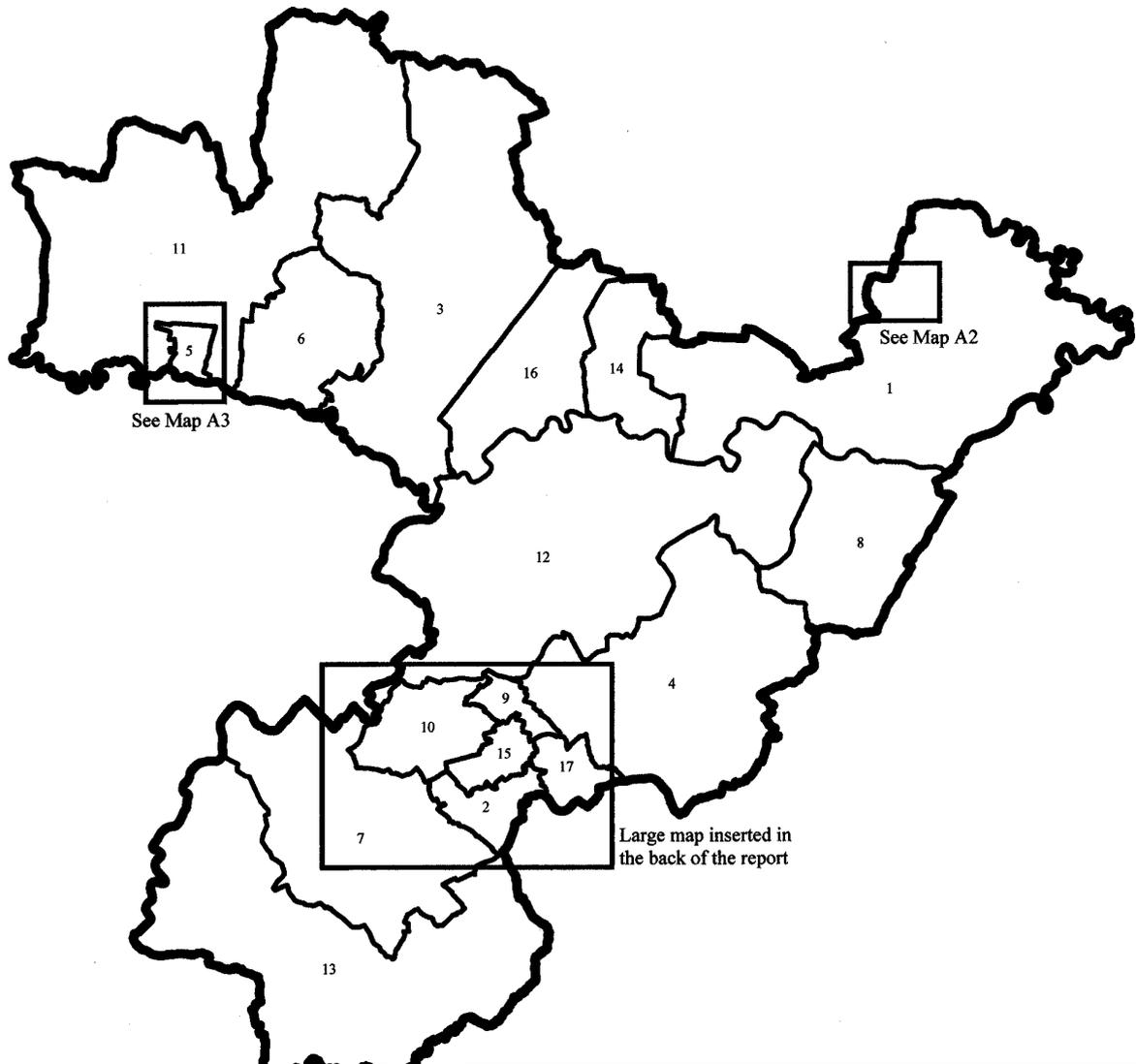
Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on Maps A2, A3 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed parish warding arrangements for Elvaston parish.

Map A3 illustrates the proposed parish warding arrangements for Hatton parish.

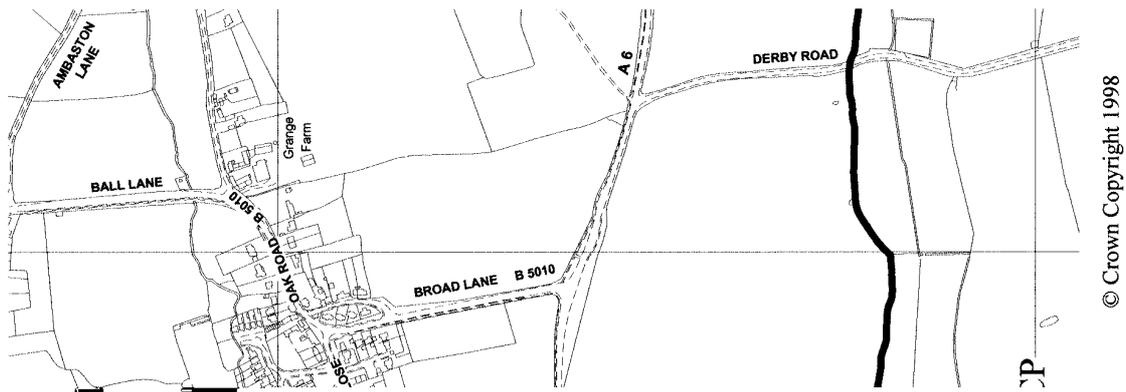
The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the Commission's proposed warding arrangements for the Swadlincote area.

Map A1:
Final Recommendations for South Derbyshire: Key Map

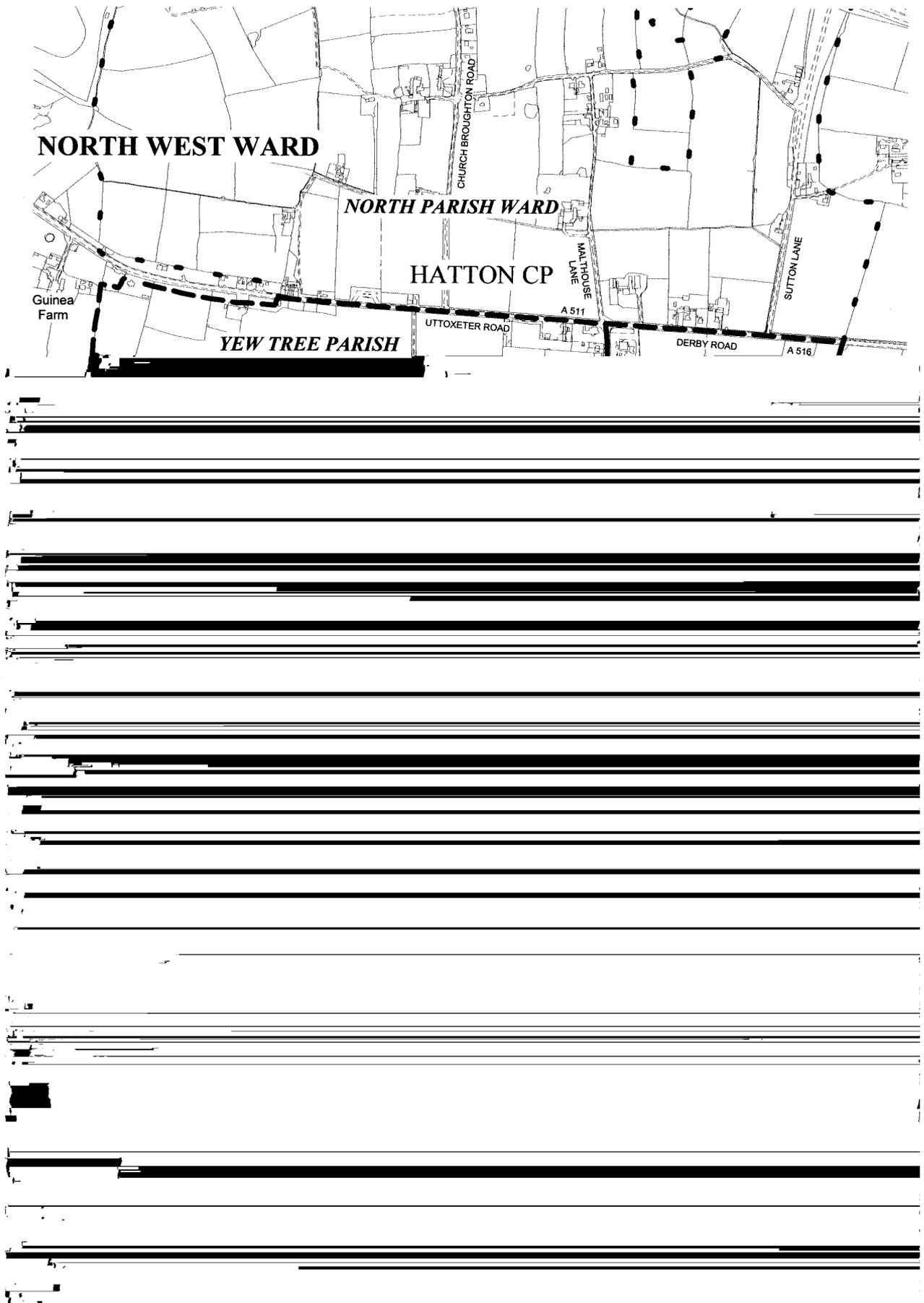


- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Aston | 7 Linton | 13 Seales |
| 2 Church Gresley | 8 Melbourne | 14 Stenson |
| 3 Etwall | 9 Midway | 15 Swadlincote |
| 4 Hartshorne and Ticknall | 10 Newhall and Stanton | 16 Willington and Findern |
| 5 Hatton | 11 North West | 17 Woodville |
| 6 Hilton | 12 Repton | |

Map A2:
Proposed Parish Warding Arrangements for Elvaston Parish



Map A3:
Proposed Parish Warding Arrangements for Hatton Parish



APPENDIX B

Draft Recommendations for South Derbyshire

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 5, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations only in respect of the following wards, where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other change from draft to final recommendations, which is not included in Figures B1 and B2, is that we propose to rename Ticknall & Hartshorne ward as Hartshorne & Ticknall.

Figure B1:

The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Church Gresley* (Swadlincote)	Gresley ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)
Hatton & North West	Etwall ward (part – the parish of Ash); Hatton ward (the parishes of Hatton and Hoon); North West ward (part – the parishes of Barton Blount, Church Broughton, Dalbury Lees, Foston & Scropton, Osleston & Thurvaston, Sutton on the Hill and Trusley)
Midway* (Swadlincote)	Midway ward (part); Newhall (ward); Swadlincote ward (part)
Newhall & Stanton* (Swadlincote)	Gresley ward (part); Midway ward (part); Newhall ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)
Swadlincote	Gresley ward (part); Newhall ward (part); Swadlincote ward (part)

* Although some of the constituent areas appear to be the same as under our final recommendations, in fact our final recommendations propose that smaller/larger parts of certain wards should be transferred into these proposed wards.

Figure B2:

The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Church Gresley (Swadlincote)	2	3,440	1,720	5	3,733	1,867	4
Hatton & North West	2	3,440	1,720	5	3,713	1,857	3
Midway (Swadlincote)	3	5,325	1,775	8	5,652	1,884	5
Newhall & Stanton (Swadlincote)	3	5,231	1,744	6	5,291	1,764	-2
Swadlincote	3	5,231	1,744	6	5,478	1,826	2

Source: Electorate figures are based on South Derbyshire District Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

