

Final recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Windsor & Maidenhead

Report to the Electoral Commission

April 2002

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Eton, Windsor and Maidenhead is inserted inside the back cover of this report.

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. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to the Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clark CBE
Kru Desai
Robin Gray
Joan Jones
Ann M Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

We are required by law to review the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England. 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 and town councils.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Windsor & Maidenhead's electoral arrangements on 17 April 2001. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 27 November 2001, after which it undertook a nine-week period of consultation. As a consequence of the transfer of functions referred to earlier, it falls to us, the Boundary Committee for England, to complete the work of the LGCE and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations received by the LGCE during consultation on its draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Windsor & Maidenhead:

- **In six of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and two wards vary by more than 20 per cent.**
- **By 2006 electoral equality is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in eight wards and by more than 20 per cent in two wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 126-127) are that:

- **The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead should have 57 councillors, one less than at present;**
- **there should be 23 wards, instead of 22 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 16 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one, and six wards should retain their existing boundaries.**

The purpose of these proposals is to ensure that, in future, each borough councillor represents approximately the same number of electors, bearing in mind local circumstances.

- **In only one of the proposed 23 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in only one ward, Hurley ward, expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough by 2006.**

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

- **new warding arrangements for Bray, Eton, Hurley, Old Windsor and Sunninghill parishes.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 5 June 2002:

**The Secretary
Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Final Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Ascot & Cheapside	2	the proposed Ascot & Cheapside parish ward of Sunninghill parish	Map 2 and Map A2
2	Belmont (Maidenhead)	3	part of Belmont ward	Map 2 and the large map
3	Bisham & Cookham	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of Bisham and Cookham	Map 2
4	Boyn Hill (Maidenhead)	3	Boyn Hill ward; part of Oldfield ward	Map 2 and the large map
5	Bray	3	the Bray, Holyport and Oakley Green & Fifield parish wards of Bray parish	Map 2
6	Castle Without (Windsor)	3	part of Castle ward; part of Park ward; part of Trinity ward	Map 2 and the large map
7	Clewer East (Windsor)	2	part of Trinity ward	Map 2 and the large map
8	Clewer North (Windsor)	3	Dedworth parish ward of Bray parish; Clewer North ward; part of Castle ward	Map 2 and the large map
9	Clewer South (Windsor)	2	the proposed Alexander parish ward of Bray parish; part of Clewer South ward	Map 2 and the large map
10	Cox Green (Maidenhead)	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parish of Cox Green	Map 2 and the large map
11	Datchet	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parish of Datchet	Map 2 and the large map
12	Eton & Castle	1	the proposed Eton East parish ward of Eton parish; part of Castle ward	Map 2 and the large map
13	Eton Wick	1	the proposed Eton Wick parish ward of Eton parish	Map 2 and the large map
14	Furze Platt (Maidenhead)	3	Furze Platt ward and part of St Mary's ward	Map 2 and the large map
15	Horton & Wraysbury	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of Horton and Wraysbury	Map 2
16	Hurley	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of Hurley, Shottesbrooke, Waltham St Lawrence and White Waltham	Map 2
17	Maidenhead Riverside (Maidenhead)	3	part of St Mary's ward	Map 2 and the large map
18	Oldfield (Maidenhead)	3	part of Belmont ward; part of Oldfield ward; part of St Mary's ward	Map 2 and the large map
19	Old Windsor	2	the parish of Old Windsor	Map 2
20	Park (Windsor)	2	part of Clewer South ward and part of Park ward	Map 2 and the large map
21	Pinkneys Green (Maidenhead)	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Pinkneys Green ward	Map 2 and the large map
22	Sunningdale	2	the parish of Sunningdale	Map 2 and Map A2

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
23	Sunninghill & South Ascot	3	the proposed Sunninghill & South Ascot parish ward of Sunninghill parish	Map 2 and Map A2

Notes: 1 Windsor and Maidenhead are the only unparished parts of the borough.

2 The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and Maps A1 and A2 in Appendix A.

Table 2: Final Recommendations for Windsor & Maidenhead

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ascot & Cheapside	2	3,529	1,765	-4	3,499	1,750	-4
2	Belmont (Maidenhead)	3	5,809	1,936	5	5,800	1,933	6
3	Bisham & Cookham	3	5,483	1,828	-1	5,350	1,783	-2
4	Boyn Hill (Maidenhead)	3	5,600	1,867	2	5,350	1,783	-2
5	Bray	3	5,748	1,916	4	5,550	1,850	2
6	Castle Without (Windsor)	3	4,938	1,646	-10	5,142	1,714	-6
7	Clewer East (Windsor)	2	3,433	1,717	-7	3,922	1,961	8
8	Clewer North (Windsor)	3	5,883	1,961	7	5,761	1,920	6
9	Clewer South (Windsor)	2	3,930	1,965	7	3,852	1,926	6
10	Cox Green (Maidenhead)	3	5,825	1,942	6	5,450	1,817	0
11	Datchet	2	3,750	1,875	2	3,548	1,774	-3
12	Eton & Castle	1	1,685	1,685	-8	1,756	1,756	-4
13	Eton Wick	1	1,870	1,870	2	1,850	1,850	2
14	Furze Platt (Maidenhead)	3	5,437	1,812	-1	5,435	1,812	0
15	Horton & Wraysbury	2	3,808	1,904	4	3,900	1,950	7
16	Hurley	3	4,849	1,616	-12	4,700	1,567	-14
17	Maidenhead Riverside (Maidenhead)	3	5,774	1,925	5	5,921	1,974	8
18	Oldfield (Maidenhead)	3	5,749	1,916	4	5,697	1,899	4
19	Old Windsor	2	3,843	1,922	5	3,844	1,922	6
20	Park (Windsor)	2	3,568	1,784	-3	3,467	1,734	-5
21	Pinkneys Green (Maidenhead)	3	5,418	1,806	-2	5,348	1,783	-2

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
22	Sunningdale	2	3,661	1,831	0	3,550	1,775	-2
23	Sunninghill & South Ascot	3	5,139	1,713	-7	5,050	1,683	-8
	Totals	57	104,729	-	-	103,742	-	-
	Averages	-	-	1,837	-	-	1,820	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Windsor & Maidenhead 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 final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is being reviewed as part of the programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England, which was started by the LGCE in 1996. We have inherited that programme, which we currently expect to complete in 2004.

2 Windsor & Maidenhead's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in September 1980 (Report no. 376).

3 In making final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
 - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - (b) secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - (c) achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Windsor & Maidenhead was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (LGCE, fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

5 Our task is to make recommendations 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 and town councils in the district.

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

7 The LGCE was not prescriptive on council size. Insofar as Windsor & Maidenhead is concerned, it started from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but was willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, the LGCE found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and that any proposal for an increase in council size would need to be fully justified. In particular, it did not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, or that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 17 April 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified Thames Valley Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Berkshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of

Parliament with constituencies in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the South East region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 13 August 2001. At Stage Two it considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared its draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 27 November 2001 with the publication of the LGCE's report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Windsor & Maidenhead*, and ended on 28 January 2002. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is a unitary authority covering an area of 19,770 hectares and serving an estimated population of 137,000. The Royal Borough includes two ancient boroughs, each with its own traditions and history. Windsor is known throughout the world for its Castle, which has been a fortress and Royal residence for over 850 years. Both Windsor and its neighbour, Eton, are major tourist attractions. The area of the Royal Borough extends along both banks of the River Thames between Runnymede and Windsor, and on the south bank of the Thames from Windsor to Hurley. The area includes Windsor Great Park, Ascot Racecourse, the Castle and town of Windsor, Eton with its famous college, Maidenhead and a significant number of villages, hamlets and local settlements. The area has excellent transport links and is bisected by the M4 motorway running east to west. The Royal Borough contains 15 parishes that surround the unparished urban areas of Windsor and Maidenhead. Main towns are Eton, Maidenhead and Windsor. Maidenhead town comprises 38 per cent of the borough's total electorate.

11 The electorate of the borough is 104,729 (February 2001). The Council presently has 58 members who are elected from 22 mixed-member wards, 13 of which are relatively urban in Eton, Windsor and Maidenhead, the remainder being predominantly rural. Sixteen of the wards are each represented by three councillors, four are each represented by two councillors, and two are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

12 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, the LGCE calculated, in percentage terms, 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'.

13 At present each councillor represents an average of 1,806 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will decrease to 1,789 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in six of the 22 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average and in two wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Old Windsor ward, where the councillor represents 29 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Windsor & Maidenhead

Table 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Belmont (Maidenhead)	3	5,809	1,936	7	5,798	1,933	8
2	Bisham & Cookham	3	5,483	1,828	1	5,350	1,783	0
3	Boyn Hill (Maidenhead)	3	5,006	1,669	-8	4,800	1,600	-11
4	Bray	3	6,025	2,008	11	5,850	1,950	9
5	Castle (Windsor)	2	3,390	1,695	-6	3,400	1,700	-5
6	Clewer North (Windsor)	3	4,883	1,628	-10	4,800	1,600	-11
7	Clewer South (Windsor)	2	3,943	1,972	9	3,800	1,900	6
8	Cox Green (Maidenhead)	3	5,825	1,942	8	5,450	1,817	2
9	Datchet	2	3,750	1,875	4	3,548	1,774	-1
10	Eton North & South	1	1,299	1,299	-28	1,400	1,400	-22
11	Eton West	1	1,870	1,870	4	1,850	1,850	3
12	Furze Platt (Maidenhead)	3	5,551	1,850	2	5,350	1,783	0
13	Horton & Wraybury	2	3,808	1,904	5	3,900	1,950	9
14	Hurley	3	4,849	1,616	-10	4,700	1,567	-12
15	Oldfield (Maidenhead)	3	6,181	2,060	14	6,100	2,033	14
16	Old Windsor	3	3,849	1,283	-29	3,850	1,283	-28
17	Park (Windsor)	3	5,177	1,726	-4	5,150	1,717	-4
18	Pinkneys Green (Maidenhead)	3	5,418	1,806	0	5,348	1,783	0
19	St Mary's (Maidenhead)	3	5,859	1,953	8	6,200	2,067	16
20	Sunningdale & South Ascot	3	6,413	2,138	18	6,250	2,083	16

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
21 Sunninghill	3	5,900	1,967	9	5,850	1,950	9
22 Trinity (Windsor)	3	4,441	1,480	-18	4,998	1,666	-7
Totals	58	104,729	–	–	103,742	–	–
Averages	–	–	1,806	–	–	1,789	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Windsor & Maidenhead 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 2001, electors in Old Windsor ward were relatively over-represented by 29 per cent, while electors in Sunningdale & South Ascot ward were relatively under-represented by 18 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One the LGCE received 10 representations, including a borough-wide scheme from Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council, Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party and the Liberal Democrat Group and representations from Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats and Windsor Liberal Democrats. In the light of these representations and evidence available to it, the LGCE reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Windsor & Maidenhead*.

15 The draft recommendations were based on the proposals from the Borough Council and Labour Party, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, and provided a pattern of mixed-member wards in the borough. It proposed that:

- Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council should be served by 57 councillors, compared with the current 58, representing 23 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 16 of the existing wards should be modified, while six wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for Bray, Eton and Sunninghill parishes.

Draft Recommendation

Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council should comprise 57 councillors, serving 23 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

16 The proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all but one of the 23 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to remain constant, with only one ward, Hurley ward, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average by 2006.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

17 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 30 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council.

Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council

18 The Borough Council supported the draft recommendations across the borough, including the 57-member council size, but proposed amendments to Hurley ward which would result in three single-member wards and the parish warding of Cox Green parish. It also proposed new parish warding arrangements for Bray parish as well as proposing new ward names for Eton West, Eton East & Home Park, Sunninghill North, Sunninghill South, Inner Windsor and Trinity wards. The Borough Council also considered the A332 relief road to be a more suitable boundary between the wards within Eton town than the railway line.

Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party

19 Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party proposed new warding arrangements for the existing Hurley ward resulting in three single-member wards and a new arrangement for Bray ward, creating new Bray and Fifield wards. It reiterated its Stage One proposal to use the A332 as a boundary in Eton town and proposed that the boundary of Old Windsor ward should be coterminous with the parish boundary. It supported the draft recommendations for the remainder of the borough.

20 Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party also proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward and Trinity ward be renamed Clewer East ward.

Parish and Town Councils

21 We received five representations from parish and town councils. Eton Town Council acknowledged the logic in the draft proposals but considered the natural distinction between communities to be the A332 road rather than the railway line and favoured the Labour Party's scheme in this area. The Town Council also proposed that Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward, and Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward.

22 Old Windsor Parish Council accepted the draft recommendations but proposed new parish council arrangements for its parish, abolishing the two parish wards currently within the parish. Sunninghill Parish Council supported the recommendations for its parish but proposed that Sunninghill North ward be renamed Ascot & Cheapside ward, and Sunninghill South ward be renamed Sunninghill & South Ascot ward, on the grounds that these names would reflect the local communities contained within the wards.

23 Hurley Parish Council supported the proposal to retain the existing Hurley ward and expressed concern about the Borough Council's revised proposal to split Hurley ward into three single-member wards. It also proposed revised parish council arrangements for its parish. Cox Green Parish Council supported the draft recommendation that Cox Green parish remain united within a borough ward represented by three councillors. The Parish Council also objected to the Borough Council's proposed re-warding of Cox Green parish, stating that it had not been consulted on the change.

Other Representations

24 A further 23 representations were received in response to the draft recommendations, from local political groups, councillors and residents. Maidenhead Conservative Association was disappointed that the LGCE did not adopt any changes to the existing Hurley ward as part of its draft recommendations and supported the Borough Council's Stage Three proposal for an amended Hurley ward. Windsor Conservative Association proposed six ward name changes across the borough. Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats agreed with the majority of the draft recommendations but supported the group of Liberal Democrat councillors' proposal for St Mary's ward. They also urged the Commission to retain the existing Hurley ward, opposing the borough Council's proposed modifications.

25 Maidenhead Labour Party proposed a new warding arrangement for the existing Hurley ward comprising three single-member wards. Its proposal would result in the warding of Bisham and White Waltham parishes. It did not support the warding of Cox Green parish.

26 A group of existing and former Liberal Democrat councillors proposed changes to the proposed St Mary's ward. They proposed an amendment to the western boundary with Furze Platt ward and an amendment to the southern boundary with Oldfield ward. They also proposed that St Mary's ward be renamed Maidenhead Riverside ward. A Hurley resident recommended changes to parish council electoral arrangements. Two local residents supported the draft recommendations for Sunninghill and Sunningdale parishes.

27 Three local residents supported the proposed Trinity ward and each proposed that it be renamed Clewer East ward. Two local residents supported the proposed Clewer North ward, one of whom proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward and Trinity ward be renamed Clewer East ward.

28 Datchet, Old Windsor, Horton & Wraysbury Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for its area. A Windsor resident supported the proposals for Windsor town but suggested that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Home Park ward and Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward. Another resident supported the proposals for Eton but considered the A332 to be a more suitable boundary than the railway line. Bray parish ward was considered to be big enough to constitute a borough ward on its own by a local resident.

29 A local resident who supported the Labour Party's proposals for the Clewer area stated that its proposals for Park and Inner Windsor wards promoted community identity. He also proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward. Another local resident also supported the Labour Party proposals that the LGCE adopted at draft stage and proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward and Trinity ward be renamed Clewer East ward.

30 Councillor McGarvie, a local parish councillor for Cox Green parish, fully endorsed the Parish Council's response at Stage Three. Councillor McGarvie also objected to the Borough Council's proposals for Cox Green parish and proposed his own amendments for this area should we consider adopting the Borough Council's proposals. Councillor Evans and a Cox Green resident also objected to the Borough Council's proposal to ward Cox Green parish; the former stated that the parish had not been consulted on proposed changes.

31 Theresa May MP was disappointed that the LGCE did not make any changes to the existing Hurley ward in the draft recommendations. Mrs May stated that she would prefer Hurley ward to be split into three single-member wards and that Cox Green ward be retained on its current boundaries.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

32 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Windsor & Maidenhead 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). 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”.

33 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 within the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

34 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.

35 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.

Electorate Forecasts

36 Since 1975 there has been a 23 per cent increase in the electorate of Windsor & Maidenhead borough. At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting a decrease in the electorate of approximately 1 per cent from 104,729 to 103,742 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects the decrease to be spread throughout the borough. In order to prepare these forecasts, 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. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, the LGCE stated in its draft recommendations report that it was satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

37 No comments were received on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available. However, we have become aware of an error in the 2006 electorate figures for the proposed Clewer North and Park wards and after investigating the matter we have corrected the figures as highlighted in Table 2 and outlined later.

Council Size

38 As already explained, the LGCE started its review by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although they were willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

39 In its draft recommendations report the LGCE adopted the Council's proposal for a council size of 57 members on the ground that it provided for the best allocation of councillors between the urban and rural areas. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party, having also investigated the possibility of a 57-member council, proposed retaining the current 58-member council on the basis that for many years it "has secured convenient and effective local government for the people of the borough/UA". The Liberal Democrat Group proposed a 59-member council, an increase of one.

40 Maidenhead Conservative Association believed that there was a case for a relatively large number of councillors given the many and various communities which exist in the borough, with well defined but differing interests. However, it supported the Borough Council's decision to reduce the number of councillors to 57.

41 While the LGCE noted that it had received little supporting argumentation for any of the council sizes proposed, it was not convinced by the argumentation provided to retain or increase the council size. The LGCE proposed to adopt a 57-member council given that it provided for the best allocation of councillors across the borough, particularly between the rural and urban areas.

42 During Stage Three two representations were received in relation to the proposed council size, with Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party reiterating its Stage One proposal for a 58-member scheme. The Borough Council supported the draft recommendation for a 57-member council and having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we remain of the opinion that achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would be best met by a council of 57 members.

Electoral Arrangements

43 As set out in the draft recommendations report, all the representations received during Stage One were carefully considered, including the borough-wide schemes put forward by the Borough Council and Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party.

44 In formulating the draft recommendations all submissions were looked at closely. Having adopted a 57-member council, the LGCE based its draft recommendations on both the Borough Council's and Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party's proposals. It moved away from both these schemes in some areas and proposed its own boundary between Furze Platt and St Mary's ward while adopting the Borough Council's proposals for the remainder of Maidenhead. The LGCE noted the similarity in the proposals for Eton and Windsor and substantially adopted the Labour Party's proposals albeit with minor boundary amendments. The Labour Party's proposals were also adopted in the southernmost area of Sunningdale and Sunninghill parishes.

45 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations but proposed a new warding arrangement for Hurley ward. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party also supported the draft recommendations while suggesting alternative warding arrangements for

Hurley and Bray wards and also proposed a minor boundary amendment to Old Windsor ward. Both the Borough Council and the Labour Party, along with Eton Town Council, stated that the A332 slip road is a much more suitable boundary between wards in Eton town than the railway line.

46 We note the alternatives suggested for the existing Hurley ward but we propose retaining the existing arrangement on the basis that it does not entail warding Cox Green and Bisham parishes, a proposal which was not locally supported. We also propose making the aforementioned boundary amendment to the wards in Eton town so that the boundary follows the A332 slip road, while making a minor boundary amendment to Old Windsor ward so that it is coterminous with the parish boundary. The proposed St Mary's ward will be amended, as suggested by the group of Liberal Democrat councillors, in order to unite the town within a single ward and retain community identity, by grouping the North Town area in a single ward. We have decided to confirm the remainder of the draft recommendations subject to six ward name changes across the borough.

47 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and representations received during Stage Three. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a) Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's wards;
- b) Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Oldfield wards;
- c) Bisham & Cookham, Bray and Hurley wards;
- d) Clewer North, Clewer South, Park and Trinity wards;
- e) Castle, Eton North & South and Eton West wards;
- f) Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Old Windsor wards;
- g) Sunningdale & South Ascot and Sunninghill wards.

48 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's wards

49 The existing wards of Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's cover the northern part of Maidenhead town, and are each currently represented by three councillors. Under the current 58-member council the number of electors per councillor in the four wards varies from the borough average by 7 per cent, 2 per cent, equal to the average and 8 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate in Belmont and St Mary's wards, while improving in Furze Platt ward to vary by 8 per cent, 16 per cent and equal to the borough average in 2006. The electoral variance in Pinkneys Green ward is expected to remain constant over the five-year period.

50 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that this area should comprise four wards, with the proposed wards of Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's each being represented by three councillors. It proposed minimal change in this area, with the proposed south-eastern boundary of Belmont ward running along Bad Godesberg Way to the Cookham Road, and some of the properties on Cookham Road, Moor Lane, Moorside Close, Pearce Close and Pearce Road being transferred from St Mary's ward to Furze Platt ward. It also proposed that the southern boundary of St Mary's ward should follow Saint-Cloud Way and Bridge Road. It proposed that Pinkneys Green ward should retain its existing boundaries.

51 The Labour proposed minimal change in this area, proposing similar arrangements to those of the Borough Council, with the south-eastern boundary of the proposed Belmont ward running along Bad Godesberg Way to Cookham Road and the properties to the north of Moor Lane being transferred from St Mary's ward into Furze Platt ward. It proposed that the southern boundary of St Mary's ward should follow Saint-Cloud Way and Bridge Road. It also proposed that Pinkneys Green ward retain its existing boundary apart from the south side of Oak Grove, which would be transferred from Furze Platt ward.

52 Maidenhead Conservative Party supported the Borough Council's proposals for Belmont, Furze Platt and St Mary's wards. The Liberal Democrat Group proposed that this area should be represented by five wards, with the proposed Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's wards each being represented by three councillors and the proposed Maidenhead Riverside ward being represented by a single councillor. Maidenhead Liberal Democrats proposed three new wards: Belmont, Maidenhead Riverside and St Mary's.

53 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, the LGCE noted the merit in and similarity between the Borough Council and Labour Party schemes. It concurred with the Borough Council, Liberal Democrat Group and Maidenhead Liberal Democrats that Pinkneys Green ward should retain its existing boundary. It also agreed with both the Borough Council's and Labour Party's proposal that a new Belmont ward boundary should run along Bad Godesberg Way to Cookham Road because it follows a definable boundary that promotes community identity. The LGCE was not persuaded that the Labour Party's proposed boundary between Furze Platt and Pinkneys Green wards would reflect community identity, as it divided Oaken Grove between two wards. In relation to Furze Platt and St Mary's wards the LGCE noted the high level of electoral inequality in the Borough Council's scheme. While it considered that the Borough Council had used an easily identifiable boundary in its proposed St Mary's ward it was not persuaded that a 12 per cent variance was acceptable in an urban area in the light of the alternative boundaries available. The LGCE therefore proposed its own boundary which would run along Cookham Road, Moor Lane and then follow the rear of properties on the east side of North Town Moor before rejoining the existing Furze Platt ward boundary. This boundary was similar to that proposed by the Labour Party, and the LGCE considered that while it provided for better levels of electoral equality and it better reflected community identity by combining all properties north east of the Cookham Road in one ward. The Liberal Democrat Group and Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats' proposals for this area recommended dividing St Mary's ward. This caused the LGCE some concern on the basis of community identity, as it considered that properties to the east of Ray Park Avenue share a common identity with those on the west side. In the absence of accurate figures and on the basis that the proposed ward divided natural communities, the LGCE did not pursue the Liberal Democrats' proposals in this area.

54 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be improved levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors varying from the borough average in Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and St Mary's wards by 5 per cent, 6 per cent, 2 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate slightly in Belmont, Furze Platt and St Mary's wards to vary by 6 per cent, 7 per cent and 5 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance in Pinkneys Green ward is expected to remain constant.

55 At Stage Three the Borough Council and Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party supported the proposals for this area. A group of current and former Liberal Democrat councillors proposed amendments to the proposed St Mary's ward. These amendments involved the

grouping of the town area in a single ward and also utilising a better boundary between Furze Platt and St Mary's wards. This would follow the rear of properties on the east of Pearce Road and along the western side of the recreation ground until it reaches the existing ward boundary. It was also proposed that the new ward be named Maidenhead Riverside ward on the basis that St Mary's church, from which the ward derives its name, would now be in the proposed Oldfield ward. Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats supported this proposal for the proposed St Mary's ward.

56 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three, and in the light of the support received for the draft recommendations, we propose to confirm the draft recommendations for this area subject to one ward name change and boundary amendments to the proposed St Mary's ward. This amendment, as proposed by the Liberal Democrat councillors, involves the grouping of like communities within a single ward and does not divide natural communities such as that in the North Town area. It also unites the town area in the proposed Oldfield ward. These changes do not adversely affect electoral equality and provide a good balance between the statutory criteria for the area. We also propose that St Mary's ward be renamed Maidenhead Riverside ward as proposed by the Liberal Democrat councillors in order to reflect the area contained within the ward.

57 Under our final recommendations for a 57-member council there would be improved levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors varying from the borough average in Belmont, Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and Maidenhead Riverside wards by 5 per cent, 1 per cent, 2 per cent and 5 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is expected to improve in Furze Platt ward and deteriorate slightly in Belmont and Maidenhead Riverside wards to equal the borough average and vary by 6 per cent and 8 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance in Pinkneys Green ward is expected to remain constant. Our final recommendations are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Oldfield wards

58 The existing wards of Boyn Hill, Cox Green (comprising the parish of Cox Green) and Oldfield cover the southern part of the Maidenhead urban area and are currently represented by three councillors each. Under the current arrangement of a 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Oldfield wards varies from the borough average by 8 per cent, 8 per cent and 14 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is expected to improve in Cox Green ward while deteriorating in Boyn Hill ward to vary by 2 per cent and 11 per cent respectively from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance of Oldfield ward is projected to remain constant.

59 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that this area should be represented by three wards, each being represented by three councillors. It proposed minimal change in the area, retaining the existing boundary of Cox Green ward and proposing that the eastern boundary of Boyn Hill ward should run along Frascati Way, Grenfell Place, Grenfell Road, then south to the railway line. It also proposed that the northern boundary of Oldfield ward should run along Bad Godesberg Way and Saint-Cloud Way before joining Bridge Road.

60 The Labour Party also proposed that this area should comprise three three-member wards. It also proposed no change to the existing Cox Green ward. It proposed that the southern

boundary of Boyn Hill ward be amended to run to the south of the railway line and include properties west of Desborough Park, formerly in Oldfield ward. The Labour Party also proposed a new Oldfield ward.

61 Maidenhead Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposals for Boyn Hill and Oldfield wards but proposed a minor change to the existing Cox Green ward boundaries. The Liberal Democrat Group proposed that this area comprise four wards, with the proposed Boyn Hill and Cox Green wards being represented by three councillors each and the proposed Bray and South Maidenhead wards each being represented by two councillors. It proposed no change to the existing Cox Green ward. Maidenhead Liberal Democrats proposed that the Grenfell area of Maidenhead be included in a new Boyn Hill ward. They also proposed a new two-member South Maidenhead ward which would include part of the existing Oldfield ward minus Grenfell Road, the High Town area and the Town Centre. They proposed no change to Cox Green ward.

62 Having considered the representations received at Stage One, the LGCE considered that all the schemes had merit but in the interests of electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and on the basis that it was implementing a 57-member council, it proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area. Both the Liberal Democrat Group's and Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats' proposals resulted in major re-warding in the southern part of Maidenhead, which the LGCE considered unnecessary in the light of the alternative warding arrangements which were available. The LGCE therefore agreed with all the other submissions received that Cox Green ward should retain its existing boundary, as this would result in a good level of electoral equality while retaining Cox Green parish within a single ward. It noted Maidenhead Conservative Association's alternative warding arrangement for Cox Green parish, but was not persuaded by the evidence provided that this would better meet the statutory criteria than the existing arrangements.

63 The LGCE adopted the Borough Council's Boyn Hill ward as this retained the railway line as its southern boundary and was considered to be an easily identifiable boundary which included all properties to the west of Frascati Way. Oldfield ward therefore remained relatively unchanged, as proposed by the Borough Council. The LGCE was not convinced by the Labour Party's proposed Boyn Hill and Oldfield wards, as the proposed Boyn Hill ward spans the railway line, which is considered to be a natural boundary, and the proposed Oldfield ward annexes part of Maidenhead originally in Oldfield ward, and places it in a new, more rural, Bray-St Michael ward.

64 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Oldfield wards by 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Cox Green ward to equal the average by 2006. The electoral variances for both Boyn Hill and Oldfield wards are projected to remain constant over the five years.

65 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the proposed Boyn Hill and Oldfield wards but proposed that Cox Green parish be warded in line with its new proposals for Hurley ward. This involved an area of Cox Green ward being transferred into a new Woodlands Park ward. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party supported the draft recommendations.

66 Representations were received from two local councillors and a local resident who expressed concern at the Borough Council's proposed parish warding of Cox Green parish.

Councillor McGarvie, who supported the Parish Council's response at Stage Three, also proposed his own amendments to Cox Green parish should we consider adopting the Borough Council's proposals for the area. This proposal created two two-member wards in the existing Cox Green ward named Cox Green North ward and Cox Green South ward with the latter containing the Woodlands Park area of White Walthams parish. Cox Green Parish Council supported the draft recommendations and also expressed concern at the Borough Council's proposed warding of its parish, stating that it had not been consulted on the proposed amendments. It also stated that the area to be removed from Cox Green parish under the Council's proposals is an integral part of the parish.

67 A representation was received from current and former St Mary's ward Liberal Democrat councillors, as outlined earlier. Their proposal involved an amended boundary for Oldfield ward, transferring the area north of Bridge Road, south of Kennet Road, along the rear of the properties on Blackamoor Lane and east of Ray Street into Oldfield ward.

68 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three, and in light of the support received for the draft recommendations, we have decided to confirm them as final subject to the adoption of the local Liberal Democrat councillors' proposal for St Mary's ward. This amendment extends the boundary in Oldfield ward to include the remainder of the town area, formerly in St Mary's ward, and does not adversely affect electoral equality. We note the proposals which involve the warding of Cox Green parish but due to the volume of local support to retain Cox Green parish as a single borough ward and the opposition to the Borough Council's proposals to transfer part of Cox Green parish to a new Woodlands Park ward, we are confirming the draft recommendations for Cox Green ward in full.

69 Under our final recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Oldfield wards by 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Cox Green ward to equal the average by 2006. The electoral variance for both Boyn Hill and Oldfield wards is projected to remain constant over the five years. Our final recommendations are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Bisham & Cookham, Bray and Hurley wards

70 The existing wards of Bisham & Cookham (comprising the parishes of Bisham and Cookham), Bray (comprising the parish of Bray) and Hurley (comprising the parishes of Hurley, Shottesbrooke, Waltham St Lawrence and White Waltham) cover the rural area to the north, south and west of Maidenhead, with Bray ward also bordering the western side of Windsor. Each ward is currently represented by three councillors. Under the current arrangements of a 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 1 per cent, 11 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Bisham & Cookham and Bray wards, while deteriorating slightly in Hurley ward, to equal the average and vary by 9 per cent and 12 per cent respectively by 2006.

71 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with the proposed Bisham & Cookham, Bray and Hurley wards being represented by three councillors each. It proposed retaining the existing Bisham & Cookham ward boundary, as there was local opposition to any change. It also proposed retaining the existing Hurley ward boundary on the basis that any change which would reduce the electoral variance would result

in the dividing of Bisham parish or Cox Green parish. In the interests of electoral equality and community identity, it proposed creating a new parish ward in north east of Bray parish.

72 The Labour Party proposed that this area comprise five wards, with the proposed Fifield and Winter Hill wards being represented by three councillors each, Walthams ward being represented by two councillors and Bray-St Michael and Hall Place wards each being represented by a single councillor. Maidenhead Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposals for Bisham & Cookham ward and objected to any proposal for change. However, it also objected to the Borough Council's proposal for no change to Hurley ward, as it noted the local representations that had been made for change.

73 Waltham St Lawrence Parish Council stated, "in view of the remoteness of Hurley from the Walthams...this council believes that the Walthams (comprising Waltham St Lawrence, White Waltham and Shottesbrooke, possibly Littlewick Green) should be separately designated and represented by its own borough councillor". It proposed an alternative three single-member ward scheme for the area. White Waltham Parish Council proposed the same alternative pattern for the area, stating that the proposal would ensure that the varying needs of the communities affected were given due weight at borough council level. Bisham Parish Council stated that it wished to see its parish retained within one ward, as at present.

74 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed that this area should comprise four wards, with the proposed Bisham & Hurley, Cookham, Holyport and Woodlands Park wards each being represented by two councillors. Maidenhead Liberal Democrats proposed two options for this area. Option One would leave the existing wards unchanged, while Option Two would split the existing Bisham & Cookham and Hurley wards into three new wards of Bisham & Hurley, Cookham and Walthams, each with two councillors. Windsor Liberal Democrats proposed creating new Bray and Holyport wards.

75 Having considered all the representations at Stage One, the LGCE proposed no change to the existing Bisham & Cookham and Hurley wards, as it considered the current arrangements offered the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria for the area as a whole. It did, however, propose the creation of a new parish ward in Bray parish, as proposed by the Borough Council and Liberal Democrat Group. This new parish ward would be named Bray North East parish ward and would facilitate the inclusion of urban overspill from Windsor in the proposed Clewer South ward. The local support for change to the existing Hurley ward was noted but neither of the schemes proposed by Waltham St Lawrence Parish Council or White Waltham Parish Council offered a better alternative than the existing arrangements, as under a 57-member council both these proposals would have created wards which would have resulted in electoral variances of over 10 per cent.

76 Maidenhead Conservative Association's objection to the retention of the existing Hurley ward was noted and its proposed alternative offered good levels of electoral equality. However, it was considered that this proposal did not offer a suitable alternative for the whole area as it only addressed the urban nature of the Woodlands Park area. It was recognised that the Labour Party's proposals for five wards in this area had merit, as they focused on the individual communities in the area, but the LGCE felt that such extensive warding of the parishes was unnecessary. The Liberal Democrat Group's, Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats' and Windsor Liberal Democrats' proposals for this area also involved extensive re-warding of the area, with consequential effects on Bisham & Cookham ward. Again, the LGCE considered such changes to be unnecessary, particularly as they resulted in poorer levels of electoral equality than under the draft recommendations.

77 Having considered all the submissions received, the LGCE was of the opinion that the existing wards provided the best balance between electoral equality and the other statutory criteria. It noted the relatively high electoral variance of Hurley ward but considered that it was justified due to the constraints of the borough boundary and the proximity of Maidenhead town, and was of the opinion that this area is best served by three councillors representing one ward. While it would be possible to create parish wards in this area, which could be placed in different borough wards, the LGCE concluded that this would not reflect community identity in the area, as it would split locally supported areas such as Cox Green and Bisham parishes.

78 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Bisham & Cookham, Bray and Hurley wards by 1 per cent, 4 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Bray ward and slightly deteriorate in Bisham & Cookham and Hurley wards to vary from the borough average by 2 per cent, 2 per cent and 14 per cent by 2006.

79 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the recommended Bray and Bisham & Cookham wards but proposed a three single-member ward pattern for the existing Hurley ward. This involved the creation of new Hurley, The Walthams and Woodlands Park wards with the latter including a warded area of Cox Green parish. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party also proposed a creating three single-member wards for Hurley ward which involved the parish warding of Bisham parish and White Walthams parish. It also proposed the creation of a new Bray ward in the Bray village area of the existing Bray ward, with the remainder of the existing ward comprising a new Fifield ward.

80 Hurley Parish Council supported the draft recommendations and objected to the Borough Council's amendments. It stated that it had not been fully consulted on the proposed changes. Maidenhead Constituency Liberal Democrats urged us to endorse the draft recommendations for this area and not to adopt the Borough Council's proposed modifications, due to a lack of local consultation with some parish councils. Cox Green Parish Council stated that the area to be removed from Cox Green parish under the Council's proposals and transferred to a new Woodlands Park ward is an integral part of the parish and should remain in a ward with the remainder of Cox Green parish.

81 Maidenhead Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposed amendments to the existing Hurley ward. Maidenhead Labour Party stated that while it is in favour of three single-member wards for Hurley ward it is not in agreement with the parish warding of Cox Green parish. It proposed the three single-member ward option that parish warded Bisham parish and White Waltham parish. Theresa May MP supported the Borough Council's proposal to split the current Hurley ward into three single-member wards but also stated that she supported retaining Cox Green on its existing boundaries. A local Bray resident considered Bray parish ward big enough to stand as a borough ward on its own and argued that it has little in common with the adjoining Holyport parish ward.

82 Councillor McGarvie from Cox Green proposed a new arrangement for the existing Cox Green ward should we consider implementing the Borough Council's proposals for the area. This new proposal involved creating two two-member wards in the existing Cox Green ward to be named Cox Green North borough ward and a two-member Cox Green South borough ward, with the latter including the Woodlands Park area of White Walthams parish.

83 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three and in light of the local support received for the proposals, we propose endorsing the draft recommendations in full for this area. We note the merits of the alternative schemes proposed for Hurley ward by all parties but, in the light of support from Hurley Parish Council and Cox Green Parish Council to retain the draft recommendations, and the level of opposition to the Borough Council's alternatives, we propose no amendments in this area. To implement any alternative scheme would result in the locally opposed warding of Bisham & Cookham, Cox Green and Hurley parishes. In the circumstances we consider that the draft recommendations offer the best balance between the statutory criteria for the area as a whole as natural communities are grouped together and avoid any unnecessary parish warding of Bisham and Cox Green parishes, which we consider would not adequately reflect community identity in the area.

84 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be the same as at draft. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2 and on Map 2.

Clewer North, Clewer South, Park and Trinity wards

85 The existing wards of Clewer North, Clewer South, Park and Trinity cover south and west Windsor, with Clewer North, Park and Trinity ward each currently being represented by three councillors and Clewer South ward being represented by two councillors. Under the current 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the four wards varies from the borough average by 10 per cent, 9 per cent, 4 per cent and 18 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Clewer South and Trinity wards while deteriorating slightly in Clewer North ward to vary by 6 per cent, 7 per cent and 11 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance for Park ward is expected to remain constant.

86 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that this area should be covered by four wards, with the proposed Clewer East and Clewer West wards being represented by two councillors each and the proposed Park and Trinity wards each being represented by three councillors. It proposed dividing the existing Clewer North and Clewer South wards on an east/west basis and creating a new Clewer West ward which would include the proposed Bray North East parish ward of Bray parish as described earlier. The Borough Council also proposed new Clewer East, Park and Trinity wards which would largely reflect the area of the existing wards with some boundary amendments.

87 The Labour Party proposed that this area should be represented by four wards, with the proposed Clewer Manor, Clewer South West and Park wards each being represented by two councillors and the proposed Clewer North ward being represented by three councillors. Its proposed Clewer North ward would contain all the properties to the north of Dedworth Road and Clarence Road between the A332 in the east and Puddlesway in the west. The proposed Clewer South East ward would retain the existing Clewer South ward boundary with amendments to its southern boundary.

88 The Labour Party's proposed Clewer Manor ward retained the existing Trinity ward boundary except in the north east, where the boundary would run to the south of the properties on Goslar Way and Alma Road. The proposed Park ward would largely retain its existing boundary, apart from amendments along its northern boundary.

89 Windsor Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposals for this area. The Liberal Democrat Group proposed that this area should comprise four wards, with the proposed Clewer North, Park and Trinity wards being represented by three councillors and the

proposed Clewer South ward being represented by two councillors. Windsor Liberal Democrats proposed an amended Park ward.

90 Having considered carefully all the representations received at Stage One, the LGCE proposed adopting its own proposals in the Clewer area of Windsor, while adopting the Labour Party's proposed Clewer Manor and Park wards with minor modifications. It proposed retaining the existing Clewer North ward but extending the eastern boundary to include all the properties to the west of the A332. The new Clewer South ward would retain the original Clewer South boundaries, but include a modified Bray North East parish ward of Bray parish, as proposed by the Borough Council and Liberal Democrat Group. However, its southern boundary would follow the rear of properties to the north of Duncannon Crescent, Wolf Lane and south of Poolmans Road before following the original boundary to the rear of Washington Drive. This amendment to the southern area of Clewer South ward would be the only modification to the Labour Party's amended Park ward. It also proposed adopting the Labour Party's proposed Clewer Manor ward, as it used easily identifiable boundaries which promoted community identity but it proposed that this ward retain the name Trinity ward.

91 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Clewer North, Clewer South, Park and Trinity wards by 7 per cent, 7 per cent, 3 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Clewer North and Clewer South wards and deteriorate slightly in Park and Trinity wards to vary from the borough average by 2 per cent, 6 per cent, 7 per cent and 8 per cent by 2006.

92 At Stage Three, Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for this area but proposed that Trinity ward be renamed Clewer East ward. The Borough Council also supported the draft recommendations but proposed that Trinity ward be renamed Manor ward. Windsor Conservative Association proposed that Trinity ward be renamed Convent ward as the area surrounding Trinity Church had been moved to the proposed Inner Windsor ward. A local resident considered that using Goslar Way as the boundary of the proposed Trinity ward would promote community identity. Another local resident considered that the Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party's draft proposals for Park and Inner Windsor wards offered the best balance between the statutory criteria and would promote community identity. He also supported the Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party's draft proposals for the Clewer area. Four local residents supported the proposed Trinity ward but suggested that it be renamed Clewer East ward.

93 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three and in the light of the local support received for the draft proposals, we propose endorsing the draft recommendations in full for this area subject to Trinity ward being renamed Clewer East ward as proposed by Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party and four local residents. We have also redistributed electors that were misallocated in the draft recommendations report between the proposed Clewer North and Park wards. This correction does not adversely affect the electoral equality of the proposed wards.

94 Under our final recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Clewer East, Clewer North, Clewer South and Park wards by 7 per cent, 7 per cent, 7 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Clewer North and Clewer South wards and slightly deteriorate in Clewer East

and Park wards to vary from the borough average by 6 per cent, 6 per cent, 8 per cent and 5 per cent by 2006. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Castle, Eton North & South and Eton West wards

95 The existing Castle, Eton North & South (comprising the Eton North and Eton South parish wards of Eton parish) and Eton West (comprising the Eton West parish ward of Eton parish) wards cover Eton town and the east of Windsor, with Eton North & South and Eton West wards being currently represented by a single councillor each and Castle ward being represented by two councillors. Under the current arrangements of a 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 6 per cent, 28 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in all wards over the next five years to vary by 5 per cent, 22 per cent and 3 per cent by 2006.

96 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be covered by three wards, with the proposed Eton & Castle and Eton West wards being represented by a single councillor each and the proposed Inner Windsor ward being represented by two councillors. Its proposed Eton West ward would contain all the properties to the west of the A332, with the proposed Eton & Castle ward containing all properties east of the A332 to the north of the river and to include the Castle and its grounds. The proposed Inner Windsor ward would include the existing Castle ward minus the Castle and its grounds and excluding those properties to the west of the A332 with a further amendment to its south-western boundary.

97 The Labour Party proposed that this area should be represented by three wards, with the proposed Eton East & Home Park and Eton West wards being represented by a single councillor each and the proposed Castle Without ward being represented by three councillors. The Labour Party proposed that Eton West ward should contain all the properties to the west of the A332 slip road and that the proposed Eton East & Home Park ward should contain all the properties to the east of the A332 slip road to the river, including the Castle and its grounds. The proposed Castle Without ward would contain that part of north-east Windsor that is bordered in the south and west by the A332, Goslar Way, Alma Road and Osborne Road to the Long Walk and excluding the Castle to the east of Thame Street.

98 Windsor Conservative Association did not support the Borough Council's proposals for Eton & Castle and Eton West wards, stating that multi-member wards are of greater benefit to the electorate than single-member wards. The Liberal Democrat Group and Windsor Constituency Liberal Democrats proposed that this area should comprise two wards, with the proposed Eton & Castle ward being represented by three councillors and the proposed Eton West ward being represented by a single councillor.

99 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One, the LGCE concluded that the Labour Party's proposals offered the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area and adopted them in full. The similarity between all submissions received was noted, but the LGCE considered that the Labour Party used more identifiable boundaries. As a result of an error in the draft recommendations report the Labour Party's proposed Eton town boundary was illustrated as following the railway line instead of the A332 slip road.

100 The name Inner Windsor was adopted instead of the Labour Party's proposed Castle Without ward name as it was considered a more appropriate reflection of the area. The LGCE

noted the Windsor Conservative Association's two-member ward proposal for Eton but considered that the area would be best served by two single-member wards, as at present. The Liberal Democrat Group and Windsor Constituency Liberal Democrats proposed similar Eton West ward, but the LGCE was not convinced that their proposed Eton & Castle wards would provide for more convenient and effective local government and, under a 57-member council, it would result in a poorer level of electoral equality.

101 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council there would be relatively good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Eton East & Home Park, Eton West and Inner Windsor wards by 9 per cent, 2 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Eton East & Home Park and Inner Windsor wards to vary from the borough average by 4 per cent and 6 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance for Eton West ward is projected to remain constant by 2006.

102 At Stage Three, the Borough Council supported the proposals for this area but pointed out that the A332 would be a more suitable boundary between the Eton town wards. It also proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Clarence ward, Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward and Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party supported the draft recommendations but reiterated that at Stage One it had proposed the boundary between wards in Eton town should follow the A332 slip road and not the railway line. It also proposed that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party also proposed an amendment to Eton East & Home Park ward boundary which would make Old Windsor ward boundary coterminous with Old Windsor parish boundary. This change would affect six electors.

103 Windsor Conservative Association proposed that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward, Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward and Inner Windsor ward be renamed Clewer Within ward. Eton Town Council stated that the A332 is a more suitable boundary between wards within Eton town and that it favoured the Labour Party's proposals for the town. It also proposed that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward and Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward. A local resident supported the draft recommendations for Windsor town and proposed that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Home Park ward and that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle ward. Three local residents supported the proposals for Inner Windsor ward but proposed renaming it Castle ward. A further local resident supported the proposals for Eton town but also highlighted the A332 as a more suitable boundary between the Eton wards.

104 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage Three we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations in this area subject to two boundary amendments and ward name changes. We propose amending the Eton East & Home Park ward boundary so that it is coterminous with Old Windsor parish ward boundary. This will affect a minimal amount of electors, as detailed later. We also propose moving the boundary between Eton West and Eton East & Home Park wards to run along the A332 slip road, as this was the original proposal made by the Labour Party. This boundary was proposed by the Borough Council at Stage One and was locally supported during Stage Three by Eton Town Council and a local resident. We consider this to be a good identifiable boundary that promotes community identity in Eton by grouping similar communities in each of the proposed wards.

105 In addition to the boundary amendments we propose that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward and Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward. These ward

names were proposed by the Borough Council, Eton Town Council, Windsor Conservative Association and local residents, and are based on a community and historical context. We also propose that Inner Windsor ward be renamed Castle Without ward as the retention of the name Castle ward was locally supported.

106 Under our final recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be relatively good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Castle Without, Eton & Castle and Eton Wick wards by 10 per cent, 8 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Eton & Castle and Castle Without wards varying from the borough average by 4 per cent and 6 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance for Eton Wick ward is projected to remain constant by 2006. Our final proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Old Windsor wards

107 The existing wards of Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Old Windsor cover the rural eastern area of the borough with Datchet and Horton & Wraysbury wards being represented by two councillors each and Old Windsor ward being represented by three councillors. Under the current arrangements of a 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 4 per cent, 5 per cent and 29 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Datchet and Old Windsor wards while deteriorating slightly in Horton & Wraysbury ward to vary by 1 per cent, 28 per cent and 9 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

108 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be covered by three wards, each represented by two councillors. It proposed retaining all the existing wards with the only change being that Old Windsor ward should be represented by two councillors instead of three, as at present.

109 The Labour Party proposed a similar warding arrangement to the Borough Council. However, it proposed that Horton & Wraysbury be renamed Colne Valley for historical reasons, and a minor boundary change to Old Windsor ward, with a small portion in the north being transferred from the proposed Eton East & Home Park ward.

110 Windsor Conservative Association supported the retention of the existing boundaries for the three wards concerned. The Liberal Democrat Group and Windsor Constituency Liberal Democrats also proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with no change to the existing Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Old Windsor wards.

111 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, the consensus between all respondents was noted and no changes were proposed to the existing wards other than reducing the number of councillors representing Old Windsor ward to two.

112 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be good electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Old Windsor wards by 2 per cent, 4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate slightly over the next five years in all wards to vary from the borough average by 3 per cent, 7 per cent and 6 per cent by 2006.

113 At Stage Three the Borough Council and Datchet, Old Windsor, Horton & Wraybury Branch Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for this area. Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party also supported the draft recommendations and reiterated its proposal that Old Windsor ward should be coterminous with Old Windsor parish boundary. Old Windsor Parish Council expressed concern about the reduction in the number of members from three to two for Old Windsor ward but accepted that the proposals have merit and are based on fact and due consideration of the overall situation in the borough.

114 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three, and in the light of the support received for the draft proposals, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations for this area, subject to one minor boundary amendment to Old Windsor ward which would provide that the borough ward boundary is coterminous with the parish boundary. This boundary amendment affects six electors.

115 Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would remain the same as at draft. Our final recommendations proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2 and on Map 2.

Sunningdale & South Ascot and Sunninghill wards

116 The existing Sunningdale & South Ascot (comprising the parish of Sunningdale and the South Ascot parish ward of Sunninghill parish) and Sunninghill (comprising the Ascot, Cheapside and Sunninghill parish wards of Sunninghill parish) wards cover the south of the borough with each ward being represented by three councillors. Under the current arrangements of a 58-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Sunningdale & South Ascot and Sunninghill wards varies from the borough average by 18 per cent and 9 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve slightly over the next five years in Sunningdale & South Ascot ward to vary by 16 per cent from the borough average by 2006 and remain constant in Sunninghill ward.

117 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be covered by three wards, with the proposed Ascot & Cheapside and Sunningdale wards being represented by two councillors and the proposed Sunninghill & South Ascot ward being represented by three councillors. The new Ascot & Cheapside and Sunninghill & South Ascot wards would be separated by a boundary stretching from east to west dividing Sunninghill parish. The council also proposed a two-member Sunningdale ward, which would comprise the parish of Sunningdale. Windsor Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposals for this area.

118 The Labour Party proposed that this area should be represented by three wards, with the proposed Sunningdale and Sunninghill North wards being represented by two councillors each and the proposed Sunninghill South ward being represented by three councillors. The boundary between the new Sunninghill North and Sunninghill South wards would follow the railway line before following the rear of properties on Lower Village Road, Oriental Road and The Glen to reach the London Road. The proposed boundary would follow the London Road to the Sunningdale parish boundary. The Labour Party proposed that the Sunningdale ward boundary should be coterminous with the parish boundary.

119 The Liberal Democrat Group and Windsor Liberal Democrats proposed that this area should comprise three wards, with the proposed North Ascot and Sunninghill wards being represented by two councillors each and the proposed Sunningdale & South Ascot ward being represented by three councillors.

120 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, the consensus that the area should be represented by seven councillors and divided into three wards was noted. The LGCE concluded that the Labour Party's proposals offered the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria for this area by grouping like communities in single wards and using easily identifiable boundaries. The Labour Party proposed easily identifiable boundaries which would result in reasonable levels of electoral equality. It was noted that the Borough Council's proposal offered similar levels of electoral equality but did not provide a more easily identifiable boundary between its proposed Ascot & Cheapside and Sunninghill & South Ascot wards. It was considered that the Liberal Democrat Group and Windsor Constituency Liberal Democrats' proposals had merit, but the LGCE concluded that the proposals put forward by the Labour Party utilised more easily identifiable natural boundaries, while reflecting local community identity. The LGCE adopted the Labour Party's proposals without modification.

121 Under the draft recommendations for a 57-member council, there would be good electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Sunningdale, Sunninghill North and Sunninghill South wards by 0 per cent, 4 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate slightly over the next five years in Sunningdale and Sunninghill South wards to vary from the borough average by 2 per cent and 8 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance for Sunninghill North ward is projected to remain constant by 2006.

122 At Stage Three, the Borough Council and Windsor & Maidenhead Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for this area. Sunninghill Parish Council proposed that Sunninghill North ward be renamed Ascot & Cheapside ward and Sunninghill South be renamed Sunninghill & South Ascot ward. These ward name changes were also proposed by the Borough Council and Windsor Conservative Association. A local resident supported the LGCE's decision to adopt the Labour Party's scheme while a Sunningdale resident also supported the draft recommendations for this area.

123 Having considered all the representations received at Stage Three and in the light of the support received for the proposals, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations in full for this area subject to Sunninghill North ward being renamed Ascot & Cheapside ward and Sunninghill South ward being renamed Sunninghill & South Ascot ward as proposed by Sunninghill Parish Council, the Borough Council and Windsor Conservative Association.

124 Under our final recommendations for a 57-member council there would be good electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Ascot & Cheapside, Sunningdale and Sunninghill & South Ascot wards by 4 per cent, equal to the borough average and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate slightly over the next five years in Sunningdale and Sunninghill & South Ascot wards to vary from the borough average by 2 per cent and 8 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance for Ascot & Cheapside ward is projected to remain constant by 2006. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2, Map A2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Electoral Cycle

125 By virtue of the amendments made to the Local Government Act 1992 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001, we have no powers to make recommendations concerning electoral cycle.

Conclusions

126 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to the LGCE's consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse those draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- there should be boundary amendments to the proposed Furze Platt, Oldfield and St Mary's wards;
- the boundary between Eton East & Home Park and Eton West wards will now follow the A332 slip road;
- Old Windsor ward will be coterminous with the Old Windsor parish boundary;
- we propose that Eton East & Home Park ward be renamed Eton & Castle ward, Eton West ward be renamed Eton Wick ward, Inner Windsor be renamed Castle Without ward, St Mary's ward be renamed Maidenhead Riverside ward, Trinity ward be renamed Clewer East ward, Sunninghill North ward be renamed Ascot & Cheapside ward and Sunninghill South ward be renamed Sunninghill & South Ascot ward.

127 We conclude that, in Windsor & Maidenhead:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 58 to 57;
- there should be 23 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 16 of the existing wards should be modified.

128 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	58	57	58	57
Number of wards	22	23	22	23
Average number of electors per councillor	1,806	1,837	1,789	1,820
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	6	1	8	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	2	0	2	0

129 As Table 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 six to one, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent from the borough average. This improved level of electoral equality would continue by 2006, with only one ward, Hurley ward, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average, at 14 per cent. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council should comprise 57 councillors serving 23 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A including the large map inside the back cover.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

130 When reviewing parish 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 states that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards, it should also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. In the draft recommendations report the LGCE proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for Bray, Eton and Sunninghill parishes to reflect the proposed borough wards.

131 In response to the consultation report, we received representations from Bray, Hurley and Old Windsor parish councils and a local resident with reference to internal parish council arrangements.

132 The parish of Sunninghill is currently served by 16 councillors representing four parish wards: Ascot (returning five councillors), Cheapside (returning one councillor), Sunninghill (returning five councillors) and South Ascot (returning five councillors). The Labour Party's proposals for Sunninghill parish were adopted at borough level because it used easily identifiable boundaries which resulted in good levels of electoral equality under a 57-member council. This necessitated the redistribution of parish councillors within Sunninghill parish. There were no representations received concerning parish councillor allocation at Stage One, therefore it was proposed that Sunninghill parish be represented by 16 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Sunninghill North parish ward (returning seven councillors) and Sunninghill South parish ward (returning nine councillors).

133 At Stage Three, we received no representations in relation to the parish electoral arrangements of Sunninghill and propose endorsing the draft recommendations as final subject to renaming the parish wards to reflect the borough ward names of Ascot & Cheapside and Sunninghill & South Ascot.

Final Recommendation

Sunninghill Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Ascot & Cheapside parish ward (returning seven councillors) and Sunninghill & South Ascot parish ward (returning nine councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

134 The parish of Bray is currently served by 15 councillors representing four parish wards: Bray (returning five councillors), Dedworth (returning one councillor), Holyport (returning six councillors) and Oakley Green & Fifield (returning three councillors). The LGCE proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposed parish ward in Bray parish, in order to place those properties in Bray parish which have more affinity with Windsor, within a Windsor borough ward. This necessitated the redistribution of parish councillors in Bray parish. There were no representations received concerning this distribution during Stage One, therefore it was proposed that Bray parish be represented by 15 councillors, as at present, representing five parish wards: Bray (returning five councillors), Bray North East (returning one councillor), Dedworth (returning one councillor), Holyport (returning five councillors) and Oakley Green & Fifield parish ward (returning three councillors).

135 At Stage Three, Bray Parish Council proposed that Bray parish be represented by four parish wards with Bray (returning five councillors), Dedworth (returning two councillors), Holyport (returning six councillors) and Oakley Green & Fifield parish wards (returning two councillors). This proposal involved the amalgamation of Dedworth parish ward and the proposed Bray North East parish ward. However, this is not possible, if these parish wards are to become parts of separate borough wards. The Borough Council supported Bray Parish Council's proposals. We consider the new proposal to have merit but since the aforementioned parish wards cannot be amalgamated we propose endorsing the draft recommendations subject to Holyport parish ward retaining its original quota of parish councillors and Oakley Green & Fifield parish ward being reduced to two members to accommodate Bray North East parish ward, as highlighted by Bray Parish Council. The objection to naming the new parish ward Bray North East has been noted and in the absence of any alternative we propose that the new parish ward be named Alexander parish ward.

Final Recommendation

Bray Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing five parish wards: Alexander (returning one councillor), Bray (returning five councillors), Dedworth (returning one councillor), Holyport (returning six councillors) and Oakley Green & Fifield (returning two councillors). The boundary of the proposed Alexander parish ward is illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

136 The parish of Eton is currently served by 14 councillors, representing three parish wards, Eton North (returning four councillors), Eton South (returning four councillors) and Eton West (returning six councillors). The LGCE adopted the Labour Party's proposals for this area at borough level at Stage One because they retained communities within single wards while using easily identifiable boundaries which resulted in good levels of electoral equality. This has necessitated the redistribution of parish councillors. No submissions were received concerning parish councillor arrangements during Stage One, therefore in the draft recommendations it was

propose that Eton parish comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Eton East and Eton West, each returning seven councillors.

137 At Stage Three, we received no representations in relation to the parish electoral arrangements of Eton parish and propose endorsing the draft recommendations as final subject to renaming Eton West parish ward to reflect the borough ward name of Eton Wick.

Final Recommendation

Eton Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Eton East and Eton Wick, each returning seven councillors. The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

138 The parish of Hurley is currently served by nine councillors, representing two parish wards, Hurley North (returning three councillors) and Hurley South (returning six councillors). The LGCE proposed no change to the parish council electoral arrangements at Stage One. At Stage Three, Hurley Parish Council proposed that Hurley should be represented by 10 councillors representing two wards, with Hurley North parish ward returning four councillors and Hurley South parish ward returning six councillors. A local resident highlighted the imbalance within Hurley parish and proposed that it be represented by nine councillors with Hurley North parish ward returning four councillors and Hurley South parish ward returning five councillors. We acknowledge the submission made by the local resident and consider it to have merit but we propose to adopt the proposals put forward by Hurley Parish Council at Stage Three as we consider this rectifies the representational imbalance within the parish.

Final Recommendation

Hurley Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, one more than at present, representing two parish wards: Hurley North, returning four councillors, and Hurley South returning six councillors.

139 The parish of Old Windsor is currently served by 13 councillors, representing two parish wards, Old Windsor North (returning six councillors) and Old Windsor South (returning seven councillors). At Stage One the LGCE proposed no change to parish council electoral arrangements. At Stage Three, Old Windsor Parish Council proposed that the parish wards be abolished and that Old Windsor parish be represented by 13 councillors as a whole parish. We propose to endorse the Parish Council's proposal as part of the final recommendations.

Final Recommendation

Old Windsor Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing the entire parish. The parish boundary should reflect the proposed borough ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

140 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the borough.

Final Recommendation

Parish and town council elections should continue to take place every four years, at the same time as elections for the district ward of which they are part.

Map 2: Final Recommendations for Windsor & Maidenhead

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

141 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Windsor & Maidenhead and submitted our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

142 It is now up to the Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 5 June 2002.

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

The Secretary
Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
30 Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Windsor & Maidenhead: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Windsor & Maidenhead area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed warding arrangements for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between Ascot & Cheapside ward and Sunninghill & South Ascot ward.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Eton, Maidenhead and Windsor.

Map A1: Final Recommendations for Windsor & Maidenhead: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed boundary between Ascot & Cheapside and Sunninghill & South Ascot wards