

# Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Corby in Northamptonshire

Further electoral review

*May 2005*

## **Translations and other formats**

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# What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. It is responsible for conducting electoral reviews as directed by The Electoral Commission or the Secretary of State.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)  
Robin Gray  
Joan Jones CBE  
Ann M. Kelly CBE  
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

When conducting reviews our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish councils.



# Executive summary

The Boundary Committee for England (the Boundary Committee) is responsible for conducting electoral reviews as directed by The Electoral Commission or the Secretary of State. As a result of the poor levels of electoral equality in Corby under the existing arrangements, The Electoral Commission directed The Boundary Committee to review the electoral arrangements of the borough on 2 June 2004. The broad objective of this electoral review is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole.

## Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements five wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the borough average. The development that the Borough Council forecast during the last review for the five-year period that occurred between 1996 and 2001 was largely not realised. Currently, in Hillside ward, more development was undertaken than expected which has resulted in it having a particularly poor variance, with 50% more electors than the borough average.

The table below outlines the four stages of this review.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Stage starts</b>	<b>Description</b>
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	16 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	17 May 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	9 August 2005	Final deliberation prior to our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission

## Submissions received

During Stage One we received three relevant submissions. The Borough Council proposed a borough-wide scheme based on the existing council size. A residents association proposed a ward in the centre of Corby and a local resident proposed warding arrangements in the south of the town.

## Analysis and draft recommendations

### Electorate figures

The ambitious growth and regeneration plans that Corby has in place which aim to double the population of the borough by the year 2030 have already begun. Across the borough the council has forecast a 15% increase in electorate between 2003 and 2008, the majority of which will be in the existing Hillside ward and in Stanion parish. This is a much higher increase in electorate than has been forecast in other districts that have been reviewed by the Boundary Committee or the Local Government Commission for England. However, we are satisfied that the Borough Council has

provided sufficient information in support of the proposed increase in electorate and we have used its figures when making our recommendations. Initially, many of the wards we have recommended will have poor electoral variances. However, our aim is to provide improved electoral equality over a five-year period and as the level of electoral equality that will be achieved by 2008 is good we are satisfied that the increase in electorate will ensure improved levels of electoral equality over time.

## Council size

During Stage One we received one submission relating to council size from the Borough Council which was to retain the existing council size of 29 members. As part of our recommendations we propose to retain this council size.

## General analysis

We are proposing recommendations largely based on the Borough Council's proposals. In the rural areas surrounding the town we have proposed wards that the council had considered when forming proposals but which it did not eventually submit to us. In the north of the town we have made some amendments to the council's proposals to improve the level of electoral equality in the area. In the centre of the town we have proposed three of our own wards. We are recommending 14 wards in the borough; two single-member wards, nine two-member wards and three three-member wards.

## What happens next?

There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Corby contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 8 August 2005. Any received **after** this date may not be taken into account.

We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Corby and welcome comments from interested parties. We would particularly welcome local views, backed up by demonstrable evidence, during Stage Three. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Review Manager  
Corby Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

**Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary**

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Central	2	Part of Central ward
2 Beanfield	2	Part of Hazelwood ward; part of West ward
3 Danesholme	2	Part of Danesholme ward
4 East	3	Part of Central ward; part of East ward; part of Lloyds ward
5 Great Oakley	1	Part of Danesholme ward; part of Hillside ward
6 Kingswood	3	Part of Hazelwood ward; part of Kingswood ward
7 Lloyds	2	Part of Lloyds ward; part of Lodge Park ward; part of Shire Lodge ward
8 Lodge Park	2	Part of Lodge Park ward
9 Oakley Vale	3	Part of Hillside ward
10 Rural West	1	Rural West ward; part of Rural North ward (the parish of Rockingham); part of West ward
11 Shire Lodge	2	Part of Shire Lodge ward; part of Lodge Park ward
12 Stanion & Corby Village	2	Part of Rural East ward (the parish of Stanion); part of East ward
13 Tower Hill	2	Part of Hazelwood ward; part of Kingswood ward; part of West ward
14 Weldon & Gretton	2	Part of East ward; part of Rural East ward (the parish of Weldon); part of Rural North ward (the parish of Gretton)

**Notes:**

1. The borough comprises seven parishes and the unparished Corby town.
2. The maps accompanying this report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.
3. We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.

**Table 2: Draft recommendations for Corby borough – 2003 electorate**

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2003)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
1 Central	2	3,192	1,596	16
2 Beanfield	2	2,955	1,478	7
3 Danesholme	2	3,185	1,593	15
4 East	3	4,590	1,530	11
5 Great Oakley	1	1,569	1,569	14
6 Kingswood	3	4,578	1,526	11
7 Lloyds	2	3,168	1,584	15
8 Lodge Park	2	3,135	1,569	14
9 Oakley Vale	3	1,947	649	-53
10 Rural West	1	1,374	1,374	0
11 Shire Lodge	2	3,031	1,516	10
12 Stanion & Corby Village	2	1,803	902	-35
13 Tower Hill	2	3,010	1,505	9
14 Weldon & Gretton	2	2,492	1,246	-10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>40,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,380</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 2 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Corby borough – 2008 electorate**

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2008)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
1 Central	2	3,266	1,633	3
2 Beanfield	2	3,042	1,521	-4
3 Danesholme	2	3,206	1,603	1
4 East	3	4,596	1,532	-4
5 Great Oakley	1	1,580	1,580	-1
6 Kingswood	3	5,031	1,677	6
7 Lloyds	2	3,180	1,590	0
8 Lodge Park	2	3,137	1,569	-1
9 Oakley Vale	3	4,963	1,654	4
10 Rural West	1	1,438	1,438	-10
11 Shire Lodge	2	3,238	1,619	2
12 Stanion & Corby Village	2	2,840	1,420	-11
13 Tower Hill	2	3,030	1,515	-5
14 Weldon & Gretton	2	3,539	1,770	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46,086</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Corby Borough Council.

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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



# 1 Introduction

1 This report contains our draft proposals for the electoral arrangements for the borough of Corby, on which we are now consulting.

2 At its meeting on 12 February 2004 The Electoral Commission agreed that The Boundary Committee should make on-going assessments of electoral variances in all local authorities where the five-year forecast period following a Periodic Electoral Review (PER) has elapsed. It was agreed that the criteria for deciding which authorities should be investigated were that either;

- 30% of wards in an authority had electoral variances of over 10% from the average; or
- any single ward had a variance of more than 30% from the average.

3 The intention of the research was to establish the reasons behind the continuing imbalances and assess what action, if any, was appropriate to rectify the situation.

4 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Corby. Corby's last review was carried out by the Local Government Commission for England (LGCE), which reported to the Secretary of State in March 1997. An electoral change Order implementing the new electoral arrangements was made on 8 October 1998 and the first elections under the new arrangements took place on 6 May 1999.

5 In carrying out these reviews we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3962), i.e. the need to:
  - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
  - secure effective and convenient local government; and
  - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

6 Details of the legislation under which the review of Corby is being conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and procedural advice for periodic electoral reviews* (published by the EC in July 2002). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

7 Our task is to make recommendations to The Electoral Commission on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish councils in the borough.

8 The broad objective of an electoral review is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

9 Electoral equality, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. When electoral imbalances arise across an area, or between individual wards, that principle can become eroded if the imbalances are left uncorrected. Accordingly, the objective of an electoral review is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor is, as near as is possible, the same across a district. In practice, providing that each councillor represents exactly the same number of electors is unachievable given geographic and other constraints, including the make up and distribution of communities. However, our aim in any review is to recommend wards that are as close to the district average as possible in terms of the number of electors per councillor, while also taking account of evidence in relation to community identity and effective and convenient local government.

10 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or the retention of the existing size, should be supported by strong evidence and arguments. The Electoral Commission's *Guidance* to the Committee on this subject is quite clear. It is of paramount importance that any council size proposed to us has been developed and can be argued in the context of the authority's internal political management structures, put in place following the Local Government Act 2000. It should also reflect the changing role of councillors in the new structure. As intimated in its *Guidance*, The Electoral Commission does not allow for the decision on council size to be based purely on addressing any imbalances in small areas of the authority by simply adding or removing councillors from these areas. While we will consider the factor of achieving the correct allocation of councillors between, say, a number of towns in an authority or between rural and urban areas, our starting point must always be ensuring that the authority's political management arrangements are best employed under the recommended council size, and that this can be shown to be so.

11 In addition, we do not accept that an increase or decrease in the electorate of the authority should automatically result in a consequent increase or decrease in the number of councillors. Similarly, we do not accept that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of neighbouring or similarly sized authorities. We will seek to ensure that our recommended council size best allows the political management structures to be employed most effectively, achieves a good allocation of councillors across the district.

12 Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

13 The review is in four stages (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Stages of the review**

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	16 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	17 May 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	9 August 2005	Final deliberation prior to our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission

14 Stage One began on 3 August 2004, when we wrote to Corby Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Northamptonshire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Northamptonshire Local Councils Association, parish councils in the borough, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, Members of the European Parliament for the East Midlands Region and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Corby Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 15 November 2004.

15 During Stage Two we considered all the submissions received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 17 May 2005 and will end on 8 August 2005, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

17 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to modify them, and submit final recommendations to The Electoral Commission. It will then be for the Commission to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If The Electoral Commission accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, it will make an Order. The Electoral Commission will determine when any changes come into effect.

## Equal Opportunities

18 In preparing this report The Boundary Committee has had regard to:

- The general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1996 and the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
  - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
  - promote equality of opportunity; and
  - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

## National Parks, AONBs and the Broads

19 The Boundary Committee has also had regard to:

- Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as inserted by section 62 of the Environment Act 1995). This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in a National Park, any relevant authority shall have regard to the Park's purposes. If there is a conflict between those purposes, a relevant authority shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park;
- Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of the AONB; and
- Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act (as inserted by section 97 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the Broads, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purposes of the Broads.

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

20 The borough of Corby comprises the unparished town of Corby which is surrounded by seven parishes. The council has ambitious regeneration plans for the borough and by 2030 aims to approximately double its existing population to 100,000.

21 The electorate of the borough is 40,029 (December 2003). The Council presently has 29 members who are elected from 13 wards. Six wards are represented by three members, four by two members and three by a single member. All but three of the wards are predominantly urban. The borough contains seven parishes, but Corby town itself is unparished and comprises 88% of the borough's total electorate.

22 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 borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'. We may also refer to a ward having more electors than the borough average or fewer electors than the borough average.

23 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,380 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,589 by the year 2008 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, overestimations of electorate growth during the last electoral review and uneven growth across the borough has resulted in the number of electors per councillor in five of the 13 wards varying by more than 10% from the borough average. Two wards vary by more than 20% and in Hillside ward the councillor represents 50% more electors than the borough average. If the existing arrangements remained, 10 wards would be expected to have an electoral variance of over 10% by 2008. Hillside ward would be expected to have 220% more electors than the borough average by 2008. Therefore, having considered these levels of electoral inequality which are forecast to worsen over time across the whole borough, The Electoral Commission directed The Boundary Committee to undertake a review of the electoral arrangements of Corby Borough Council at its meeting on 2 June 2004.

**Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements in Corby borough – 2003 electorate**

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2003)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
1 Central	3	3,770	1,257	-9
2 Danesholme	3	4,635	1,545	12
3 East	2	2,524	1,262	-9
4 Hazelwood	3	4,068	1,356	-2
5 Hillside	1	2,066	2,066	50
6 Kingswood	3	3,800	1,267	-8
7 Lloyds	3	4,790	1,597	16
8 Lodge Park	3	4,153	1,384	0
9 Rural East	2	2,235	1,118	-19
10 Rural North	1	1,095	1,095	-21
11 Rural West	1	1,279	1,279	-7
12 Shire Lodge	2	2,935	1,468	6
13 West	2	2,679	1,340	-3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>40,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,380</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 4 (cont.) : Existing electoral arrangements in Corby borough  
– 2008 electorate**

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2008)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
1 Central	3	3,818	1,273	-20
2 Danesholme	3	4,667	1,556	-2
3 East	2	2,556	1,278	-20
4 Hazelwood	3	4,150	1,383	-13
5 Hillside	1	5,082	5,082	220
6 Kingswood	3	4,242	1,414	-11
7 Lloyds	3	4,805	1,602	1
8 Lodge Park	3	4,253	1,418	-11
9 Rural East	2	4,182	2,091	32
10 Rural North	1	1,227	1,227	-23
11 Rural West	1	1,332	1,332	-16
12 Shire Lodge	2	3,057	1,529	-4
13 West	2	2,715	1,358	-15
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46,086</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Corby Borough Council.

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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2003, electors in Rural North ward were relatively over-represented by 21%, while electors in Hillside ward were significantly under-represented by 50%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 Submissions received

24 At the start of the review members of the public and other interested parties were invited to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Corby Borough Council and its constituent parish councils.

25 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Boundary Committee visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received four representations during Stage One, including a borough-wide scheme from the Borough Council, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council.

#### Corby Borough Council

26 The Borough Council proposed retaining a council with 29 members serving 13 wards. It proposed 11 unparished wards and two wards comprising mostly parished areas. It also proposed to reduce the number of parish councillors in six of the seven parishes.

#### Other representations

27 A further two representations were received. Exeter Tenants' and Residents Association proposed a single-member ward in the centre of Corby town and a local resident proposed a ward in the south of the town.

28 We also received a representation from Middleton Parish Council regarding amending an external administrative parish boundary. We are not able to consider external parish boundaries as part of this review and have therefore been unable to take this representation into consideration.



## 4 Analysis and draft recommendations

**29 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Corby and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, ward names, and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.**

30 As described earlier, the prime aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Corby is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended):

- the need to secure effective and convenient local government;
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation).

31 Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being ‘as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough’. In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place over the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

32 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which results in 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.

33 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for an authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be considered and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

34 The recommendations do not affect county, district or parish external boundaries, local taxes, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that these recommendations will have an adverse effect on house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

## Electorate figures

35 Since the start of the previous electoral review of Corby in 1996 and December 2003 there has been a 2% increase in the electorate of the borough. This growth is expected to continue as part of the ambitious plans for growth and development across the borough which aims to approximately double the borough's population to 100,000 by 2030. Some of this growth is expected to be completed by 2008. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 15% from 40,029 to 46,086 over the five-year period from 2003 to 2008. It expects most of the growth to be in the existing Hillside ward in the unparished south of the town, although growth is also forecast in Stanion parish and also in the existing Kingswood ward.

36 This increase in electorate over the five-year period is higher than average for a borough of Corby's size and we note that as part of our recommendations we are proposing wards with electoral variances, which in some cases initially have worse levels of electoral equality than the existing arrangements. However, we aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over the five-year period between 2003 and 2008 and are therefore satisfied that the improvement in electoral equality over time justifies the initially poor electoral variances. The council stated that it had 'taken a 'conservative' approach ... not wishing to overstate the projected increase in population'.

37 During Stage Two, the council provided updated forecast figures for Kingswood and Hazelwood wards. Stating that these figures had initially been incorrectly calculated council officers provided a revised total electorate of 46,086 for 2008, an increase of 347 electors. The revised figures resulted in the electoral variances of Kingswood and Hazelwood wards worsening in 2008. Under the council's original figures, its proposed Hazelwood ward would have 7% more electors than the borough average. As a result of the figures being revised, the same ward would have 20% more electors than the borough average by 2008. The impact on the council's proposed Kingswood ward would be less significant. Under the council's original figures the ward would have 4% fewer electors than the borough average but under the new figures this would worsen to 8% fewer electors than the borough average.

38 We are satisfied that the revised figures should be used when forming our recommendations. However, as a consequence of the resultant poor levels of electoral equality, most notably in Hazelwood ward, we have proposed three of our own wards in the area. We did not consider that we would be able to improve the level of electoral equality in the Hazelwood and Kingswood wards without making substantial changes to both them and the council's proposed West ward. Therefore, we have not been constrained by the proposals of the council and have proposed three new wards, Beanfield, Kingswood and Tower Hill, which we consider have a combination of strong boundaries and good levels of electoral equality.

39 In order to prepare these forecasts, the council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to development plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

40 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the Borough Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. However, we welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during Stage Three.

## Council size

41 Corby Borough Council presently has 29 members. The Borough Council proposed retaining this council size and we received no other submissions in relation to council size.

42 In its initial submission the Borough Council provided some information regarding the political management structure of the council. It continues to operate a committee decision-making structure and noted that 'whilst the number of policy committees operated by the council has reduced following the application of the 2000 Act, the introduction of overview & scrutiny panels, local Standards Committee, etc still entails a requirement for councillor attendance at formal meetings'. It also noted that 'there are a number of advisory forums, and in-house groups that have been established to assist with the consultative/decision making process'. It provided some information regarding the commitment and duties of a councillor, including their attendance at council meetings, representational role and representation on outside bodies, as well as the civic and ceremonial duties of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

43 However, we did not consider that this provided sufficient discussion of the ways in which the proposed council size would secure effective and convenient local government. Therefore we requested further evidence in support of a council size of 29. We received further information from the council which considered the increase in the electorate of the council size alongside the 'additional duties and responsibilities being placed on local government by Government'. It detailed how councillors 'are encouraged, in line with the Government's desire for local councillors to undertake a greater community leadership role, to attend tenants & residents groups, parish meetings, etc to ensure that the views of local communities can be registered and reported to the Council's decision-making structure'.

44 It also considered the overview and scrutiny function which has 'entailed the need to develop new ways of working for councillors' and detailed member commitments. It did note, however, that the council 'felt that it was inappropriate at this time to propose an increase in council size'.

45 We agree that it would be inappropriate at this time to propose an increase in council size despite the increasing pressure on councillors, which the council describes in its further evidence. We acknowledge that the council is keen to take a cautious approach regarding the issue of council size given the nature of the growth over the next 25 years. We consider that it would be appropriate for the Borough Council to monitor the issue of council size ahead of the next review, particularly given the likely long-term increase in the electorate.

46 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 29 members.

## Electoral equality

47 As stated in paragraph 9, electoral equality, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. The Commission expects the Boundary Committee's recommendations to provide for high levels of electoral equality, with variances normally well below 10%. Therefore, when making recommendations we will not simply aim for electoral variances of under 10%. Where no justification is provided for specific ward proposals we will look to improve electoral equality seeking a number of electors per councillor as close to the district average as possible. It is the Committee's aim to reduce all levels of under or over-representation providing this can be achieved without compromising the reflection of the identities and interests of local communities and securing effective and convenient local government. We take the view that any proposals that would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalances of over 10% from the average in any ward will have to be fully justified, and evidence provided which would justify such imbalances in terms of community identity or effective and convenient local government. We will rarely recommend wards with electoral variances of 20% or more, and any proposed by local interested parties will require the strongest justification in terms of the other two statutory criteria.

## General analysis

48 We are proposing recommendations largely based on the Borough Council's proposals. We are recommending 14 wards in the borough; two single-member wards, nine two-member wards and three three-member wards. In the rural areas surrounding the town we have proposed three wards that the council had considered when forming proposals but which it did not eventually submit to us. We consider these wards provide a satisfactory level of electoral equality when considered in light of all of the statutory criteria. The remainder of the borough, to the west of the railway line we have combined in wholly urban wards. In the north of the town we have made some amendments to the council's proposals to improve the level of electoral equality in the area. In the centre of the town we have proposed three of our own wards where we considered the revised figures that the council provided resulted in the council's proposed wards having such poor levels of electoral equality that we could not simply amend the warding arrangement it had proposed. In the south of the town we have adopted the council's proposals in full. We do not propose to re-ward any of the parishes at this time. We do not propose to revise the electoral arrangements of any of the parishes in Corby at this time.

## Warding arrangements

49 For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a. Rural East, Rural North and Rural West wards (page 27)
- b. Central, East, Lloyds, Lodge Park and Shire Lodge wards (page 29)
- c. Hazelwood, Kingswood and West wards (page 30)
- d. Danesholme and Hillside wards (page 32)

Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 on pages 9–11, and are illustrated on the maps accompanying this report.

## Rural East, Rural North and Rural West wards

50 Under the existing arrangements Rural East ward comprises the parishes of Stanion and Weldon, Rural North ward comprises the parishes of Gretton and Rockingham and Rural West ward comprises the parishes of Cottingham, East Carlton and Middleton. Table 4 outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and also the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008 if the existing arrangements were to remain in place.

51 We received only one submission in relation to this area during Stage One, which was from the Borough Council. The council proposed that the parishes in this area are contained within just two wards. It proposed a three-member Weldon & Stanion ward comprising the parishes of Stanion and Weldon, together with Willowbrook and Weldon North industrial estates from the existing East ward which have no electors. It also proposed a two-member Welland Valley ward comprising the parishes of Cottingham, East Carlton, Gretton, Middleton and Rockingham, along with two properties from the existing unparished West ward. Transferring these two properties would enable Uppingham Road to be used as a strong boundary between the town and surrounding rural areas.

52 The Borough Council's proposals in this area would provide poor levels of electoral equality. Weldon & Stanion and Welland Valley wards would initially have 46% and 14% fewer electors than the borough average respectively. By 2008 the wards would have 12% and 19% fewer electors than the borough average respectively.

53 We note the difficulties in forming wards in the rural areas of Corby which provide a good level of electoral equality but which do not combine urban and rural areas in the same ward. We note that the council's proposed Weldon & Stanion and Welland Valley wards are wholly parished (with the exception of the industrial estates in the Welland & Stanion ward which do not contain any electors and the two properties in the Welland Valley ward from the existing West ward). However, the electoral equality in both of these proposed wards is forecast to be very poor by 2008 and the Borough Council has not provided any evidence to justify adopting wards with such electoral inequality. We therefore considered alternatives to the council's proposals.

54 We looked at improving the over-representation in the council's proposed Welland Valley ward by transferring electors from the unparished town into it. However, Uppingham Road separates the parishes from the built up area of the town. We consider this road provides a strong boundary dividing the rural parishes from the unparished town and should not be breached. We also note that the size of the parishes mean that forming wards comprising only parishes result in wards with poor levels of electoral equality. We consider that in order to avoid this it is necessary to combine some parishes with part of the unparished area of the borough.

55 We considered other alternative patterns of warding in the parished parts of the borough, including the scheme that the Borough Council had formed when considering what recommendations to make to us. This 'Option One' scheme provided a different warding arrangement in the parished areas of the borough, with a better level of electoral equality than the scheme the council actually proposed. It outlined three wards in the rural areas; a single-member Rural West ward comprising the parishes of Cottingham, East Carlton, Middleton and Rockingham, a two-member Stanion & Corby

Village ward comprising Stanion parish and an unparished area to the east of the railway line from the existing East ward. It also outlined a two-member Weldon & Gretton ward comprising the parishes of Gretton and Weldon and the Willowbrook East and Weldon North industrial estates from the existing East ward. The remainder of the existing East ward would form a revised East ward, all of which would be unparished and to the west of the railway line as discussed in the next section.

56 This pattern of warding would mean that most of the parishes would be contained in predominantly rural wards. The exception is Stanion & Corby Village ward. In the east of the town the railway line is used as the western boundary of both Weldon & Gretton and Stanion & Corby Village wards. This railway line separates most of the town from the parished areas of the borough. The only unparished area containing any electors in this scheme not to the west of the railway line would be that outlined in the Stanion & Corby Village ward.

57 Under this scheme Stanion & Corby Village and Weldon & Gretton wards would initially have 35% and 10% fewer electors than the borough average, respectively. By 2008 they would have 11% fewer and 11% more electors, respectively. Rural West ward would initially have less than 1% more electors than the borough average, with 10% fewer electors than the borough average by 2008.

58 We note that the Borough Council did not actually propose this scheme and there is no evidence of community identity in support of these wards. However, we received no evidence from any respondents regarding where the community of interest in this area is. We recognise that the location and arrangement of parishes along the edge of the borough makes it difficult to form wards with good electoral equality without dividing parishes between wards and consider that these proposals provide a balance between attaining a good level of electoral equality while avoiding combining urban and rural areas in the same ward, where possible.

59 We note that Weldon and Gretton parishes outlined in the Weldon & Gretton ward are only directly linked through the unparished industrial estate on the outskirts of the town, which would also be in this ward. However, there is a link between the parishes along Gretton Road which we consider provides a practical alternative route in the area, although we acknowledge that it does necessitate leaving the borough briefly through East Northamptonshire district. Similarly, the parish of Stanion and the unparished area in the Stanion & Corby Village ward are not directly linked and it is necessary to go through the Weldon & Gretton ward. However, we consider that it is necessary to link some unparished areas with at least one parish and consider that the growing Stanion parish is similar to this unparished area and would be better placed with it than other parishes. We acknowledge that Weldon parish is also forecast to see similar amounts of growth by 2008 but note that because Stanion parish is on the edge of the borough it can only be linked with either Weldon parish or an unparished area, whereas Weldon can be linked with other rural parishes whilst providing an acceptable level of electoral equality. We note that by linking Stanion with an unparished area we are able to recommend wards with a better level of electoral equality than the council's scheme in the parished areas of the borough.

60 Although we recognise that the electoral equality in these wards is not as good as our recommendations in other parts of the borough we consider that these wards provide the best option in the area, providing acceptable levels of electoral equality

whilst limiting the number of wards with urban and rural mixes. In light of the improvement to the level of electoral equality in the wards, we are proposing these three locally generated wards, outlined in paragraph 56, with one amendment to the Rural West ward. We propose to transfer the two properties from the existing West ward into the Rural West ward, linking them with the rural parishes, as proposed in the council's Rural West ward, in order to use the length of Uppingham Road as a strong boundary.

61 Tables 1 and 2 on pages 9–11 provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our draft recommendations for Rural West, Stanion & Corby Village and Weldon & Gretton wards.

## Central, East, Lloyds, Lodge Park and Shire Lodge wards

62 Under the existing arrangements each of these wards is wholly unparished. Table 4 outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and also the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008 if the existing arrangements were to remain in place.

63 We received two submissions in relation to this area during Stage One. The Borough Council proposed five revised wards of the same name. It proposed a two-member Central ward comprising an area to the north of Westcott Way, including the residential buildings surrounding the civic centre, Elizabeth Street and stretching out to the east as far as the railway line. Its proposed Central ward would also comprise the Exeter Estate, south of Oakley Road. Its proposed two-member Lodge Park ward would be west of Central ward and bound to the south and west by Cottingham Road and Uppingham Road, respectively. Its proposed two-member Shire Lodge ward would be to the north of Lodge Park and would comprise the area to the north and west of Willow Brook Road, east of Uppingham Road. Its northern boundary would be contiguous with Rockingham and Gretton parishes boundaries. It would also comprise Earlstree Industrial Estate. The Borough Council's proposed two-member Lloyds ward would comprise the area to the east and south of Willow Brook Road and west of Studfall Avenue, including Thoroughsale Wood. Its proposed three-member East ward would comprise an area east of Studfall Avenue and north of Cottingham Road plus the existing 'East 2' polling district east of the railway line.

64 Central, East, Lloyds, Lodge Park and Shire Lodge wards would initially have 16%, 28%, 23%, 14% and 14% more electors than the borough average, respectively. By 2008 they would have 3% more, 12% more, 7% more, 1% fewer and 6% more. The Borough Council did not provide any evidence or argument in support of each of its proposed wards in this area.

65 The Exeter Tenants' and Residents Association proposed a single-member Central ward, based on the boundaries of an existing polling district. It did not provide any evidence in support of its proposals but noted that a single-member ward in this area 'would be more beneficial for all of the residents of the estate' and that 'a solely elected councillor for the estate would better 'champion' their interests'. This single-member ward would initially have 8% more electors than the borough average and by 2008 would have 5% fewer electors than the borough average.

66 We note that the Borough Council's proposals throughout this area provide a relatively good level of electoral equality and we propose to base our draft

recommendations on them. However, our proposals in the rural areas of the borough have a knock-on effect to the council's proposed East ward: The electors that the council proposed be in its East ward, (those that are east of the railway line) have been transferred to a Weldon & Stanion ward. This results in the rest of the East ward that the Borough Council proposed having 11% fewer electors than the borough average by 2008. In order to improve the level of electoral equality in East ward we have made a number of relatively minor amendments to the council's proposal. In doing this we have also improved the level of electoral equality in the council's proposed Shire Lodge and Lloyds wards.

67 We propose transferring electors from the council's proposed Shire Lodge ward into the proposed Lloyds ward which will result in Shire Lodge ward having 2% more electors than the borough average by 2008. We propose to transfer the houses to the north and west of Willow Brook Road (evenly numbered houses from 2 to 196) from Shire Lodge ward to Lloyds ward. We also propose to transfer electors to the west of Studfall Avenue, including those electors in Clydesdale Road, Borrowdale Road, Darley Dale Road and Dale Street from Lloyds ward into the proposed East ward. We propose to adopt the Borough Council's proposed Central and Lodge Park wards in their entirety as they provide good levels of electoral equality. Having visited the area we are satisfied that the amendments that we have made will not adversely affect the reflection of community identity and justify the improved level of electoral equality that they provide.

68 We consider that Central ward proposed by the Residents Association has relatively strong boundaries and a good level of electoral equality. However, given the lack of evidence from the Exeter Tenants' and Residents Association we do not propose to adopt it, as the Borough Council proposed a Central ward with a slightly improved level of electoral equality with just 3% more electors than the borough average by 2008. We do however welcome further evidence of community identity in this area during Stage Three.

69 Tables 1 and 2 on pages 9–11 provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our draft recommendations for Central, East, Lloyds, Lodge Park and Shire Lodge wards

## Hazelwood, Kingswood and West wards

70 Under the existing arrangements each of these wards is wholly unparished. Table 4 outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and also the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008 if the existing arrangements were to remain in place.

71 We received one submission in relation to this area during Stage One, which was from the Borough Council. The council proposed three revised wards of the same name in this area, which is south of Cottingham Road and Westcott Way in the town. It proposed a two-member Hazelwood ward in the area south of Westcott Way, north of Oakley Road and east of Beanfield Avenue. To the south of this ward it proposed a three-member Kingswood ward, north west of Oakley Road and south west of Sower Leys Road. The council's proposed Hazelwood ward's western boundary would be the same as the existing West ward's eastern boundary. The council proposed a West ward based on the boundaries of the existing West ward but including the area around Coldermeadow Avenue from the existing Kingswood ward.

72 The Borough Council did not provide any evidence or argument in support of each of its proposed wards in this area. As noted previously, an error in calculating the 2008 figures resulted in the council providing new figures for the Hazelwood and Kingswood wards. As a result of the revised electorate figures for 2008 the electoral variances for Hazelwood and Kingswood ward worsened. Under the revised figures Hazelwood, Kingswood and West wards would initially have 20%, 5% and 4% more electors than the borough average respectively. By 2008 they would have 20% more, 8% fewer and 8% fewer electors respectively.

73 In this area we consider that the levels of electoral inequality resulting from the revised figures are so poor that it would not be possible to simply make minor amendments to the wards in order to improve them. The number of electors that would have to be transferred out of the council's proposed Kingswood ward would necessitate significant knock-on amendments to both Hazelwood and West wards. We note that making such amendments would result in wards that are significantly different to the council's proposals. Therefore, in the light of the lack of where the community of identity in the area is, we considered we would be able to generate wards with good electoral equality with strong boundaries if we proposed our own wards not based on the council's proposals.

74 In this area we are therefore proposing Beanfield, Kingswood and Tower Hill wards which provide good levels of electoral equality and, where possible strong boundaries. We have proposed a three-member Kingswood ward with strong boundaries, which by 2008 will have 6% more electors than the borough average. This ward would comprise the area north of Danesholme Road to the north west of Oakley Road. It's northern boundary would be Westcott Way and its western boundary would be Westwood Walk, Gainsborough Road and the western boundary of Old King's Wood. We consider that these roads would form strongly identifiable boundaries in the area. We consider that, in the absence of evidence of community of interest, proposing this ward using the strongest boundaries in the area will result in a ward with an acceptable electoral variance by 2008.

75 The remaining two wards that we are proposing are Beanfield and Tower Hill, which we formed by dividing the remaining electorate in the area into two two-member wards which will have 4% and 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2008, respectively. This area has no distinct or obvious break to indicate where the ideal boundary should be and we have therefore divided it at the point where the optimum level of electoral equality between the two wards can be achieved. In the absence of evidence of where the community of interest lies, and, having visited the area we are satisfied that the proposed boundary is satisfactory and does not divide areas which we consider should be united in the same ward. Our proposed Beanfield ward would comprise an area south of Cottingham Road in the area around Beanfield Avenue and Beanfield Junior School. It's western boundary would be Uppingham Road and its southern boundary would be south of Beanfield Junior School, running along Pevensey Walk until it joins Beanfield Avenue and subsequently Westwood Walk which would form its eastern boundary.

76 Our proposed Tower Hill ward would share its northern boundary with our proposed Beanfield wards southern boundary and extend south as far as Gainsborough Road. Due to the fact that these wards have been proposed by us we have named them

according to landmarks or areas that are shown on local mapping. However, we consider that local people are in a better position to provide names for wards in their area and we therefore welcome comments on these proposed names during Stage Three.

77 We consider that by making our own recommendations in this area, in the light of the revised figures which significantly worsen the electoral variances in the wards proposed by the Borough Council, we have identified the best balance between the statutory criteria. We have proposed wards with good electoral equality and strong, easily identifiable boundaries. However, as noted previously, we did not receive any evidence of where the community identity lies and we have not been able to identify any areas where community identity is strong. We therefore welcome views on our proposals during Stage Three, particularly in relation to community identity.

78 Tables 1 and 2 on pages 9–11 provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our draft recommendations for Beanfield, Kingswood and Tower Hill wards.

## Danesholme and Hillside wards

79 Under the existing arrangements both of these wards are wholly unparished. Table 4 outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and also the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008 if the existing arrangements were to remain in place.

80 We received two submissions in relation to this area during Stage One. The Borough Council proposed three revised wards, all forecast to have electoral variances which are under 4% from the borough average by 2008. The Borough Council did not provide any evidence or argument in support of each of its proposed wards in this area. It proposed a three-member Oakley Vale ward, based on the boundaries of the existing Hillside ward (less an area north of Lewin Road which it transferred into its proposed Great Oakley ward.) It proposed that the remaining two wards in the area would be formed by dividing the existing three-member Danesholme ward along Oakley Road to create a two-member Danesholme ward to the west and a single-member Great Oakley ward to the east.

81 The other submission that we received in this area was from a local resident who also proposed dividing the existing Danesholme ward along Oakley Road so that the area known as Oakley Vale can be recognised as a distinct area in its own right. However, he did not provide any evidence of community identity to support his proposals.

82 The proposals of the Borough Council result in wards which will have excellent levels of electoral equality by 2008 and which also have strong boundaries. We note that initially the level of electoral equality in the proposed Oakley Vale ward is poor and would have 53% fewer electors than the borough average. However, this is forecast to improve by 2008 so that it would have 4% more electors than the borough average.

83 In light of the strong boundaries, good electoral equality and support from a local resident for the Borough Council's scheme, we propose to adopt its proposals in this area in their entirety.

84 Tables 1 and 2 on pages 9–11 provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our draft recommendations for Danesholme, Great Oakley and Oakley Vale wards.

## Conclusions

85 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will affect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements based on 2003 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2008.

**Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements**

	Current arrangements		Draft recommendations	
	2003	2008	2003	2008
Number of councillors	29	29	29	29
Number of wards	13	13	14	14
Average number of electors per councillor	1,380	1,589	1,380	1,589
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	5	10	9	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	3	2	0

86 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Corby Borough Council would initially result in an increase in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from five to nine. However, by 2008 just two wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

### **Draft recommendation**

Corby Borough Council should comprise 29 councillors serving 14 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the maps accompanying this report.

## Parish electoral arrangements

87 As part of an FER the Committee can make recommendations for new electoral arrangements for parishes. Where there is no impact on the district council's electoral arrangements, the Committee will generally be content to put forward for consideration proposals from parish and town councils for changes to parish electoral arrangements in FERs. However, the Committee will usually wish to see a degree of consensus between the district council and the parish council concerned. Proposals should be supported by evidence, illustrating why changes to parish electoral arrangements are required. The Committee cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an FER.

88 Responsibility for reviewing and implementing changes to the electoral arrangements of existing parishes, outside of an electoral review conducted by the Committee, lies with district councils. Such reviews must be conducted in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997. If a district council wishes to make an Order amending the electoral arrangements of a parish that has been subject to an electoral arrangements order made by either the Secretary of State or The Electoral Commission within the past five years, the consent of the Commission is required.

89 During Stage One, the Borough Council proposed revised electoral arrangements for six of the seven parishes in the borough. It proposed reducing the number of parish councillors in each of the following parishes, as shown in Tables 6 and 7.

**Table 6: Existing parish arrangements**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>2003 electorate</b>	<b>2008 electorate</b>	<b>Current no. of cllrs</b>
Stanion	747	1,768	11
Weldon	1,488	2,414	11
Gretton	1,004	1,125	9
Cottingham	752	773	9
Middleton	328	349	7
East Carlton	199	210	7

**Table 7: Corby Borough Council's proposed parish arrangements**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>2003 electorate</b>	<b>2008 electorate</b>	<b>Proposed no. of cllrs</b>
Stanion	747	1,768	7
Weldon	1,488	2,414	9
Gretton	1,004	1,125	7
Cottingham	752	773	5
Middleton	328	349	5
East Carlton	199	210	5

90 The Borough Council acknowledged that these proposals 'do not necessarily reflect the opinion of any or all parish councils'. We also note that there is no evidence of consultation with any of the affected parishes and no argument provided in support of a reduction of parish councillors. Therefore, we do not propose to make any recommendations for changes to any parish council's electoral arrangements at this time.

**Draft recommendation**

To retain the existing parish arrangements.



## 5 What happens next?

91 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Corby contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 8 August 2005. Any received after this date may not be taken into account. All responses (including names and addresses of respondents unless specified otherwise) may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

92 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Corby and welcome comments from interested parties relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, ward names, and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

93 Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Review Manager  
Corby Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

94 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, the Boundary Committee now makes available for public inspection full copies of all representations it takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, a copy of all Stage Three representations will be placed on deposit locally at the offices of Corby Borough Council, at the Committee's offices in Trevelyan House and on its website at [www.boundarycommittee.org.uk](http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk). The facility to put submissions on our website was not available during Stage One.

95 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to The Electoral Commission, which cannot make the Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after it receives them.



## 6 Mapping

Draft recommendations for Corby:

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the borough of Corby.

**Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Corby Borough Council, including constituent parishes.

**Sheet 2, Map 2** illustrates the proposed boundaries in Corby town.

**Sheet 3, Map 3a** illustrates part of the proposed Rural West ward.

**Sheet 3, Map 3b** illustrates part of the proposed Weldon & Gretton ward.

# Appendix A

## Code of practice on written consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, [www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/Code.htm](http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/Code.htm), requires all Government Departments and Agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Public bodies, such as The Boundary Committee for England, are encouraged to follow the Code.

The Code of Practice applies to consultation documents published after 1 January 2001, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

**Table A1: The Boundary Committee for England's compliance with Code criteria**

Criteria	Compliance/departure
Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.	We comply with this requirement.
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.	We comply with this requirement.
A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.	We comply with this requirement.
Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.	We comply with this requirement.
Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.	We comply with this requirement.

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<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Compliance/departure</b>
Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.	We comply with this requirement.
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.	We comply with this requirement.

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