

Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
For England  
Report No. 384

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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To the Rt Hon William Whitelaw, CH MC, MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department

PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE  
DISTRICT OF WIMBORNE IN THE COUNTY OF DORSET

1. We, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, having carried out our initial review of the electoral arrangements for the district of Wimborne, in accordance with the requirements of section 63 of, and Schedule 9 to, the Local Government Act 1972, present our proposals for the future electoral arrangements for that district.

2. In accordance with the procedure laid down in Section 60(1) and (2) of the 1972 Act, notice was given on 31 December 1974 that we were to undertake this review. This was incorporated in a consultation letter addressed to Wimborne District Council, copies of which were circulated to Dorset County Council, town councils, parish councils and parish meetings in the district, the Member of Parliament for the constituency concerned and the headquarters of the main political parties. Copies were also sent to the editors of the local newspapers circulating in the area and of the local government press. Notices inserted in the local press announced the start of the review and invited comments from members of the public and from interested bodies.

3. Wimborne District Council were invited to prepare a draft scheme of representation for our consideration. When doing so, they were asked to observe the rules laid down in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, and the guidelines set out in our Report No 6 about the proposed size of the Council and the proposed number of councillors for each ward. They were also asked to take into account any views expressed to them following their consultation with local interests. We therefore asked that they should publish details of their provisional proposals about a month before they submitted their draft scheme to us, thus allowing an opportunity for local comment.

4. In accordance with section 7(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has exercised an option for a system of whole council elections.
5. On 3 June 1975 the District Council presented their draft scheme of representation. The Council proposed to divide the area of the district into 24 wards, each returning 1, 2 or 3 members to form a council of 37 members.
6. We considered the draft scheme together with copies of the correspondence received by the Council during the preparation of the scheme and after its publication, as well as the comments we had received direct.
7. We accepted the suggestion of Pamphill and Shapwick Parish Council that the parish of Shapwick should be transferred from the proposed Wimborne Minster ward to the proposed Sturminster Marshall ward in order to preserve local ties.
8. We noted that the District Council's draft scheme produced some imbalance in representation in favour of the rural areas. We therefore decided that the proposed wards of Holt, Knowlton, Sixpenny Handley and Vale of Allen should be regrouped to form three wards by dividing the four parishes in the proposed Knowlton ward between the proposed wards of Holt and Sixpenny Handley. The size of the district council would then be reduced by one rural member and the overall equality of representation improved.
9. We considered the names of the proposed wards and decided that the proposed ward of Beaufoys and Tricketts Cross should be renamed Tricketts Cross.
10. Subject to the changes referred to in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above we concluded that the District Council's draft scheme provided a reasonable basis for the future electoral arrangements for the district in compliance with the rules in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act and our guidelines and we formulated our draft proposals accordingly.

11. On 12 February 1976 we issued our draft proposals and these were sent to all who had received our consultation letter or had commented on the District Council's draft scheme. The Council were asked to make these draft proposals and the accompanying map, which illustrated the proposed ward boundaries, available for inspection at their main offices. Representations on our draft proposals were invited from those to whom they were circulated and, by public notices, from other members of the public and interested bodies. We asked for comments to reach us by 20 April 1976.

12. Wimborne District Council together with Holt Parish Council and Knowlton Parish Council objected to the reduction in rural representation. The parish councils also objected to the proposed warding of the parishes in the Knowlton area on the grounds that local ties had not been observed. The Sixpenny Handley Parish Council objected to our proposal that the parish of Woodlands should be joined to the parish of Sixpenny Handley to form a single member ward on the grounds that there was no community of interest between the two parishes.

13. Ferndown Town Council favoured the creation of additional single member wards in the parish of Hampreston and suggested that the proposed two-member wards of Ferndown Central and Tricketts Cross should be divided to achieve this. A local ratepayers association submitted an alternative scheme for dividing the parish of Hampreston into 8 single-member wards. Their proposals were supported by another local ratepayers federation.

14. In view of these comments we decided that we needed further information to enable us to reach a conclusion. Therefore, in accordance with section 65(2) of the 1972 Act and at our request, Mr L H Baines OBE was appointed an Assistant Commissioner to hold a local meeting and to report to us.

15. The Assistant Commissioner held a meeting at Wimborne on 10 November 1977. A copy of his report to us is attached at Schedule 1 to this report.

16. In the light of discussion at the meeting and his inspection of the areas concerned the Assistant Commissioner recommended that our draft proposals should be confirmed subject to one modification, the transfer of the parish of Woodlands from the proposed ward of Sixpenny Handley to the proposed ward of Holt.

17. We reviewed our draft proposals in the light of the comments which we had received and of the report of the Assistant Commissioner. We accepted the Assistant Commissioner's recommendations and, subject to the modification which he recommended we decided that our draft proposals should be confirmed as our final proposals.

18. In order to implement these proposals it was necessary for warding orders to be made by the District Council in relation to the parishes of Corfe Mullen, Hampreston, West Moors and St Leonards and St Ives. These orders were made on 6 May 1980.

19. Details of our final proposals are set out in Schedules 2 and 3 to this report. Schedule 2 gives the names of the wards and the number of councillors to be returned by each. Schedule 3 is a description of the boundaries of the proposed wards which are shown on the attached map.

PUBLICATION

20. In accordance with section 60(5)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, a copy of this report and a copy of the map are being sent to Wimborne District Council and will be available for public inspection at the Council's main offices. Copies of this report (without the map) are being sent to those who received the consultation letter and to those who made comments.

L.S.

Signed:

NICHOLAS MORRISON - (CHAIRMAN)

JOHN M RANKIN (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN)

PHYLLIS BOWDEN

TYRRELL BROCKBANK

G E CHERRY

D P HARRISON

R R THORNTON

L B GRIMSHAW  
(Secretary)

29 May 1980

REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS - DISTRICT OF WIMBORNE.REPORT OF ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

1. A local meeting was held on Thursday, 10 November, 1977 at the Allendale Community Centre, Wimborne, at which the persons whose names and addresses appear in Annex 'A' were present, to hear representations relating to the draft proposals of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for the District of Wimborne in the County of Dorset.
2. The draft proposals provided for the division of the District into 23 wards, the boundaries of which were defined by reference to existing parishes or wards of parishes, or in the case of the parishes of Hampreston, West Moors, St. Leonards and St. Ives and Corfe Mullen to proposed wards to be included in orders to be made under S.50(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 by the District Council; the draft proposals provided for 13 of the 23 wards each to return one councillor, seven wards each to return two councillors, and three wards each to return three councillors, a total of 36 councillors for the whole District.
3. The principal objections to the draft proposals related to the scale of representation in the rural areas and to the desire for single member wards. Detailed objections, some of which are related to these two principal objections are dealt with below.
4. Two letters dated 30.10.77 and 10.11.77 from Miss J. M. Chadwick to the Secretary of the Commission were forwarded to me. At the meeting I enquired if Miss Chadwick were present, and, on her identifying herself, I explained to her that the matters raised in her letters, which dealt with the ownership of land, were not matters for decision by the Commission and did not come within the scope of the meeting, but that all electors within the District had a valid concern with the subject of the draft proposals, and that if she wished to remain and address me I would be prepared to hear her. She appeared to understand the tenor of my remarks, but shortly afterwards of her own accord left the meeting and did not subsequently return.
5. Rural Representation. The District Council in their draft scheme had provided for a council of 37 members, with the intention of preserving some element of rural weighting. They objected to the reduction to 36 members in the draft proposals and urged a return to the provisions of the draft scheme. In this they were supported by Sixpenny Handley parish council, who, however, were unrepresented at the meeting, by Holt parish council, who clearly felt strongly on the point, and by Knowlton parish council, whose group of four parishes would be split between two wards in the draft proposals. The provisions of para. 3 of Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972 were drawn to the attention of the objectors and it was explained that the Commission in preparing their draft proposals were bound by these statutory provisions. The Council's draft scheme would provide a substantial degree of over-representation of 14 rural parishes, and on the Council's own estimates the situation will worsen in the near future. Under the draft proposals, representation would at present accord closely with entitlement, but with the balance moving in favour of the rural areas (though within acceptable limits) by 1980. The draft proposals, it is true, involve a substantial regrouping of the 14 parishes concerned, and the four parishes jointly administered by the Knowlton parish council would be split between two proposed wards. I have, however, no doubt that the reduction in the numbers of councillors from 37 to 36 is the right method of correcting the rural weighting element in the draft scheme and that it forms a suitable basis for representation of the rural parishes.
6. Sixpenny Handley, Vale of Allen and Holt wards. Arising from the foregoing, it becomes necessary to consider whether the grouping in the draft proposals is suitable as well as being numerically acceptable. Holt parish council had suggested in correspondence that they should continue to be linked

with Hinton Parva, as at present, but no representations had been received from Hinton Parva and the point was not raised by the representative of Holt at the meeting. Sixpenny Handley parish council had pressed strongly in correspondence against the proposed grouping of that parish with Woodlands parish with whom it was claimed they had virtually nothing in common. Knowlton parish council, representing the four parishes of Horton, Chalbury, Woodlands and Wimborne St. Giles had concentrated their objection on the two aspects of rural weighting and the avoidance of splitting the four parishes between different wards, and therefore did not deal, other than in those terms, with the individual parishes in the group. At the meeting I tentively sounded the possibility of Woodlands being grouped with Holt rather than Sixpenny Handley, on the assumption that some re-grouping of the four Knowlton parishes might be necessary or desirable; to this I found no opposition and Mr. Press, for the District Council, expressed the view that the Council would not be likely to object to such a proposal. I subsequently inspected the whole of the area covered by the 14 parishes. It is clearly far from easy to suggest wholly acceptable groupings in this area, especially when taking into account various divisive geographical features, including the main Dorchester-Salisbury road (A354). Indeed I found much point in the Sixpenny Handley claim of a total lack of affinity with Woodlands. (Wimborne St. Giles, though actually reaching further east than Woodlands, has its main centre and population to the north of Woodlands and substantially nearer to Sixpenny Handley). I suspect that Woodlands has much more in common with Chalbury and Horton, and with only 256 electors could conveniently be transferred to the Holt ward. The entitlement figures, as set out below would still be within acceptable limits and I recommend accordingly

<u>Ward</u>	<u>No. of Cllrs</u>	<u>1975</u>		<u>1980</u>	
		<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>	<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Entitlement</u>
Holt	1	1503	1.21	1503	1.04
Sixpenny Handley	1	968	0.78	1145	0.79

7. Single-member wards. A number of arguments was strongly urged upon me in favour of single-member wards, with special emphasis on the parish of Hampreston, on behalf of the Ferndown and District Ratepayers Association, the East Dorset Ratepayers and Residents Federation and the Ferndown Town, Council as well as by others representing individual interests and other areas.

8. It was argued that single-members wards enable the elector to be more closely conscious of who represents him on the District Council, that Hampreston has suffered from the present situation of seven councillors for one ward, that communication between public and councillors is made easier, particularly now that under local government re-organisation one councillor represents many more electors than before. It was said that if there are two councillors for a ward it is impossible to pinpoint their respective responsibilities; there was a balance to be struck between familiarity with the area and the spread of knowledge of functions which more than one member could achieve; that though local councils can act as a filter for all local authority problems, 90% of which probably are not problems of the local council itself, the familiarity with the area and electorate which single member wards give outweighs such advantages, and firmly places a responsibility on one individual, who, because he cannot be a lone voice in the wilderness, must achieve his aims through informal groupings within the council. Since the so-called advantages of two or three-member wards of a spread of committee activities and a sharing of knowledge of and responsibility for the area could not be achieved over the whole district, as many rural wards could not justify more than one member, there could be no objection in principle to single-member wards, and therefore local wishes should be acceded to.

9. Against this the District Council conceded that single-member wards were acceptable where the circumstances indicated that it might be successful. On the other hand well-established areas such as Wimborne remained entirely happy with multiple-member wards and it might be better, therefore, to wait for some time during a settling down period before establishing single-member wards which might in a relatively short period require amendment. Tricketts Cross ward was a particularly good example; there, it had been urged that the Beaufoys and Tricketts Cross areas of the ward, separated by the A31 should become separate wards each returning one member; but if, as was happening, development was taking place and the longer term situation for the future was uncertain, it would be easier to add another member to the proposed Tricketts Cross ward than to have fresh boundary revisions to accommodate the two existing members and the additional member in three single-member wards. The District Council would like to see a pattern of wards where boundary changes, as opposed to changes in the number of members, could be avoided for a period of say, 10 years. The differences to be found in e.g. the character of the Beaufoys and Tricketts Cross areas were all to the good; single-member wards in urban areas were liable to create parochialism in terms of representation.

10. It is right to record at this point that Corfe Mullen Ratepayers and Residents Association who had earlier objected to an increase of membership for the three wards of Corfe Mullen from three to four, but who had not objected in writing to the draft proposals, attended the meeting to indicate the withdrawal of their objection to an increase to four members, but also indicated their support for single-member wards and in this they appeared to have the backing of Mr. Wills representing Corfe Mullen parish.

11. In my view there can be no possible objection in principle to single-member wards. However, a desire expressed by local councils or other responsible bodies for such an arrangement is only one of several factors to be taken into account in any individual case. Not only should all the factors on both sides outlined above be considered but both the immediate and longer term practicalities of any proposed boundaries. At the meeting the Ferndown Ratepayers Association described in detail their proposals, already outlined to the Commission, for dividing the parish of Hampreston into single-member wards (They had already - September, 1976 - accepted the draft proposals for West Parley and West Moors, providing two-member wards). Exact figures of electorate for each of the suggested wards were not easy to establish but there was fairly close agreement which suggested that the electorates might be broadly acceptable, subject to adjustments, if the principle of single-member wards for Hampreston were itself to be accepted. The District Council indicated at the meeting that the suggestions of the Ratepayers Association were not acceptable to them in their present form and that for the reasons given above they desired the wording of the draft proposals to proceed, though they emphasised that they were not opposed in principle to single-member wards.

12. On 30 November, accompanied by the Chairman of the Ferndown Ratepayers Association and officers of the District Council I inspected the area in question and examined in detail the boundaries contained in the draft proposals and in the Association's suggestions. I was most grateful to those who accompanied me for their assistance in identifying the boundaries in question, and to Mr. Spencer, the Association Chairman, for the great care and trouble which was taken in preparing and presenting the case.

13. Though the question of single-member wards was presented to me as a matter of principle, no objection had been made by Wimborne to a three-member ward there, Corfe Mullen Ratepayers Association raised the matter as an after-thought and had no specific proposals to put forward, the proposed three member ward for Colehill was unopposed, objections at West Parley and West Moors had been withdrawn and St. Leonard's and St. Ives at the meeting expressed themselves as 'completely happy' with the draft proposals. Of the six proposed

wards for the parish of Hampreston, four are single-member wards and the substance of the objection therefore relates only to two proposed wards, Ferndown Central and Tricketts Cross. In my view, there can be few disadvantages either to these two wards or to the parish generally, in their representation by two members each on a District Council with no less than 10 multiple-member wards. Such disadvantages as may exist are certainly at this stage outweighed by the advantages of flexibility and the other advantage claimed by the District Council referred to above. On even stronger grounds there appears to be no case for disturbing the draft proposals as they relate to the proposed Corfe Mullen Central ward.

14. Recommendation. Arising from the meeting and from my inspections, as well as from the written objections already submitted to the Commission I recommend:

That the draft proposals of the Commission be confirmed in their entirety with the exception that the parish of Woodlands be transferred from the proposed Sixpenny Handley ward to the proposed Holt ward.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "L. Baird", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is slanted upwards to the right.

January 1978.

Assistant Boundary Commissioner.

LOCAL MEETING HELD AT WIMBORNE - THURSDAY 10 NOVEMBER 1977ATTENDANCE LIST

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>
W. G. Press	Council Offices Furzehill, Wimborne	Wimborne District Council
M. E. Jackson	" "	" " "
E. B. Monds	" "	" " "
E. C. Peckham	" "	" " "
L. Robinson	7 Culverhayes Place, Wimborne.	Western Gazette
V. A. G. Myers	County Hall, Dorchester Dorset.	Chief Executive (K.A. Abel) Dorset County Council.
A. H. Boys	9 Heath Road, Leonards.	St. Leonards & St. Ives Parish Council
C. H. Rowe	25 St. Ives Park, Ashley Heath, Ringwood	St. Leonards & St. Ives Parish Council
F. Greaves	23 Sarum Avenue, West Moors	Com. Member Ferndown & District Ratepayers
J. M. Antell	Knowle Hill Farm, Horton, Wimborne.	
A. Belcher	Horse Copse, Lodge Hill, Holt	Knowlton Parish Council
M. Drew	Todael, Broomhill, Holt, Wimborne.	Holt Parish Council
F. W. J. Moore	145 Leigh Road, Wimborne	Wimborne Town Council
Mrs. E. D. Young	Bailie Wicket, Sturminster Marshall Wimborne	Clerk of Sturminster Marshall Parish Council
R. C. Coffin	Corfe Mullen	Member of Corfe Mullen Parish Council
Miss J.M. Chadwick	Cragside, Avon Castle Drive, Ringwood	self
J. P. Wills	5 Maxwell Road, Broadstone	Corfe Mullen Parish
F. C. Henderson	90 Hillside Road	Corfe Mullen Ratepayers Association
F. K. Farquharson	Moonfleet, Wimborne Rd. Corfe Mullen.	" " " "
M. C. Herridge	6 Woodside Close, Ferndown.	North Dorset Liberal Association
W. Pook	175 Wareham Road, Corfe Mullen.	Corfe Mullen Parish Councillor

cont'd....

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>
R. W. Heath	20 Martindale Avenue	Corfe Mullen Parish Council Clerk
J. Emerson	84 Twyford House, Fairways, Ferndown.	A Ratepayer
G. L. Hibbs	23 Glenmoor Road West Parley	Wimborne District Councillor (for West Parley)
S. R. Gibbons	70 Glenwood Road West Moors	Ratepayer (Ferndown District)
P. M. Roberts	279 New Road, Ferndown	Vice Chairman Ferndown Town Council
R. F. G. Spencer	77 Golf Links Road, Ferndown	Chairman Ferndown & District R.P.A.
H. A. Tod	74 Wesley House, Fairways, Ferndown	Honorary Secretary, East Dorset Ratepayers/Residents Federation
R. Guttridge	13 Mallard Road, Colehill	Bournemouth Evening Echo

DISTRICT OF WIMBORNE : NAMES OF PROPOSED WARDS AND NUMBERS  
OF COUNCILLORS

<u>NAME OF WARD</u>	<u>NO OF COUNCILLORS</u>
Ameysford	1
Colehill	3
Corfe Mullen Central	2
Corfe Mullen North	1
Corfe Mullen South	1
Crane	1
Ferndown Central	2
Golf Links	1
Holt	1
Longham	1
St Leonards and St Ives East	2
St Leonards and St Ives South	1
St Leonards and St Ives West	1
Sixpenny Handley	1
Stapehill	1
Sturminster Marshall	1
Tricketts Cross	2
Vale of Allen	1
Verwood	3
West Moors North	2
West Moors South	2
West Parley	2
Wimborne Minster	3

WIMBORNE DISTRICT - DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES

AMEYSFORD WARD

The Ameysford Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

COLEHILL WARD

The parish of Colehill.

CORFE MULLEN CENTRAL WARD

The Corfe Mullen Central Ward of the parish of Corfe Mullen.

CORFE MULLEN NORTH WARD

The Corfe Mullen North Ward of the parish of Corfe Mullen.

CORFE MULLEN SOUTH WARD

The Corfe Mullen South Ward of the parish of Corfe Mullen.

CRANE WARD

The parishes of: Alderholt  
Cranborne  
Edmondsham

FERNDOWN CENTRAL WARD

The Ferndown Central Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

GOLF LINKS WARD

The Golf Links Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

HOLT WARD

The parishes of: Chalbury  
Holt  
Horton  
Woodlands

LONGHAM WARD

The Longham Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

SIXPENNY HANDLEY WARD

The parishes of: Pentridge

Sixpenny Handley

Wimborne St Giles

STAPEHILL WARD

The Stapehill Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

ST LEONARDS AND ST IVES EAST WARD

The St Leonards and St Ives East Ward of the parish of St Leonards and St Ives.

ST LEONARDS AND ST IVES SOUTH WARD

The St Leonards and St Ives South Ward of the parish of St Leonards and St Ives.

ST LEONARDS AND ST IVES WEST WARD

The St Leonards and St Ives West Ward of the parish of St Leonards and St Ives.

STURMINSTER MARSHALL WARD

The parishes of: Shapwick

Sturminster Marshall

TRICKETTS CROSS WARD

The Tricketts Cross Ward of the parish of Hampreston.

## VALE OF ALLEN WARD

The parishes of: Gussage All Saints

Gussage St Michael

Hinton Martell

Hinton Parva

Long Crichel

Moor Crichel

Witchampton

## VERWOOD WARD

The parish of Verwood.

## WEST MOORS NORTH WARD

The West Moors North Ward of the parish of West Moors.

## WEST MOORS SOUTH WARD

The West Moors South Ward of the parish of West Moors.

## WEST PARLEY WARD

The parish of West Parley.

## WIMBORNE MINSTER WARD

The parishes of: Pamphill

Wimborne Minster