

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
WARWICK

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

*November 1999*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Warwick District.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Kru Desai

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Robin Gray

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Warwick is inserted inside the back cover of the report.





## Local Government Commission for England

2 November 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 3 November 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Warwick under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in May 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 102-103) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Warwick.

We recommend that Warwick District Council should be served by 46 councillors representing 20 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that elections should continue to take place every four years.

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

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Warwick on 3 November 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 25 May 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

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

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Warwick:

- **in eight of the 20 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and five wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2003 electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in nine wards and by more than 20 per cent in six wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 102-103) are that:

- **Warwick District Council should have 46 councillors, one more than at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, the same as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 12 of the existing wards should be modified, and eight wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **the whole council should continue to be elected together every four years.**

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

- **In 16 of the proposed 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **Electoral equality is forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards projected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average by 2003.**

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

- **revised town council warding arrangements for Kenilworth;**
- **revised town council warding arrangements for Warwick.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 15 December 1999:

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

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

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1	Abbey (Kenilworth)	3	Abbey ward (part); Stoneleigh ward (part – the Burton Green parish ward of Stoneleigh parish)
2	Bishop's Tachbrook	1	Bishop's Tachbrook ward (part – the parish of Bishop's Tachbrook)
3	Brunswick (Leamington Spa)	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
4	Budbrooke	2	Bishop's Tachbrook ward (the parishes of Barford and Wasperton); Budbrooke ward (part – the parishes of Budbrooke, Norton Lindsey and Sherbourne); Leek Wootton ward (part – the parish of Hatton)
5	Clarendon (Leamington Spa)	2	Clarendon ward (part)
6	Crown (Leamington Spa)	2	<i>Unchanged</i>
7	Cubbington	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Blackdown, Bubbenhall, Cubbington, Eathorpe, Old Milverton, Wappenbury and Weston under Wetherley)
8	Lapworth	1	Lapworth ward (part – the parishes of Baddesley Clinton, Bushwood, Lapworth and Rowington)
9	Leek Wootton	1	Lapworth ward (part – the parish of Wroxhall); Leek Wootton ward (part – the parishes of Beausale, Haseley, Honiley, Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe and Shrewley)
10	Manor (Leamington Spa)	3	Clarendon ward (part); Manor ward
11	Milverton (Leamington Spa)	3	Clarendon ward (part); Milverton ward
12	Park Hill (Kenilworth)	3	Park Hill ward; St John's ward (part)
13	Radford Semele	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Hunningham, Offchurch and Radford Semele)
14	St John's (Kenilworth)	3	Abbey ward (part); St John's ward (part)
15	Stoneleigh	1	Stoneleigh ward (part – the parishes of Ashow and Baginton, and the Stoneleigh parish ward of Stoneleigh parish)

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

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
16	Warwick North	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
17	Warwick South	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
18	Warwick West	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
19	Whitnash	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parish of Whitnash)
20	Willes (Leamington Spa)	3	Clarendon ward (part); Willes ward

Note: Map 2 and Appendix A, including the large map in the back of the report, illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Warwick

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	6,114	2,038	-2	6,197	2,066	-6
2 Bishop's Tachbrook	1	1,579	1,579	-24	2,163	2,163	-1
3 Brunswick	3	6,435	2,145	3	6,779	2,260	3
4 Budbrooke	2	3,596	1,798	-13	4,609	2,305	5
5 Clarendon	2	4,125	2,063	-1	4,338	2,169	-1
6 Crown	2	4,284	2,142	3	4,302	2,151	-2
7 Cubbington	2	4,447	2,224	7	4,625	2,313	5
8 Lapworth	1	2,372	2,372	14	2,414	2,414	10
9 Leek Wootton	1	1,980	1,980	-5	2,032	2,032	-7
10 Manor	3	6,601	2,200	6	6,502	2,167	-1
11 Milverton	3	6,669	2,223	7	6,778	2,259	3
12 Park Hill	3	6,279	2,093	1	6,303	2,101	-4
13 Radford Semele	1	1,994	1,994	4	2,015	2,015	-8
14 St John's	3	6,085	2,028	-2	6,265	2,088	-5
15 Stoneleigh	1	2,022	2,022	-3	2,196	2,196	0
16 Warwick North	3	6,681	2,227	7	6,739	2,246	2
17 Warwick South	3	5,399	1,800	-13	6,293	2,098	-4
18 Warwick West	3	6,325	2,108	2	6,841	2,280	4
19 Whitnash	3	5,688	1,896	-9	6,685	2,228	2
20 Willes	3	6,796	2,265	9	6,890	2,297	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>95,471</b>	—	—	<b>100,966</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,075</b>	—	—	<b>2,195</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Warwick District 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 district. 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 district of Warwick. We have now reviewed the districts in Warwickshire as part of our programme of Periodic Electoral Reviews (PERs) of all principal local authority areas in England.

2 This was our first review of the electoral arrangements of Warwick. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in March 1979 (Report No. 332). We intend to review Warwickshire County Council's electoral arrangements in due course.

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

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

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the District Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also make recommendations on the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the district.

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

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

7 Second, the broad objective of PERs is then to achieve, so far as is practicable, equality of representation across the district as a whole. For example, we will require particular justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

8 Third, we are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that district but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a district's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, not that changes should be made to the size of a district council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other districts.

9 In July 1998, the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one half of the district council would be elected, in year two half the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral areas in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities.

10 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER

programme, including the Warwickshire districts, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we considered that local authorities and other interested parties might wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas.

<sup>11</sup> This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 3 November 1998, when we wrote to Warwick District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament and the Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 8 February 1999. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

<sup>12</sup> Stage Three began on 25 May 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Warwick*, and ended on 19 July 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

<sup>13</sup> The district of Warwick lies in the centre of Warwickshire. The district covers some 28,253 hectares, and has a population of approximately 116,500. It is predominantly urban in character, and is centred upon the three historic towns of Kenilworth, Leamington Spa and Warwick. Whitnash is the fourth largest town in the district, while the remainder of the district is predominantly rural in character. The district contains 33 parishes; Leamington Spa, which contains more than a third of the district's total electorate, is the only unparished part of the district.

<sup>14</sup> To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the district average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

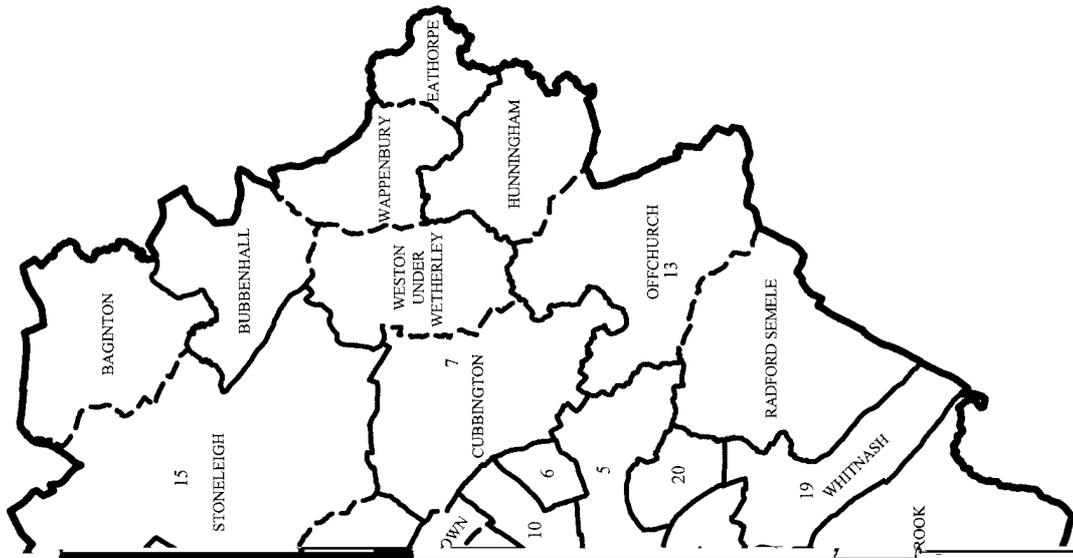
<sup>15</sup> The electorate of the district is 95,471 (February 1998). The Council presently has 45 members who are elected from 20 wards. Thirteen of the wards are relatively urban, encompassing the four main towns of the district, with the remainder being predominantly rural. Eleven of the wards are each represented by three councillors, three are each represented by two councillors and six are single-member wards. The whole council is elected together every four years.

<sup>16</sup> Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Warwick district, with around 19 per cent more electors than two decades ago, primarily as a result of new housing developments. The most notable increases have been in the Warwick and Kenilworth areas. Further housing developments are underway at present in the parish of Hatton and between Warwick and Whitnash.

<sup>17</sup> At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,122 electors, which the District Council forecasts would increase to 2,244 by the year 2003 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 eight of the 20 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, five wards vary by more than 20 per cent and one ward varies by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Crown ward (Leamington Spa) where the three councillors each represent 33 per cent fewer electors than the district average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Warwick



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Figure 3:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	6,551	2,184	3	6,634	2,211	-1
2 Bishop's Tachbrook	1	2,698	2,698	27	3,328	3,328	48
3 Brunswick	3	6,435	2,145	1	6,779	2,260	1
4 Budbrooke	1	2,209	2,209	4	2,226	2,226	-1
5 Clarendon	3	4,935	1,645	-22	5,032	1,677	-25
6 Crown	3	4,284	1,428	-33	4,302	1,434	-36
7 Cubbington	2	4,447	2,224	5	4,624	2,312	3
8 Lapworth	1	2,448	2,448	15	2,490	2,490	11
9 Leek Wootton	1	2,172	2,172	2	3,174	3,174	41
10 Manor	3	6,474	2,158	2	6,502	2,167	-3
11 Milverton	3	6,326	2,109	-1	6,431	2,144	-4
12 Park Hill	2	3,850	1,925	-9	3,874	1,937	-14
13 Radford Semele	1	1,994	1,994	-6	2,015	2,015	-10
14 St John's	3	7,537	2,512	18	7,718	2,573	15
15 Stoneleigh	1	2,562	2,562	21	2,736	2,736	22
16 Warwick North	3	6,681	2,227	5	6,739	2,246	0
17 Warwick South	2	5,399	2,700	27	6,293	3,147	40
18 Warwick West	3	6,325	2,108	-1	6,841	2,280	2
19 Whitnash	3	5,688	1,896	-11	6,685	2,228	-1
20 Willes	3	6,456	2,152	1	6,543	2,181	-3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>95,471</b>	—	—	<b>100,966</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,122</b>	—	—	<b>2,244</b>	—

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Crown ward were significantly over-represented by 33 per cent, while electors in Stoneleigh ward were relatively under-represented by 22 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

18 We received 11 direct representations during Stage One, including district-wide schemes from the District Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Warwick*.

19 Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, particularly having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate. However, we moved away from the Council's scheme in the Kenilworth area, putting forward our own proposals. Overall, we proposed that:

- (a) Warwick District Council should be served by 46 councillors, compared with the current 45, representing 20 wards, the same as at present;
- (b) the boundaries of 14 of the existing wards should be modified, while six wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- (c) there should be new warding arrangements for Kenilworth Town Council.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Warwick District Council should comprise 46 councillors, serving 20 wards. The Council should continue to hold elections on a whole-council basis.

20 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 17 of the proposed 20 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. Electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards projected to vary by no more than 6 per cent from the average by 2003.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

21 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 18 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Warwick District Council and the Commission by appointment.

### Warwick District Council

22 The Council supported the majority of our draft recommendations, accepting our proposal for a council size of 46 members and generally supporting most of the suggested ward boundaries. It proposed that Eathorpe parish should be included within the proposed Cubbington ward and not, as it had proposed in its Stage One submission, the proposed Radford Semele ward.

23 The Council accepted that there was considerable difficulty in its Stage One proposals regarding alterations to parish boundaries in the Bishop's Tachbrook/Whitnash area and consequently withdrew its original suggestions for this part of the district. It also "noted" our proposals for Kenilworth.

### Warwickshire County Council

24 The County Council urged the Commission to reconsider its draft recommendations "to take the opportunity to enable coterminosity to be achieved and to consider making any changes effective simultaneously with changes to county division boundaries".

25 It stated that it objected to the draft recommendations for all five Warwickshire districts on the basis that "the importance of coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards in achieving the statutory objectives of electoral reviews has not been given adequate weight" and considered that "undue weight has been given to the objective of achieving equality of representation largely within the existing framework at district level at the expense of wider considerations". It considered that this situation would cause "either significant inequality of representation or inadequate coterminosity between divisions and

wards to emerge in the subsequent review of county council electoral divisions".

26 The County Council also opposed the use of the centre of roads as ward boundaries which it considered to be "problematical and not conducive to the objective to reflect the interests of local communities". It stated that, where changes to existing ward boundaries are to take effect, "we believe that matching changes to county division boundaries should take place simultaneously" and recognised that "to achieve this it may be necessary to delay district changes or to bring the county electoral review forward". It further stated that such problems "will become even more difficult if the government moves to implement district and county elections in alternate years as set out in its recent *White Paper*".

27 The County Council stated that our proposals for Leamington Spa caused them particular concern; the proposed reduction in size and number of councillors representing Clarendon ward would in its view leave Clarendon ward too small to be a complete division and with no obvious partner with which to create a county division.

### Elected Representatives

28 During Stage Three we received representations from four councillors. District Councillor Butler (Budbrook ward) argued that the settlements of Barford, Hampton Magna and Hatton are distinct communities with little affinity to one another, and that a pattern of single-member wards in that part of the district would be more appropriate. County Councillor Gordon (Rowington division) believed that the rural areas of the district should be represented by single-member wards and that the Hatton Park housing development should be taken into consideration within the electorate projection figures.

29 District Councillor MacKay (Stoneleigh ward) proposed that the Burton Green parish ward of Stoneleigh parish should remain within the proposed district ward of Stoneleigh, rather than being transferred to a Kenilworth-based ward.

County Councillor Windybank (Stoneleigh division) supported the views expressed by Councillor MacKay, stating that the people of Burton Green “value their separate identity as a village”.

## **Parish and Town Councils**

30 We received eight submissions from parish and town councils within the district. Baddesley Clinton Parish Council commented that it wished to be located within the same district ward as Lapworth parish with which, it argued, it has close ties. Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council expressed its opposition to the proposed Budbrooke ward. It reiterated its preference for rural parishes to be represented in single-member wards, a view also expressed by Budbrooke Parish Council. Rowington Parish Council commented on a local parish boundary anomaly.

31 Kenilworth Town Council stated at Stage Three that, although the Town Council as a whole could not agree on precise ward boundaries, it did support our draft recommendation for there to be nine district councillors for Kenilworth rather than the present eight. The Liberal Democrat Group on the Town Council proposed that Kenilworth’s nine district councillors be elected from four district wards. Warwick Town Council also broadly welcomed our draft recommendations for district council wards, although it proposed that the Town Council be represented by 15 councillors, one less than at present, with each ward returning five town councillors. Whitnash Town Council proposed that the boundary of the parish be modified to incorporate parts of the new Heathcote Home Farm development within the parish boundary.

## **Other Representations**

32 A further four representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from local political groups, local organisations and residents. The Burton Green Residents Association commented that it did not support the draft recommendation which placed the Burton Green parish ward of Stoneleigh Parish within the proposed Abbey (Kenilworth) district ward, as Burton Green has “no affinity” with Kenilworth.

33 A local resident wrote to us at Stage Three commenting on the proposals for town wards in Kenilworth. He suggested that each of the three town wards should have an equal number of town

councillors (six) which, it was argued, would provide equitable representation for all town council wards. The Park Hill Conservative Association proposed that Kenilworth Town Council should comprise 17 town councillors, one more than at present. It proposed that the Abbey town ward should be represented by five councillors and Park Hill and St John’s town wards by six councillors each.

34 Another resident commented on our proposals for Cubbington ward, bringing to our attention boundary anomalies between Old Milverton parish (in Cubbington ward) and Leamington Spa. However, in a Periodic Electoral Review we are unable to propose changes to the administrative boundaries of civil parishes. The District Council is able to carry out such a review under the Local Government and Rating Act (1997).

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

35 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Warwick is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

36 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. We must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken.

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

38 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and

over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

### Electorate Forecasts

39 At Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 6 per cent from 95,471 to 100,966 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. It expected most of the growth to be in the south-east of the district, especially in Bishop’s Tachbrook ward, although some was also expected in the existing Leek Wootton ward. 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.

40 In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time. We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

### Council Size

41 As already explained, the Commission’s starting point is to assure that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government.

42 Warwick District Council is at present served by 45 councillors. At Stage One the District Council proposed a small increase in council size, from 45 to 46 members. The Liberal Democrat Group also proposed a moderate increase in council size but based its scheme for the district on an overall council size of 47 members. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral

equality would best be met by a council size of 46 members.

43 During Stage Three the Council stated that it supported our proposal for a council size of 46 members. We did not receive any other comments relating specifically to the proposed council size and we are therefore content to endorse our draft recommendation for a council size of 46 as final.

## Electoral Arrangements

44 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the district-wide schemes from the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council. From these representations, some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

45 The Council and the Liberal Democrat Group fully agreed on a scheme outside the three main towns, and agreed on the numbers of district councillors who should represent the towns of Kenilworth and Warwick. The agreed scheme in the more rural parts of the district secured an improved level of electoral equality, having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate. It was only in the town of Leamington Spa that a fundamental difference resulted (in terms of the number of councillors) between the two district-wide schemes.

46 Given the improved levels of electoral equality that would result, we put forward much of the agreed scheme for the more rural areas of the district, as described above. However, we had to choose between the schemes in the more urban areas of the district. As described in our draft recommendations report, we put forward the Council's proposals for the towns of Leamington Spa and Warwick, and put forward our own proposals in Kenilworth.

47 In response to our draft recommendations report, there was general support for our proposals in the urban areas of the district; however, a number of representations suggested modifications to our draft recommendations in the more rural areas of the district.

48 As stated earlier, Warwickshire County Council opposed the draft recommendations, urging us to reconsider our draft recommendations "to take the opportunity to enable coterminosity to be achieved

and to consider making any changes effective simultaneously with changes to county division boundaries". It had particular concerns about the proposed configuration of district wards in Leamington Spa.

49 This is an issue which has arisen in a number of review areas. It is indicative of the tensions which can arise between the achievement of electoral equality within the individual districts of a county, each of whose electoral arrangements can vary significantly in terms of councillor:elector ratios and ward sizes, and across county council electoral divisions, while also seeking some measure of coterminosity between the two. These tensions are not readily reconciled.

50 In certain cases, it has been put to us that in reviewing district electoral arrangements we should prescribe that ward patterns and sizes should be such that they would be compatible with county council divisions. We do not believe this to be an approach the Commission should take. As a Commission, we rely heavily on local authorities and others to put proposals to us on how the electoral arrangements within their individual areas might be improved. We believe that the interests of local democracy are best served by basing our recommendations on schemes which are generated locally, address the statutory criteria, and achieve a high level of electoral equality.

51 Nevertheless, we recognise that coterminosity between county divisions and district wards is capable of being conducive to effective and convenient local government, and we place a high value on its achievement as part of our reviews of county council electoral arrangements.

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

- (a) Leamington Spa town (six wards);
- (b) Warwick town (three wards);
- (c) Kenilworth town (three wards) and Stoneleigh ward;
- (d) Bishop's Tachbrook and Whitnash wards;
- (e) Budbrooke ward;
- (f) Lapworth and Leek Wootton wards;
- (g) Cubbington and Radford Semele wards.

## **Leamington Spa town (six wards)**

53 Leamington Spa is the largest centre of population in the district. The town is currently divided into six wards: Brunswick, Clarendon, Crown, Manor, Milverton and Willes, each ward being represented by three councillors. Leamington Spa is the only area within Warwick district that is unparished. Currently, the wards of Brunswick, Manor, Milverton and Willes are well represented, all varying by no more than 4 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor either initially or by 2003. However, the wards of Clarendon and Crown are both substantially over-represented, varying by 22 per cent and 33 per cent below the district average respectively (25 per cent and 36 per cent by 2003).

54 At Stage One both the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group submitted proposals for warding arrangements in Leamington Spa. The Council proposed that, overall, the town should be represented by 16 councillors, two less than at present, returned from six wards, the same as at present. The Liberal Democrat Group proposed that the town should be represented by 17 councillors, one less than at present, returned from eight wards. The Group proposed a pattern of predominantly two-member wards throughout the town (with one exception) while the Council proposed a pattern of mainly three-member wards, the exceptions being suggested two-member Clarendon and Crown wards. As stated earlier in this report, and as elaborated in our draft recommendations report, we judged that Leamington Spa should be represented by 16 councillors, and based our proposals on the Council's suggested warding pattern.

55 The Council proposed that no boundary changes should be made to the present Crown and Brunswick wards, but that the number of councillors representing Crown ward should be reduced from three to two. It also proposed relatively minor modifications to the boundaries of the Clarendon, Manor, Milverton and Willes wards in order to improve the overall levels of electoral equality and that the number of councillors representing the modified Clarendon ward should also be reduced from three to two.

56 This scheme would achieve an overall improvement in electoral equality for the six wards of Brunswick, Clarendon, Crown, Manor, Milverton and Willes, with the wards varying by no more than 9 per cent from the district average

initially, and by no more than 5 per cent from the average by 2003. We put these proposals forward in their entirety as our draft recommendations, and invited comments. The District Council stated in its Stage Three submission that it accepted the draft recommendations for Leamington Spa in their entirety. Other than Warwickshire County Council's comments (see below) no other specific comments were received regarding Leamington Spa.

57 As stated earlier, Warwickshire County Council's Stage Three submission opposed elements of our draft recommendations for the town on the ground that the proposals could result in non-coterminous boundaries between district wards and council divisions. It regarded the proposals for Leamington Spa as being of "particular concern" since the proposed Clarendon ward would be too small to be a county division in its own right, and stated that "by recommending this change, the Commission seem to have left themselves very little scope for achieving coterminosity with the later [County Council] review".

58 While we appreciate the County Council's concerns, we have stated above (see paragraphs 44-47) our approach to this issue. This review was of Warwick District Council, not the County Council, and the draft recommendations for Leamington Spa achieve good levels of electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. Given that our draft proposals were endorsed by the District Council and that no alternative scheme was received which would achieve similar levels of electoral equality and meet the County Council's objective, we are content to endorse our draft recommendations for the proposed Leamington Spa wards of Clarendon, Crown, Brunswick, Manor, Milverton and Willes as final. See the large map inserted at the back of the report for further details.

## **Warwick town (three wards)**

59 Warwick town is currently represented by eight district councillors returned from three wards: North, South and West. Warwick North and Warwick West wards are each represented by three members, with Warwick South ward represented by two members. Warwick North and Warwick West are both well represented on the Council at present, varying by 5 per cent and 1 per cent from the average respectively (equal to the average and 2 per cent by 2003). However, Warwick South is one of the two most under-represented wards in the district at present, varying by 27 per cent above the

average and projected to worsen to 40 per cent by 2003 as a result of large-scale housing developments.

60 At Stage One the Council and Liberal Democrat Group both submitted warding proposals for the town. The Council proposed that there should be no modification to the ward boundaries of either Warwick North or Warwick West wards. It proposed that in order to achieve better electoral equality for Warwick South ward and in view of the new housing developments which are currently under construction on the Warwick, Whitnash and Bishop's Tachbrook boundary, modifications should be made between Warwick South ward and the parishes of Whitnash and Bishop's Tachbrook, in addition to allocating an additional (third) councillor to Warwick South to improve electoral equality in area.

61 Although the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals for three two-member and one three-member district wards would also have secured reasonable levels of electoral equality in Warwick, we were of the view that the Council's proposals generally appeared to facilitate better ward boundaries. However, we did not put forward the Council's suggestion to alter the Warwick South ward boundary: as stated in our draft recommendations report, under a Periodic Electoral Review we are unable to propose changes to the administrative boundaries of civil parishes.

62 A good level of electoral equality (having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate) would be achieved without altering the Warwick South ward, except by allocating it an extra district councillor. Given this, we put forward proposals for three three-member wards for Warwick, with no changes to the current ward boundaries, as part of our draft recommendations, and asked for further comments on our proposals during Stage Three. Although the Warwick South ward would initially be over-represented by 13 per cent, all three Warwick wards were projected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the district average by 2003.

63 At Stage Three the Council concurred with our draft recommendations for Warwick town, stating that it accepted our proposal not to alter the Warwick/Bishop's Tachbrook/Whitnash boundary. Warwick Town Council stated in its Stage Three submission that it supported our proposal to increase the representation in Warwick South ward from two to three district councillors. The Town Council also commented on its own electoral

arrangements, an issue which is dealt with towards the end of this chapter. No other specific comments were received regarding the town of Warwick.

64 Given the broad support for our draft recommendations in this area, we are confirming our proposals for three-member Warwick North, Warwick South and Warwick West wards as final.

### **Kenilworth town (three wards) and Stoneleigh ward**

65 The town of Kenilworth is presently served by eight district councillors representing three wards. The three-member Abbey ward is 3 per cent above the average number of electors per councillor (1 per cent below by 2003). The two-member Park Hill ward is over-represented, varying by 9 per cent from the average (14 per cent by 2003). Conversely, the three-member St John's ward is under-represented, varying by 18 per cent from the average (15 per cent by 2003). The neighbouring, predominantly rural single-member ward of Stoneleigh is also somewhat under-represented at present. The ward, comprising the parishes of Ashow, Baginton and Stoneleigh, varies by 21 per cent above the district average (22 per cent by 2003).

66 At Stage One we received four specific representations regarding Kenilworth, from the District Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council, and the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups on Kenilworth Town Council. All of these representations argued that the Burton Green parish ward of Stoneleigh parish (containing 540 electors) should be incorporated into the town for district council warding purposes. All four representations also proposed an overall increase in representation for Kenilworth, from eight to nine district councillors. We stated in our draft recommendations report that if the Burton Green electors were included, Kenilworth would be entitled to this level of representation, although the case for an increase in representation for the town was dependent on the inclusion of these additional electors.

67 Given the apparent local consensus for this proposal, and that given it improved electoral equality in Stoneleigh ward, we agreed that the 'expanded' Kenilworth area should in future be represented by nine district councillors. We were of the view that the case in favour of the Burton Green area being included within Kenilworth for

district warding purposes was strong; not only are there reasonable ties between the two areas but electors in the Stoneleigh parish ward are some distance from Burton Green. Additionally, the loss of Burton Green from the Stoneleigh district ward would improve electoral equality in that area considerably: a revised Stoneleigh ward (without Burton Green) would vary by just 3 per cent from the average initially and would equal the average by 2003.

68 In terms of the number of district councillors to be elected per ward within Kenilworth, the patterns put to us in the four submissions (to attain nine district councillors for the town) were three three-member wards, or three two-member wards plus one three-member ward. Given the present predominance of three-member wards in the urban areas of Warwick district (i.e. the towns of Kenilworth, Leamington Spa and Warwick), and since Kenilworth presently has three district wards, we were of the view that three three-member wards would be the most appropriate warding pattern for the town.

69 We proposed a scheme for the town which built upon elements of the local submissions received. We suggested that the three-member Abbey district ward should be modified by the addition of the Burton Green parish ward from Stoneleigh parish and that some electors in the south-west of Kenilworth be transferred from Abbey ward to St John's ward. Under our scheme the revised three-member Abbey ward would vary by 2 per cent below the average initially, 6 per cent below by 2003. The revised Park Hill and St John's wards would vary by 1 per cent above and 2 per cent below the district average respectively, projected to be 4 per cent below and 5 per cent below by 2003.

70 During Stage Three we received representations regarding Kenilworth from the District Council, Kenilworth Town Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on the Town Council, the Park Hill Branch Conservative Association, the Burton Green Residents Association, District Councillor MacKay, County Councillor Windybank and a local resident. These representations are detailed fully in Chapter 4.

71 Warwick District Council supported the draft proposals for Kenilworth, while the Town Council supported the proposal for there to be nine district councillors for the town, although it had concerns over our suggested warding pattern. The Town Council also commented on its own electoral

arrangements, an issue which is dealt with towards the end of this chapter. The Liberal Democrat Group on the Town Council put forward a suggestion that there should be four wards in Kenilworth rather than three, although it supported the inclusion of the Burton Green parish ward for district council warding purposes. The Park Hill Branch Conservative Association supported the draft recommendations for the proposed district wards in Kenilworth and also commented on town council electoral arrangements.

72 County Councillor Windybank, who represents the Stoneleigh electoral division, argued that the interests of Burton Green residents would be best served within the Stoneleigh ward as, unlike Kenilworth, it is predominantly a rural area. He acknowledged, however, that Burton Green does share reasonable ties with Kenilworth. Councillor Windybank also highlighted the fact that over 800 electors from the present Stoneleigh ward are students in halls of residence who attend Warwick University.

73 District Councillor MacKay, who represents the Stoneleigh ward, expanded on the issue of student electors in his submission, stating that they were, by their nature, a transient population and as such they had little call for local amenities. He also noted that there had been a very low turnout at the polls by the students in his ward at the May 1999 local elections. Councillor MacKay argued that as such a large proportion of the local electorate were students, the Commission should allow the Stoneleigh ward to remain considerably under-represented.

74 Although the points raised by Councillors Windybank and MacKay may be valid, it is a duty of the Commission to have regard to both the current electorate (at the commencement of a review) and five-year electorate forecasts during a Periodic Electoral Review. The Local Government Act (1972) states that: "Having regard to any change in the number or distribution of the *local government electors* [our emphasis] of the district or borough likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration.

(a) the ratio of the number of *local government electors* [our emphasis] to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough. (The Local Government Act (1972) Sch 11, 3. 2 (a))"

We are therefore duty bound to take into account all local government electors as stipulated in the Act. This results in the inclusion of electors such as students, or indeed seasonal workers or members of the armed services, if they appear on the current electoral register at the commencement of a Periodic Electoral Review, regardless of whether or not their residence in a locality may be transitory.

75 The Burton Green Residents Association also wrote to us during Stage Three. The Association stated that it had carried out a consultation exercise within Burton Green, asking for local residents' comments on our draft recommendations. The Association stated that some 72 per cent of households consulted did not wish to see any changes to the existing warding arrangements in the area.

76 While we have some sympathy for the views of those respondents who oppose the inclusion of Burton Green electors within a Kenilworth-based district council ward, there has been no viable alternative proposed to us. Were we to recommend that the parish ward of Burton Green remain in an unchanged Stoneleigh ward, that ward would be some 25 per cent under-represented by 2003, which we consider too high a level of electoral inequality when alternatives are available.

77 Given the support of the Council and others for our draft recommendations in Kenilworth and Stoneleigh, we are confirming our proposed three-member district council wards of Abbey, Park Hill and St John's as final. We have not been persuaded that we should move away from a pattern of three-member wards for Kenilworth, nor to move away from the specific boundaries we put forward as draft recommendations. We are also confirming our draft recommendation for a revised Stoneleigh ward as final (see Maps A2 and A3 for further details). Proposals in respect of Kenilworth Town Council's electoral arrangements are detailed at the end of this chapter.

### **Bishop's Tachbrook and Whitnash wards**

78 The three-member Whitnash ward consists solely of the parish of that name at present, while the neighbouring single-member Bishop's Tachbrook ward presently comprises the parishes of Barford, Bishop's Tachbrook and Wasperton. Whitnash ward varies by 11 per cent below the average number of electors per councillor, although it is

forecast to improve to just 1 per cent below the average by 2003. Bishop's Tachbrook ward is considerably under-represented and exceeds the average number of electors per councillor by 27 per cent at present, increasing to 48 per cent by 2003. Between them, the two wards are projected to increase by more than 1,600 electors by 2003, primarily due to large-scale housing development around the Warwick/Bishop's Tachbrook/Whitnash boundary.

79 As stated previously in this report, the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council agreed on a scheme for Whitnash and the rural areas during Stage One. However, this scheme involved changes to parish boundaries in the area where the Warwick/Bishop's Tachbrook/Whitnash boundaries meet. As explained earlier in relation to Warwick (paragraph 61), we are unable to propose changes to the administrative boundaries of civil parishes as part of a Periodic Electoral Review.

80 As part of our draft recommendations, we proposed that the three-member Whitnash ward remain unchanged, as it would retain a good level of electoral equality (having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate) under a council size of 46. However, to improve electoral equality in Bishop's Tachbrook ward, we proposed that the parish of Bishop's Tachbrook form a single-member ward on its own, and that the parishes of Barford and Wasperton be transferred to a new two-member Budbrooke ward (see later paragraphs).

81 Under our draft recommendations the wards of Whitnash and Bishop's Tachbrook would initially be over-represented by 9 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. However, due to the projected increase in electorate, neither ward was expected to vary by more than 2 per cent from the average by 2003.

82 Our draft recommendations were generally well received locally, with the Council supporting our proposals in this area. Given the Council's support and in the absence of other views, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Whitnash and Bishop's Tachbrook wards as final.

### **Budbrooke ward**

83 As a consequence of needing to transfer the parishes of Barford and Wasperton from the present Bishop's Tachbrook ward, we also proposed consequential changes to other wards in the southern and south-western parts of the

district. Although the present single-member Budbrooke ward (consisting of the parishes of Budbrooke, Norton Lindsey and Sherbourne) varies from the district average by only 4 per cent (1 per cent by 2003), we concurred with the Council that the ward should be revised to improve electoral equality in the area as a whole.

84 The Council and the Liberal Democrat Group proposed in their Stage One submissions that Budbrooke should become a two-member ward. In addition to its present three parishes, it was suggested that the parishes of Barford and Wasperton (from Bishop's Tachbrook ward) and Hatton (from Leek Wootton ward) should be added. The modified ward would initially vary below the district average number of electors per councillor by 13 per cent, but was projected to improve to 5 per cent above the average by 2003, primarily because of anticipated house building in Hatton parish.

85 As stated in our draft recommendations report, we considered whether the proposed two-member Budbrooke ward could be divided into two single-member wards, but the spread of electorate across the constituent parishes made this impractical. It would have required the parish of Budbrooke to be divided between the two single-member wards to attain reasonable electoral equality, a proposition which did not appear to have local support or reflect local communities. We therefore put forward the Council's and Liberal Democrat Group's proposals for a new two-member Budbrooke ward.

86 District Councillor Butler, who represents the present Budbrooke ward, raised concerns about the proposed two-member Budbrooke ward. He argued that the communities of Barford, Hampton Magna and Hatton, which would all be included within the proposed ward, have no affinity with each other. Councillor Butler also proposed changes to parish boundaries which would, in his view, better reflect the new housing developments on the Warwick/Bishop's Tachbrook/Whitnash boundary and in the parish of Hatton. As stated previously in this report, we are unable to propose changes to the administrative boundaries of civil parishes as part of a Periodic Electoral Review.

87 Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton Joint Parish Council stated that, while it welcomed the BudbrookPad to

Baddesley Clinton and Wroxall should be transferred to a modified Leek Wootton district ward in order to improve electoral equality. A modified Lapworth ward would therefore consist solely of the parishes of Bushwood, Lapworth and Rowington, and would vary by 7 per cent from the average initially, and 2 per cent by 2003.

92 As stated above, the parish of Hatton would be transferred into a new two-member Budbrooke ward. A modified Leek Wootton ward would therefore gain the parishes of Baddesley Clinton and Wroxall but lose the parish of Hatton. Under the draft proposals the modified single-member Leek Wootton ward would vary by 3 per cent from the average initially and would equal the average by 2003.

93 During Stage Three we received support from the Council for our proposals in this area. However, Baddesley Clinton Parish Council objected to the proposed transfer of the parish from Lapworth ward, stating that it shares close ties with Lapworth and that the proposed Leek Wootton ward “seems geographically far flung. Rowington Parish Council commented on a parish boundary anomaly between the parishes of Rowington and Lapworth; however, as indicated previously, this is not an issue that can be dealt with as part of a Periodic Electoral Review.

94 The case for including Baddesley Clinton Parish Council within either Lapworth ward or Leek Wootton ward is finely balanced. The draft recommendations would secure an excellent level of electoral equality in both proposed wards; neither is projected to vary by more than 2 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor by 2003. If the parish, which contains around 160 electors, were instead placed in the revised Lapworth ward, electoral equality would marginally deteriorate. However, there are also the community links to consider.

95 On balance, we propose to support Baddesley Clinton Parish Council’s request to be retained within the current Lapworth district ward. We are of the view that the community identity arguments put forward by the parish council marginally outweigh the electoral equality arguments in this area. Although such a modification of our draft recommendations would lead to a marginal deterioration in the level of electoral equality in the two wards, we are of the view that Baddesley Clinton’s links with Lapworth could be

detrimentally affected were the parish to be located within the revised Leek Wootton ward.

96 We propose, therefore, to modify our draft recommendations and are now of the view that the parish of Baddesley Clinton should be located within a revised Lapworth ward. The revised Leek Wootton ward would vary from the district average by 5 per cent initially, 7 per cent by 2003, with the proposed Lapworth ward varying by 14 per cent initially, 10 per cent by 2003. See Map 2 for details.

### **Cubbington and Radford Semele wards**

97 The two-member Cubbington ward, which consists of the parishes of Blackdown, Bubbenhall, Cubbington, Eathorpe, Old Milverton, Wappenbury and Weston-under-Weatherley, presently varies above the district average by 5 per cent (3 per cent by 2003). The neighbouring single-member Radford Semele ward, which consists of the parishes of Hunningham, Offchurch and Radford Semele, varies below the average by 6 per cent (10 per cent by 2003).

98 In order to improve electoral equality, we proposed in our draft recommendations that Eathorpe parish, which presently contains around 100 electors, be transferred from Cubbington ward to Radford Semele ward. The modified wards would respectively vary by 5 per cent and 1 per cent from the average initially (both 2 per cent from the average by 2003). This proposal had been put to us by both the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group in their Stage One submissions.

99 At Stage Three the Council stated that “with hindsight” it wished to withdraw its initial proposal to move Eathorpe parish from Cubbington ward to Radford Semele ward, stating that it was now of the view that residents in Eathorpe shared a much closer affinity and identity with other parishes in the present Cubbington ward than with those in Radford Semele ward. No other direct comments were received on this issue during Stage Three.

100 Making this alteration would worsen electoral equality in this area, albeit marginally; unchanged Cubbington and Radford Semele wards would, under a council size of 46, respectively vary by 7 per cent and 4 per cent from the district average number of electors per councillor initially, and by 5 per cent and 8 per cent by 2003. However, the community identity arguments put forward also

need to be considered.

101 There are clearly ties between the parish of Eathorpe and the neighbouring parish of Wappenbury, although it could also be argued that Eathorpe shares links with the parish of Hunningham, in Radford Semele ward. It is a finely balanced case. Given that the District Council supports a reversion to the present warding pattern in this area on community identity grounds, and given that the level of electoral equality would remain at a reasonable level, both initially and by 2003, we concur with the Council's Stage Three proposal to leave Eathorpe parish within Cubbington ward. This modification, as stated above, would result in the wards of Cubbington and Radford Semele being unchanged from the present arrangements.

## Conclusions

102 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following modifications:

- We propose the Eathorpe parish be retained within Cubbington district ward, rather than being transferred to Radford Semele district ward.
- We propose changes to the town council

electoral arrangements of Kenilworth and Warwick town councils (see later paragraphs).

103 We conclude that in Warwick District:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 45 to 46;
- (b) there should be 20 wards, the same as at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 12 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) the Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

104 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures.

105 As Figure 4 shows our final recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from eight to four. This improved level of electoral equality would improve further by 2003, with no wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

*Figure 4 :  
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	45	46	45	46
Number of wards	20	20	20	20
Average number of electors per councillor	2,122	2,075	2,244	2,195
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	4	9	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	5	1	6	0

### **Final Recommendation**

Warwick District Council should comprise 46 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

## **Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

106 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, in our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for Kenilworth Town Council to reflect the proposed district wards in the town.

107 In Stage Three, we received representations on this issue. Kenilworth Town Council stated in its Stage Three submission that due to the increase in district council representation to 9 councillors, it felt that the number of town councillors should be increased to 18, giving a pattern of three town wards represented by six town councillors each “so as to ensure equal representation of the wards on the Town Council”. A local resident supported the proposed increase in town council size, stating that in order to give a balanced representation across the three modified district wards (which he supported) he proposed that the Town Council be increased by two members, giving an overall council size of 18 members. The Park Hill Conservative Association also supported the proposal to increase the town council's size and proposed increasing the number of town councillors by one from 16 to 17, giving a pattern of five, six and six councillors per town council ward. A case could be made for an increase in town council representation of two, however given that Burton Green parish ward is part of the district ward, but not of the town council area, an overall ‘best fit’ for the Town Council, in terms of elector/councillor ratios, would be achieved by an increase of one town councillor. Abbey ward would be represented by five town councillors, which

would, in our view, better reflect the composition of the Town Council. See Maps A2 and A3 for details.

108 We propose that Kenilworth Town Council be represented by 17 town councillors, one more than at present, and that the town wards be coterminous with the proposed district wards. We propose that the town ward of Abbey be represented by five town councillors, and that Park Hill and St John's town wards be represented by six town councillors each.

### **Final Recommendation**

The boundary between the three Kenilworth town council wards of Abbey, St John's and Park Hill should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Maps 2, A2 and A3. The revised Abbey town ward should be represented by five town councillors, while the revised Park Hill St John's wards should be represented by six town councillors each.

109 Warwick Town Council proposed that its three town wards, the boundaries of which would be unchanged under our final recommendations, should be represented by five town councillors each, an overall reduction of one town councillor. This would produce a balanced representation for the Town Council between the three town wards, particularly having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate. We are therefore content to propose that Warwick Town Council be represented by 15 town councillors, one less than at present, providing for a uniform pattern of five-member town council wards which would be coterminous with the proposed district council wards.

### **Final Recommendation**

The boundaries between the three Warwick town council wards of North, South and West should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Map 2. The revised town wards of North, South and West should be represented by five town councillors each.

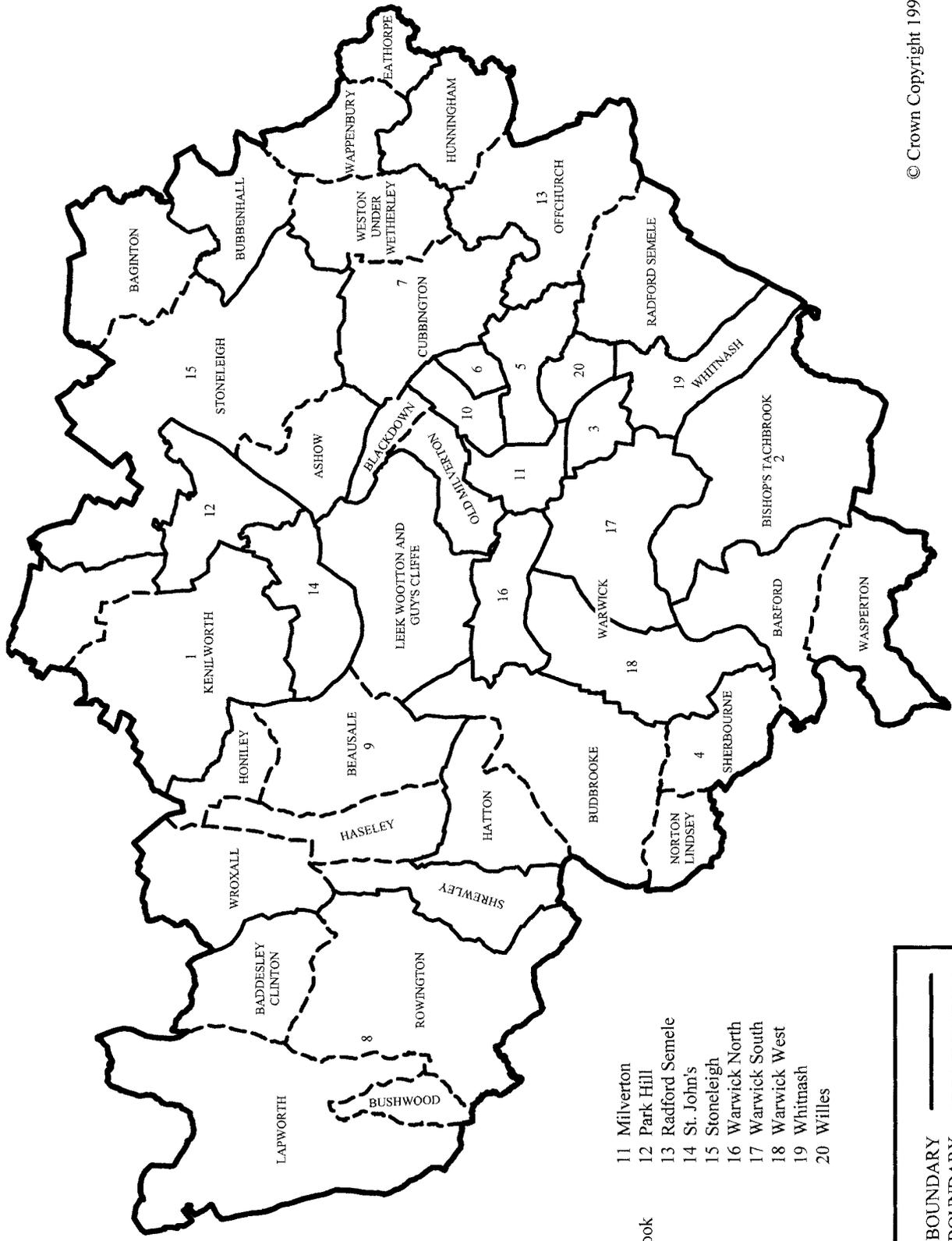
110 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the

present electoral cycle of parish or town councils in the district, and we are confirming this as final.

### **Final Recommendation**

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

Map 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Warwick



- Key to Wards
- 1 Abbey
  - 2 Bishop's Tachbrook
  - 3 Brunswick
  - 4 Budbrooke
  - 5 Clarendon
  - 6 Crown
  - 7 Cubbington
  - 8 Lapworth
  - 9 Leek Wootton
  - 10 Manor
  - 11 Milverton
  - 12 Park Hill
  - 13 Radford Semele
  - 14 St. John's
  - 15 Stoneleigh
  - 16 Warwick North
  - 17 Warwick South
  - 18 Warwicks West
  - 19 Whitnash
  - 20 Willes

KEY

PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY ———

EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY - - - - -

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## 6. NEXT STEPS

<sup>111</sup> Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Warwick and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

<sup>112</sup> It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

<sup>113</sup> All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Sponsorship Division  
Eland House  
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# APPENDIX A

## Final Recommendations for Warwick: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Warwick area.

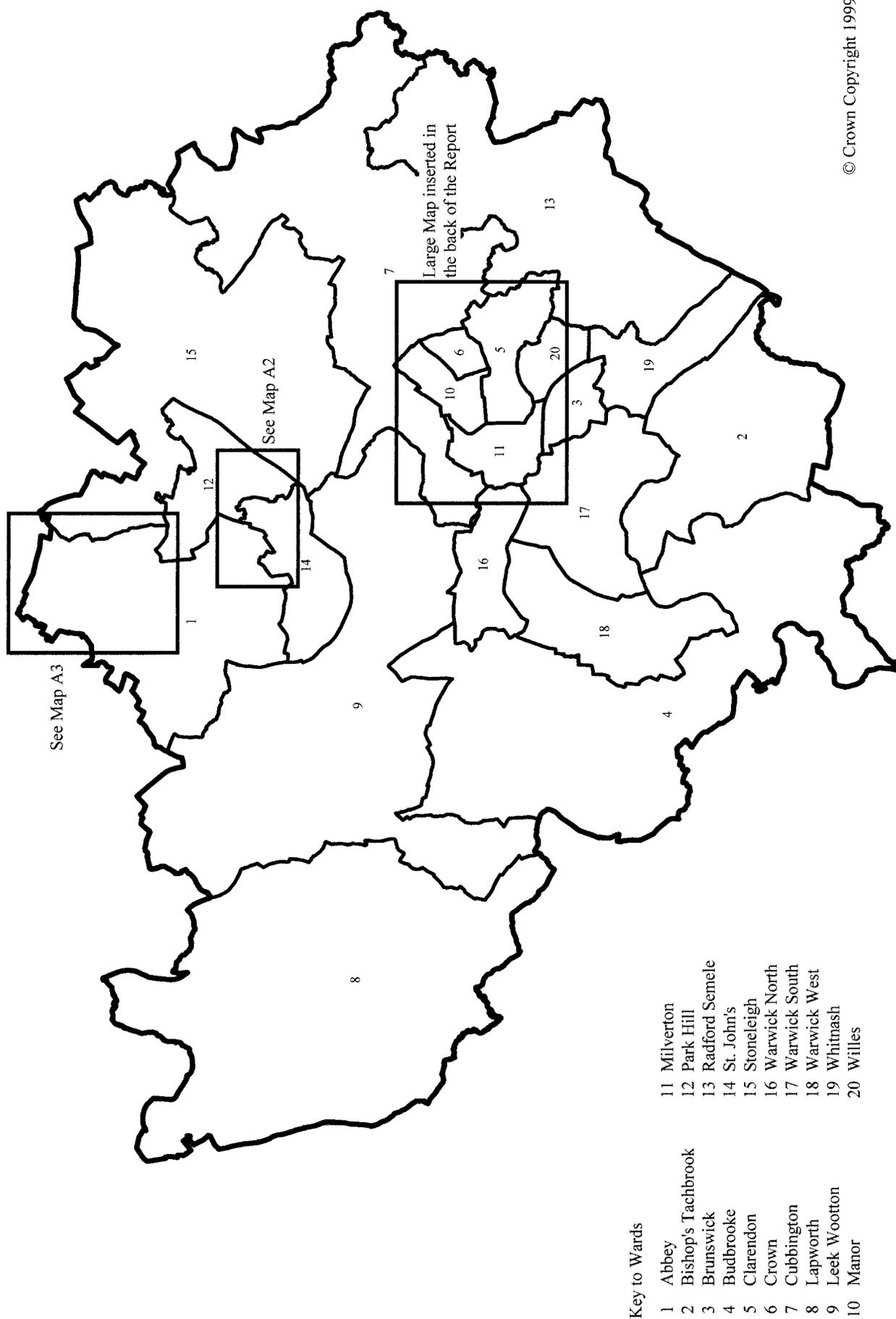
**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Maps A2 and A3 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding of Kenilworth.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposal to include the Burton Green parish ward of Stoneleigh parish within the revised Abbey ward.

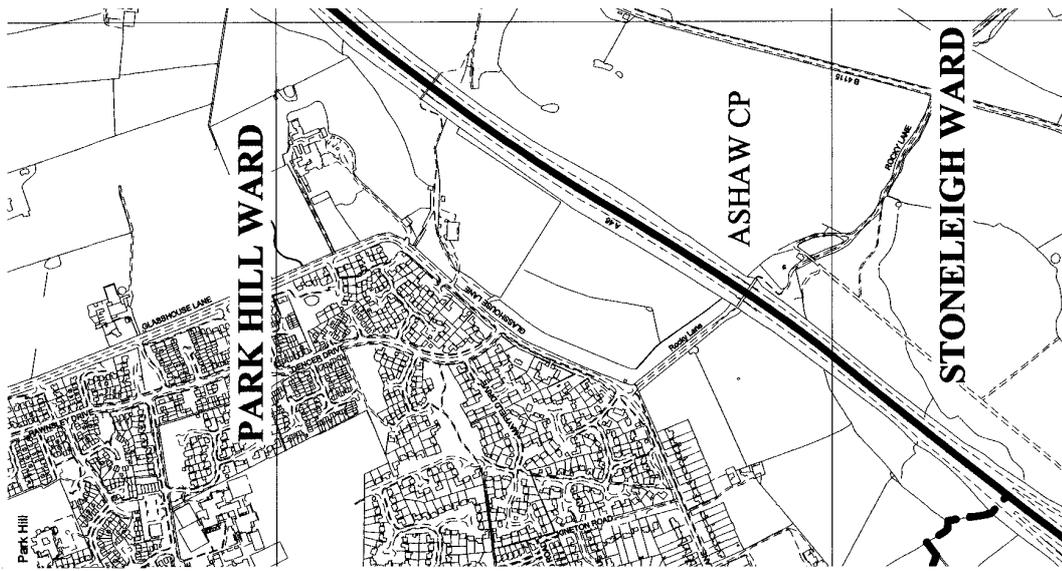
The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Royal Leamington Spa.

Map A1:  
*Final Recommendations for Warwick: Key Map*

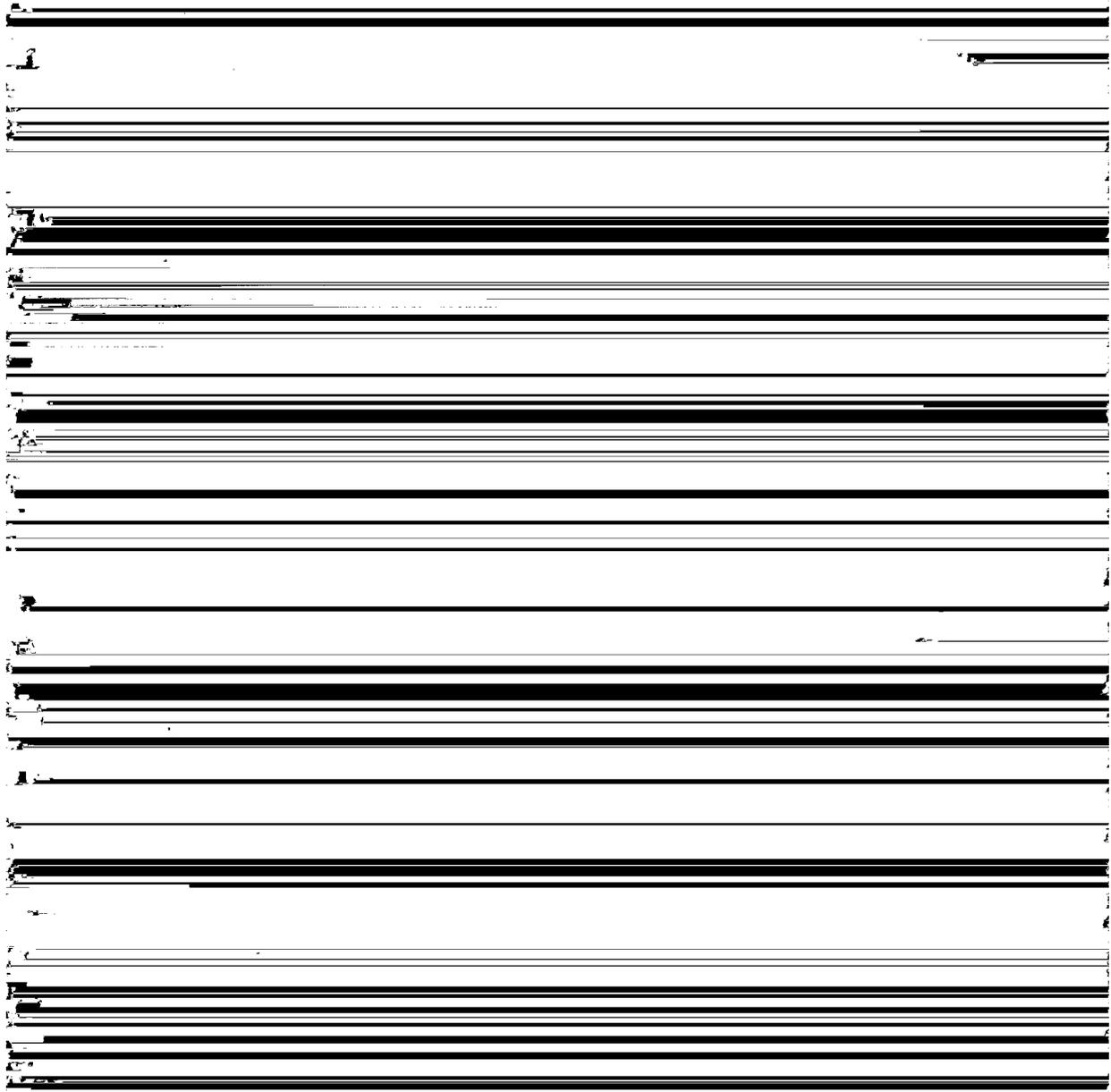


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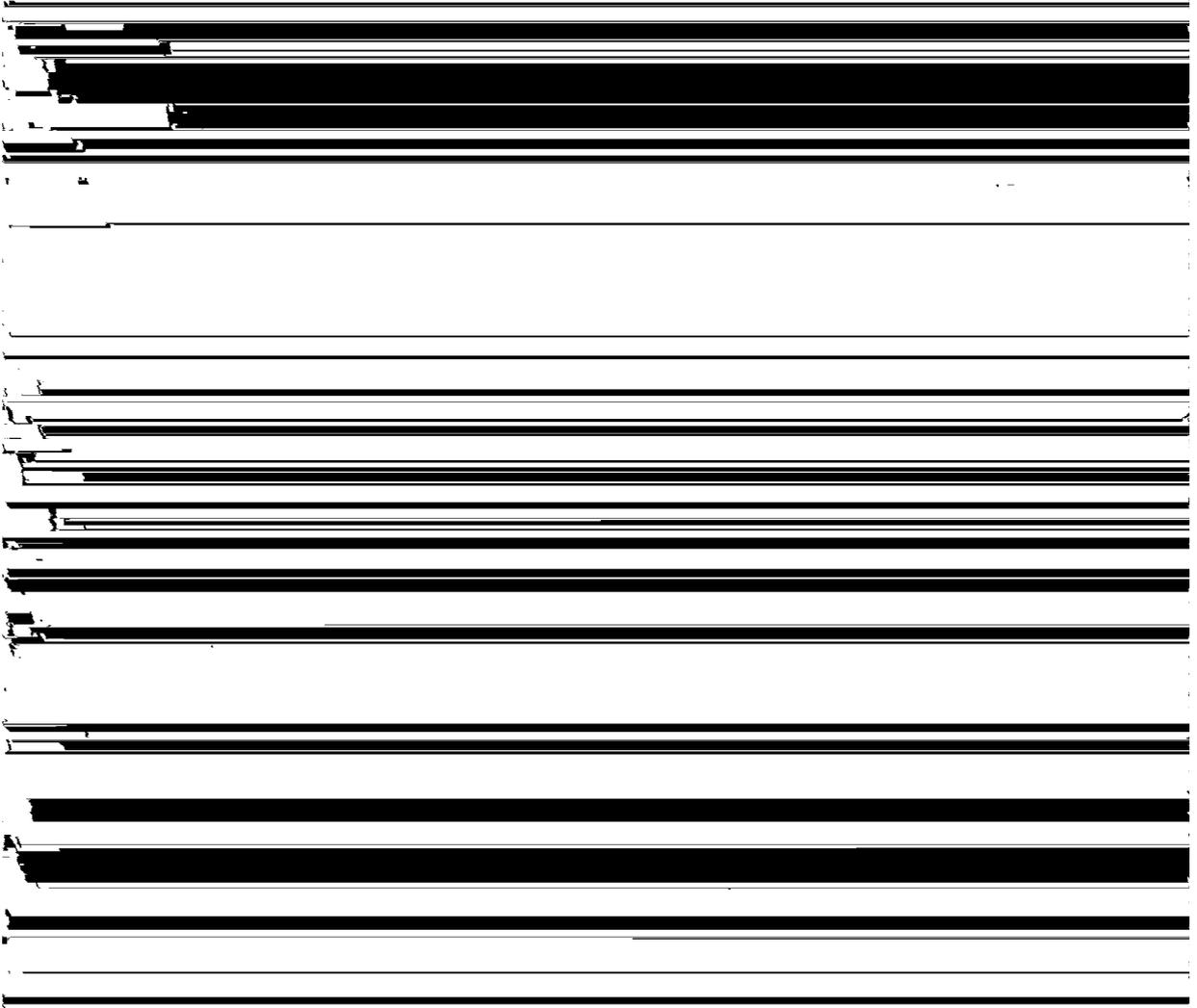
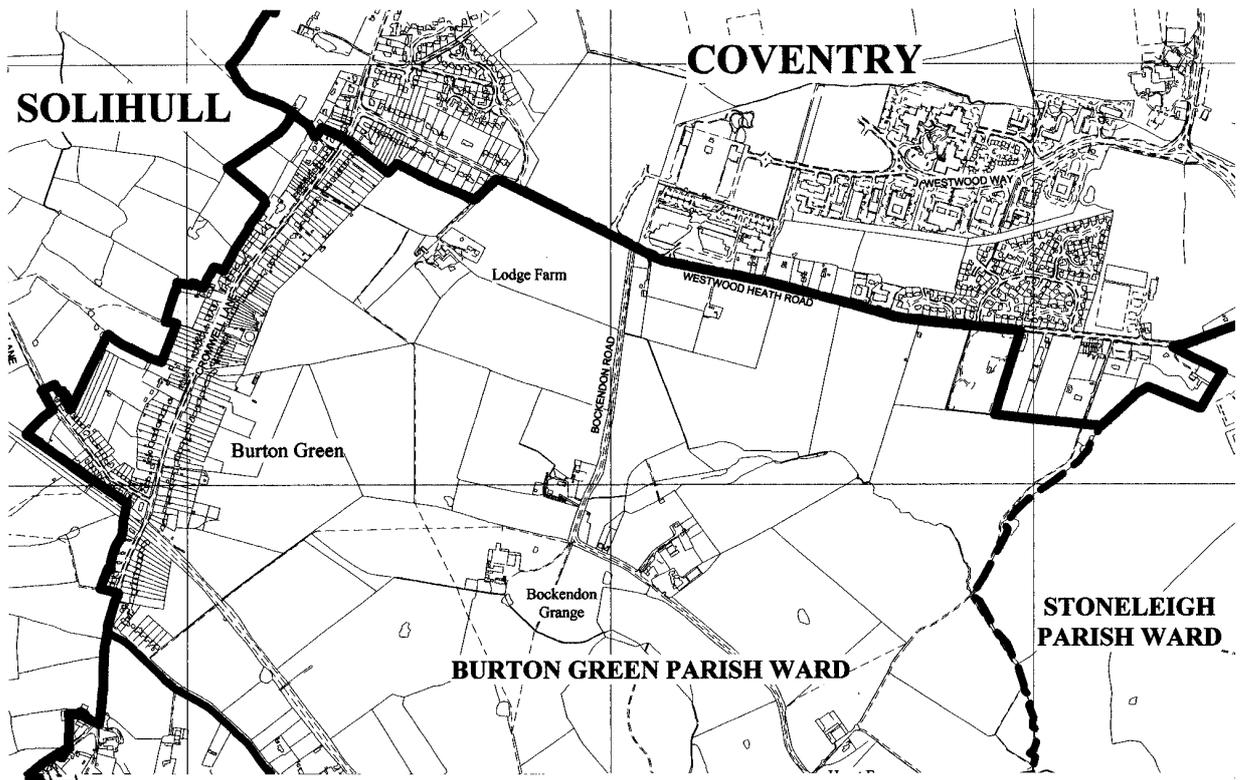
Map A2:  
The Proposed Warding of Kenilworth



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Map A3:  
The Burton Green Parish Ward of Stoneleigh Parish



# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Warwick

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of only two wards, where our draft proposals are set out below.

*Figure B1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

Ward name	Constituent areas
Cubbington	Cubbington ward (part – the parishes of Blackdown, Bubbenhall, Cubbington, Old Milverton, Wappenbury and Weston under Wetherley)
Lapworth	Lapworth ward (part – the parishes of Bushwood, Lapworth and Rowington)
Leek Wootton	Lapworth ward (part – the parishes of Baddesley and Wroxhall); Leek Wootton ward (part – the parishes of Beausale, Haseley, Honiley, Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe and Shrewley)
Radford Semele	Cubbington ward (part – the parish of Eathorpe); Radford Semele ward (the parishes of Hunningham, Offchurch and Radford Semele)

*Figure B2:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Cubbington	2	4,345	2,173	5	4,482	2,241	2
Lapworth	1	2,215	2,215	7	2,246	2,246	2
Leek Wootton	1	2,137	2,137	3	2,200	2,200	0
Radford Semele	1	2,096	2,096	1	2,158	2,158	-2

*Source: Electorate figures are based on material provided by Warwick District 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

