

# Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council

Electoral review

May 2012

## **Translations and other formats**

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# Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. The broad purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, and the names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions – for a specific local authority. We are conducting an electoral review of Purbeck to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the authority.

The review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same. The Commission commenced the review in 2011.

This review is being conducted as follows:

<b>Stage starts</b>	<b>Description</b>
23 August 2011	Submission of proposals of ward patterns to the LGBCE
15 November 2011	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
29 May 2012	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
10 July 2012	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

## Analysis and draft recommendations

### Electorate figures

Purbeck District Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2017, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2012. This is prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ('the 2009 Act'). These forecasts projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 3.5% over this period.

During the preparation of the draft recommendations, we requested more information regarding several developments across the district. We were satisfied that some developments were ongoing and, as a result, accepted the Council's projected electorate increases in these areas. However, we queried a number of electorate forecasts in the areas of Lytchett Matravers, Upton, Wareham, and Swanage. Having toured the area and considered the information provided, we have concluded that these proposed developments should be discounted from the forecasts.

Discounting these developments results in electorate figures for the district with a proposed increase of approximately 1.4% in the period 2011 to 2017. We are satisfied that, as a result of these amendments, these figures are the best available at the present time and form the basis for the draft recommendations.

### Council size

Initially, the Council made a proposal for a council size of 27 members, an increase

of three from the current council size of 24. In support of a council size of 27, the Council considered an increase was necessary to ensure that it had enough members to provide competition for membership on panels and reduce duplication of membership on various bodies. Having considered the evidence received, we were minded to adopt a council size of 27 as proposed by the Council.

On 21 February 2012, the Council resolved to change its electoral cycle to whole council elections. The change in electoral cycle removed the necessity of having a council size divisible by three and the presumption in favour of three-member wards. Subsequently, the Council submitted an alternative warding pattern based on a council size of 25 members.

The Council argued that while an increase in council size was necessary, given the change in electoral cycle, it did not require a council size of 27. The Council's case for an increase was based on an additional councillor to increase the Audit and Governance Committee to seven members. We consider a council size of 25 provides for suitable governance arrangements for the Council and a warding pattern which provides the best balance between the statutory criteria. We therefore propose a council size of 25 members for Purbeck District Council.

## General analysis

Our draft recommendations across the district are broadly based on those of the Council. Where we have proposed modifications, it has been in order to better reflect our statutory criteria. Our draft recommendations provide good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and transport links in Purbeck.

## What happens next?

There will now be a consultation period, during which we encourage comment on the draft recommendations on the proposed electoral arrangements for Purbeck contained in the report. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.** We will take into account all submissions received by **9 July 2012**. Any received **after** this date may not be taken into account.

We would particularly welcome local views backed up by demonstrable evidence. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations. Express your views by writing directly to us at:

**Review Officer**  
**Purbeck Review**  
**Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**Layden House**  
**76–86 Turnmill Street**  
**London EC1M 5LG**  
[reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

The full report is available to download at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

# 1 Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Purbeck District Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 We wrote to Purbeck District Council as well as other interested parties inviting the submission of proposals on ward arrangements for the Council. The submissions received during these stages of the review have informed our draft recommendations.

3 We are now conducting a full public consultation on the draft recommendations. Following this period of consultation, we will consider the evidence received and will publish our final recommendations for the new electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council in autumn 2012.

## What is an electoral review?

4 The main aim of an electoral review is to try to ensure 'electoral equality', which means that all councillors in a single authority represent approximately the same number of electors. Our objective is to make recommendations that will improve electoral equality, while also trying to reflect communities in the area and provide for effective and convenient local government.

5 Our three main considerations – equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government – are set out in legislation<sup>1</sup> and our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why are we conducting a review in Purbeck?

6 We decided to conduct this review because based on the January 2011 electorate figures, 43% of its wards currently exceed the 10% variance threshold. The largest outlier is the two-member St Martin ward which contains 28% fewer electors than the district average.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

7 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward and, in some instances, which parish council wards you vote in. Your ward name may also change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. The names or boundaries of parishes will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

8 It is therefore important that you let us have your comments and views on the draft recommendations. We encourage comments from everyone in the community, regardless of whether you agree with the draft recommendations or not. The draft recommendations are evidence based and we would therefore like to stress the importance of providing evidence in any comments on our recommendations, rather than relying on assertion. We will be accepting comments and views until 9 July 2012. After this point, we will be formulating our final recommendations which we are due to publish in late 2012. Details on how to submit proposals can be found on page 17 and more information can be found on our website, [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

9 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)  
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)  
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL  
Sir Tony Redmond  
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE  
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill  
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

## 2 Analysis and draft recommendations

10 Before finalising our recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council we invite views on these draft recommendations. We welcome comments relating to the proposed ward boundaries, ward names and parish or town council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

11 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for Purbeck is to achieve a level of electoral fairness – that is, each elector's vote being worth the same as another's. In doing so we must have regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009,<sup>2</sup> with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities, in particular
  - the desirability of arriving at boundaries that are easily identifiable
  - the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties

12 Legislation also states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the date of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

13 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum. We therefore recommend strongly that in formulating proposals for us to consider, local authorities and other interested parties should also try to keep variances to a minimum, making adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. As mentioned above, we aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral fairness over a five-year period.

14 Additionally, in circumstances where we propose to divide a parish between district wards or county divisions, we are required to divide it into parish wards so that each parish ward is wholly contained within a single district ward or county division. We cannot make amendments to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

15 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Purbeck District Council or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. The proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries and we are not therefore able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## Submissions received

16 Prior to, and during, the initial stages of the review, we visited Purbeck District Council ('the Council') and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received a submission from the Council relating to council size, 11 submissions during further information gathering, and a further submission from the Council during the formulation of the draft recommendations, all of which may be inspected at both our offices and those of the Council. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

17 As part of this review, the Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2017, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2012. These forecasts projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 3.5% from 2011 to 2017. This included a number of allocated and unallocated sites which the Council had included in its Core Strategy as proposed developments.

18 During the preparation of the draft recommendations we requested more information regarding several of the developments proposed in the Council's Core Strategy. We were satisfied that some developments were ongoing and, as a result, accepted the Council's projected electorate increases in these areas. However, we were concerned about the intended timing of developments planned to take place in the areas of Lytchett Matravers, Upton, Wareham, and Swanage, and, as a consequence, the electoral forecasts for those areas. These proposed sites did not have planning permission, outline planning permission or a developer appointed, and we understood that in some cases a specific site for the development had yet to be identified. Having toured the areas concerned and considered the information provided by the Council, we have decided that these developments and consequent elector projections are currently too speculative to be taken into account in the electorate forecast.

19 Discounting these developments results in electorate figures for the district with a proposed increase of approximately 1.4% in the period 2011 to 2017. We are satisfied that as a result of our amendments, these figures are the best available at the present time. They therefore form the basis for the draft recommendations.

20 The result of the revised electorate forecasts means that the projected variances proposed in submissions received during the information gathering stage, including that of the Council's, have changed. These may therefore appear different to those given in the submissions received.

21 We recognise that compiling electorate forecasts is an inexact science. We have discounted the above developments on the basis of evidence received and our understanding of the likelihood of these developments being built and occupied by 2017. We welcome comments from the Council and those involved with these developments on their progress and likelihood of them being built and occupied by that year.

## Council size

22 This review began in May 2011 with discussions regarding council size. At that point in time the Council elected by thirds and therefore needed to ensure any council size proposals were divisible by three.<sup>3</sup> The Council subsequently made a proposal for a council size of 27 members, an increase of three from the current council size of 24. In support of its proposal, the Council said an increase was necessary to ensure that it had enough members to undertake the necessary work, provide competition for membership on panels and reduce duplication of membership on various bodies. Having considered the evidence received, we were minded to adopt a council size of 27 as proposed by the Council.

23 During the information gathering stage of the review the Council requested that it be given the opportunity to consider changing its electoral cycle. We agreed to provide the Council with sufficient time to consider a change to its electoral cycle on the basis that it was committed to this process. We considered that the formulation of the draft recommendations for the district should take place after the Council had convened its special meeting for the necessary resolution to change its electoral cycle. This allowed the Council to consider a scheme based on its new electoral cycle.

24 On 21 February 2012, the Council resolved to change its electoral cycle to whole council elections. The Council also resolved that this change in electoral cycle would be implemented at elections in 2015. The resolution to change its electoral cycle removed the necessity of having a council size divisible by three and the presumption in favour of three-member wards. Subsequently, the Council submitted an alternative warding pattern based on a council size of 25. In light of the change to the electoral cycle, and the evidence received from the Council supporting a council size of 25, we explored whether we should reconsider our recommendation for a council size of 27.

25 The Council argued that while an increase in council size was necessary, it did not require a council size of 27. The argument for an increase was based on an additional councillor to raise the Audit and Governance Committee to seven members. The Council noted that at the time of proposing a council size of 27 it had been bound by its then cycle of election by thirds and that any council size proposed was required to be divisible by three. In its submission, the Council also stated that it had listened to representations from town and parish councils which indicated concerns over the financial impact of an increase in council size to 27 members.

26 Having considered the evidence, we propose a council size of 25 as part of our draft recommendations. We consider a council size of 25 provides for suitable governance arrangements for the Council and allows for a warding pattern providing the best balance between the statutory criteria. In recommending a council size of 25, we consider that this figure would enable the authority to discharge its functions.

27 We have therefore based the draft recommendations for Purbeck District Council on a council size of 25 members.

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<sup>3</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 provides that where a local authority elects by thirds, there should be a presumption in favour of the Commission recommending a uniform pattern of three-member wards.

## Electoral fairness

28 Electoral fairness, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. It is expected that our recommendations will provide for electoral fairness, reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

29 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The district average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the district (36,542 in 2011 and 37,057 by 2017) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 25 under our draft recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our draft recommendations is 1,462 in 2011 and 1,482 by 2017.

30 Under our draft recommendations, 12 of our proposed 13 wards will have electoral variances of not more than 10% from the average for the district by 2017. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Purbeck.

## General analysis

31 As previously indicated during the information gathering stage, we received 11 submissions including a district-wide proposal from the Council.

32 The submissions received included two district-wide schemes based on a council size of 24 members. These proposals were received from Wareham St Martin Parish Council and a local resident, and while both proposed identical warding patterns, the two submissions were accompanied by different evidence. The two proposals provided for reasonable levels of electoral equality across most of the district, albeit with Wool ward containing 14% more electors than the district average by 2017. The proposals included a geographically large coastal ward which would run from Studland parish in the east to West Lulworth parish in the west. This coastal ward would be linked only through Tyneham parish, which has restricted public access. The two proposals also appeared to recommend two six-member wards.

33 We considered that neither of these two submissions provided detailed evidence supporting a council size of 24, and that the warding pattern proposed did not provide the best balance between our statutory criteria. We have therefore decided not to base our recommendations on these proposals.

34 During the information gathering period, we also received four further representations that did not support an increase in council size to 27 members. These representations argued for the current council size of 24 to be retained but did not provide persuasive evidence.

35 After the Council resolved to change its electoral cycle, as discussed in paragraph 24, we received a further district-wide warding proposal from the Council, this time based on a council size of 25. This new warding pattern proposed that many of the existing wards be retained, but introduced an extra member to the Swanage North area. The Council's proposal would result in three wards being projected to have a variance greater than +/- 10% by 2017. These were the wards of Swanage

South, St Martin, and Wool which are projected to have 12% fewer, 11% fewer and 16% more electors than the district average by 2017, respectively. The Council provided some evidence of community identity and convenient and effective local government in support of its scheme, detailing each ward on an individual basis.

36 Across the district, we have broadly based our draft recommendations on the Council's proposals, subject to amendments to ensure the best balance between our statutory criteria.

37 Our draft recommendations are for a pattern of five single-member wards, four two-member wards, and four three-member wards. We consider our draft recommendations provide good electoral equality while providing a good reflection of community identities and interests where we have received such evidence. We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations.

## Electoral arrangements

38 This section of the report details the proposals we have received, our consideration of them, and our draft recommendations for each area of Purbeck. The following areas of the authority are considered in turn:

- North Purbeck and Wareham (pages 9–11)
- West Purbeck (pages 11–12)
- East Purbeck (pages 12–14)

39 Details of the draft recommendations are set out in Table B1 on pages 24–25 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

### North Purbeck and Wareham

40 This area of the district includes the towns of Wareham, Lytchett and Upton, and a number of rural settlements. In addition to the three-district-wide proposals, we also received four submissions relating to this area.

41 The Council's proposals were for a single-member Bere Regis ward, two-member wards for Lytchett Matravers, Lytchett Minster & Upton West, Lytchett Minster & Upton East and St Martin, and a three-member Wareham ward. These wards are projected to have equal to the number of electors, 5% fewer, 4% more, 8% more, 11% fewer, and 5% more electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

42 The Council's proposed two-member St Martin ward contains the three parishes of Wareham St Martin, Bloxworth, and Morden. The Council provided evidence on how these communities are connected via the B3075 and A35. This ward is projected to have 11% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2017.

43 Bloxworth Parish Meeting argued that it did not have any links with Wareham St Martin or Morden and should be included in a ward with the parish of Bere Regis, as it is under current arrangements. Bloxworth Parish Meeting provided some evidence of shared working and shared facilities with Bere Regis. However, a separate representation received from Bere Regis Parish Council provided little evidence of a shared identity with Bloxworth and primarily focused on wanting to be in a single-

member ward.

44 We explored whether Bloxworth parish could be included with Bere Regis in a single-member ward. This would result in a single-member Bere Regis ward containing 12% more electors, and a two-member St Martin ward containing 17% fewer electors than the district average by 2017. We do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify this level of electoral inequality. We therefore propose that in order to secure electoral equality, Bloxworth should be included in a St Martin ward, as proposed by the Council.

45 We explored the possibility of improving the electoral equality in the Council's St Martin ward. Firstly, we considered whether a part of Wareham, centred around Sandford Road, could be included in the St Martin ward. However, after touring the area we concluded that this modification would result in an arbitrary split of Wareham town.

46 Secondly, we considered including part of the Lytchett Minster & Upton West ward in the St Martin ward to improve electoral equality. Including a section to the west of Foxhills Road and the A351 would provide for good internal communication links as this western area of Lytchett Minster and Upton parish has strong road links running south down Wareham Road and Organford Road into Wareham St Martin parish. These internal communication links were tested during a tour of the area. This proposal would result in the wards of St Martin and Lytchett Minster & Upton West being projected to have 7% fewer and equal to the number of electors than the district average by 2017, respectively. We propose to adopt this modification as part of our draft recommendations.

47 We also noted that the Council's proposed St Martin ward does not contain complete internal communication links. This is because the western Trigon area of Wareham St Martin parish has no internal transport links to the Sandford area in the eastern part of the parish. We consequently assessed alternative warding arrangements which would provide for a St Martin ward with complete internal communication links.

48 Firstly, we considered including the Trigon area of Wareham St Martin parish in a ward with Bere Regis parish and Bloxworth parish. This would result in a two-member Bere Regis ward projected to have 22% more electors than the district average by 2017. Given this level of electoral inequality we do not consider this proposal provides a good balance between the statutory criteria. Secondly, we considered whether a larger part of Wareham could be included in a St Martin ward. However, as similarly concluded in paragraph 45 above, we are concerned that this proposal would arbitrarily split the Wareham community, and therefore are not including it as part of our draft recommendations.

49 Having considered the different options for the St Martin area we have decided to adopt the Council's proposal for St Martin ward with the modification to include the western area of Lytchett Minster & Upton parish in a St Martin ward as part of the draft recommendations, as mentioned in paragraph 46. Although this ward would not contain complete internal communication links, we consider that it provides for the best balance between the statutory criteria. We also recommend adopting a three-member Wareham ward as part of our draft recommendations. This was proposed by the Council and Wareham Town Council and retains the existing ward boundary. This ward is projected to have 5% more electors than the district average by 2017.

50 To the north-east of the district, the Council proposed two-member wards for Lytchett Minster & Upton West, Lytchett Minster & Upton East, and Lytchett Matravers. These proposed wards provide good electoral equality and, with the exception of including Morden parish in a St Martin ward, were based on the existing ward boundaries. We recommend a minor modification to the proposed boundary between the wards of Lytchett Minster & Upton West and Lytchett Minster & Upton East, as the boundary suggested by the Council divides a property on Blandford Road North. We propose that the boundary run along the rear garden of this property, including it wholly within the proposed Lytchett Minster & Upton East ward. This modification has no impact on electoral equality.

51 We recommend adopting the Council's proposed wards of Lytchett Minster & Upton West, Lytchett Minster & Upton East and Lytchett Matravers, subject to the modification detailed in paragraph 46, as part of our draft recommendations.

52 Overall, we recommend adopting the Council's proposals for the north Purbeck and Wareham area, subject to the modifications above, as our draft recommendations. The draft recommendations would create a single-member Bere Regis ward, two-member wards for Lytchett Matravers, Lytchett Minster & Upton West, Lytchett Minster & Upton East and St Martin and a three-member Wareham ward. These wards are projected to have an equal number of electors, 5% fewer, equal to the number of electors, 8% more, 7% fewer, and 5% more electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

## West Purbeck

53 The area of west Purbeck covers the Purbeck Hills, the Jurassic coast and a number of settlements and Ministry of Defence sites. The majority of electors reside in the parish of Wool.

54 For this area of the district, the Council proposed a warding pattern almost identical to the current arrangements. The Council proposed single-member Winfrith and West Purbeck wards and a two-member Wool ward. These wards are projected to have 8% fewer, 8% more and 16% more electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

55 The Council's proposed Wool ward is similar to the existing ward, with the modification that part of Wool parish centred on an area around Cologne Road is to be included in a proposed West Purbeck ward. This Cologne Road area contains 455 electors and, in proposing this warding pattern, the Council considered that it was separate from the rest of Wool. The Council considered the community on Cologne Road did not share a community identity with the Bovington Camp MOD base, particularly as the perimeter fencing of the base splits Cologne Road. The Council also considered that the community centred on Cologne Road had a number of shared community interests with the community in East Stoke parish to the east, including concerns over forestry, development at the nearby Monkey World, and road safety concerns over the junction at Bovington Lane.

56 We were concerned that the Council's proposed Wool ward contained no internal communication links between the areas of north and south Wool. Furthermore, the Council's proposed ward did not achieve good electoral equality, as

the Wool ward is projected to have, under our revised figures, 16% more electors than the district average by 2017.

57 We were also concerned that the Council's proposed ward appeared to split the Wool community, particularly as the Council had proposed that Bovington Middle School, part of the Cologne Road area, would be included in the West Purbeck ward. We considered that this school is part of the wider Wool community.

58 In light of these concerns we considered alternative warding arrangements for this area. We propose a three-member Wool ward which includes the parishes of Wool, Moreton, Affpuddle & Turnerspuddle and East Stoke. This ward is projected to have 11% more electors than the district average by 2017, would provide for good internal communication links, and does not split the Wool community. While this electoral variance is larger than we would normally be minded to recommend, we consider that this proposal provides the best balance between the statutory criteria.

59 We considered whether the parish of East Holme should also be included in the proposed Wool ward. However, this would worsen the electoral equality, with Wool being projected to have 12% more electors than the district average by 2017. We therefore recommend that East Holme is included in the Creech Barrow ward, detailed in paragraph 65.

60 To the south-west, we propose a single-member Lulworth & Winfrith ward. This ward would comprise the parishes of Chaldon Herring, Winfrith Newburgh, West Lulworth, East Lulworth and Coombe Keynes. This ward is projected to have 4% fewer electors than the district average by 2017. We consider that this ward would have good internal communication links. In addition, a submission received from East Lulworth Parish Council objected to being in a potential three-member ward and supported proposals for a single-member ward.

61 Overall, our draft recommendations for west Purbeck would create a three-member Wool ward and a single-member Lulworth & Winfrith ward. These wards are projected to have 11% more and 4% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2017, respectively.

## East Purbeck

62 East Purbeck is characterised by a mixture of rural villages, MOD sites, coastland, nature reserves and the tourist towns of Swanage and Corfe Castle.

63 For this part of the district, the Council proposed single-member Creech Barrow, Castle, and Langton wards and three-member Swanage North and Swanage South wards. These wards are projected to have 1% more, 5% more, 6% fewer, equal to the number of electors and 12% fewer electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

64 The Council's proposed single-member wards of Creech Barrow, Castle, and Langton were based on the current warding arrangements. The Council provided some evidence for each individual ward and we note that each ward has good electoral equality. We have adopted these warding proposals as part of our draft recommendations, subject to a minor modification to the proposed Creech Barrow ward.

65 We propose that East Holme parish be included in a single-member Creech Barrow ward which would be projected to have 3% more electors than the district average by 2017. We consider that this proposal provides the best balance between the statutory criteria for our proposed Wool and Creech Barrow wards. A submission received from Arne Parish Council advocated being in a rural ward because of the parish's tourist and environmental characteristics. Under our draft recommendations we propose including Arne parish in a Creech Barrow ward.

66 Creech Barrow ward would also include Tyneham parish, which does not contain any registered electors, nor has done so since 1943. The parish itself is used by the MOD as a training facility. We are mindful that the parish arrangements of Tyneham parish do not appear to adhere to the Local Government Act 1972 s9, which states that every parish must have a parish meeting, with a quorum of at least two (Local Government Act 1972 s13). Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 14 specifically states 'the parish meeting of a parish shall assemble annually on some day between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June, both inclusive, in every year.' It is not clear whether Tyneham parish has held a meeting and adheres to the Act. We do not consider the current situation can be ignored and therefore suggest that Purbeck District Council undertake a Community Governance Review for this area.

67 In the south-east the Council proposed to divide Swanage parish between three-member Swanage North and Swanage South wards. Under the current electoral arrangements Swanage North is a two-member ward. The Council proposed that the boundary between the two wards run along the backs of the properties on the south side of the High Street to improve electoral equality and act as an identifiable boundary. This results in the Swanage North and Swanage South wards being projected to have an equal number of electors and 12% fewer electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

68 We explored the possibility of improving the variance in the proposed Swanage South ward. We considered running the boundary behind the backs of properties to the north side of the High Street, but this did not provide for good electoral equality. We also considered the option of running the boundary along the centre of the High Street, which would result in the Swanage North and Swanage South wards being projected to have 10% fewer and 2% fewer electors than the district average by 2017, respectively. During a tour of the area we explored these options on the ground, and considered that running the boundary along the centre of the High Street provided for the most logical and identifiable boundary.

69 We received no further representations suggesting a suitable divide of Swanage. Swanage Town Council recommended modifying the boundary to improve electoral equality between the wards, but did not identify what the boundary should be.

70 We therefore recommend three-member Swanage North and Swanage South wards, divided by a boundary along the middle of the High Street as part of our draft recommendations. We recognise that high streets can unite communities and therefore using them as a boundary can potentially divide shared community interests. However, in this instance we consider that our draft recommendations provides the best balance between the statutory criteria.

71 Overall, we have adopted the Council's proposals for the east Purbeck area, subject to the modifications above, as our draft recommendations. Our draft

recommendations for east Purbeck would create single-member Creech Barrow, Castle, and Langton wards, and three-member Swanage North and Swanage South wards. These wards are projected to have 3% more, 5% more, 6% fewer, 10% fewer and 2% fewer electors than the district average by 2017, respectively.

## Conclusions

72 Table 1 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2011 and 2017 electorate figures.

**Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements**

	Draft recommendations	
	2011	2017
Number of councillors	25	25
Number of electoral wards	13	13
Average number of electors per councillor	1,462	1,482
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	1	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

**Draft recommendation**  
 Purbeck District Council should comprise 25 councillors serving 13 wards, as detailed and named in Table B1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

## Parish electoral arrangements

73 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

74 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Purbeck District Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

75 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for the parishes of Lytchett Minster and Upton, and Swanage.

76 As a result of our proposed electoral ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Lytchett Minster and Upton parish.

**Draft recommendation**

Lytchett Minster & Upton Town Council should return 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Lytchett Minster & Upton East (returning seven members), Lytchett Minster & Upton West (returning seven members) and Organford (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 2A.

77 As a result of our proposed electoral ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Swanage parish.

**Draft recommendation**

Swanage Town Council should return 12 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Swanage North (returning six members) and Swanage South (returning six members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 2B.



### 3 What happens next?

78 There will now be a consultation period of six weeks, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Purbeck District Council contained in this report. We will take into account fully all submissions received by 9 July 2012. Any received after this date may not be taken into account.

79 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Purbeck and welcome comments from interested parties relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, ward names and parish electoral arrangements. We would welcome alternative proposals backed up by demonstrable evidence during the consultation. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

80 Express your views by writing directly to:

**Review Officer  
Purbeck Review  
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
Layden House  
76–86 Turnmill Street  
London EC1M 5LG**

[reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

Submissions can also be made by using the consultation section of our website, [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk) or by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

81 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all the representations received will be placed on deposit locally at the offices of Purbeck District Council and at our offices in Layden House (London) and on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk). A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

82 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

83 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

84 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the next elections for Purbeck District Council in 2015.

85 This report has been screened for impact on equalities; with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

## 4 Mapping

### Draft recommendations for Purbeck

86 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for Purbeck District Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Purbeck District Council.
- **Sheet 2, Map 2A** illustrates the proposed ward boundaries in Lytchett Minster and Upton parish.
- **Sheet 2, Map 2B** illustrates the proposed ward boundaries in Swanage parish.



# Appendix A

## Glossary and abbreviations

AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	A landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward, expressed in parishes or existing wards, or parts of either
Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral imbalance	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections

Local Government Boundary Commission for England or LGBCE	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England assumed the functions of the Boundary Committee for England in April 2010
Multi-member ward or division	A ward or division represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	The 13 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and can be found at <a href="http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk">www.nationalparks.gov.uk</a>
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward

Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
PER (or periodic electoral review)	A review of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England, undertaken periodically. The last programme of PERs was undertaken between 1996 and 2004 by the Boundary Commission for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England
Political management arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enabled local authorities in England to modernise their decision-making process. Councils could choose from two broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet or a cabinet with a leader
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or district, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or district council

## Appendix B

**Table B1: Draft recommendations for Purbeck District Council**

	<b>Ward Name</b>	<b>Number of Councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2011)</b>	<b>Number of Electors per Councillor</b>	<b>Variance from Average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2017)</b>	<b>Number of Electors per Councillor</b>	<b>Variance from Average %</b>
1	Bere Regis	1	1,483	1,483	1%	1,488	1,488	0%
2	Castle	1	1,544	1,544	6%	1,549	1,549	5%
3	Creech Barrow	1	1,525	1,525	4%	1,530	1,530	3%
4	Langton	1	1,354	1,354	-7%	1,392	1,392	-6%
5	Lulworth & Winfrith	1	1,417	1,417	-3%	1,427	1,427	-4%
6	Lytchett Matravers	2	2,804	1,402	-4%	2,821	1,411	-5%
7	Lytchett Minster & Upton East	2	3,166	1,583	8%	3,187	1,594	8%
8	Lytchett Minster & Upton West	2	2,935	1,468	0%	2,955	1,478	0%
9	St Martin	2	2,737	1,369	-6%	2,744	1,372	-7%
10	Swanage North	3	3,924	1,308	-11%	4,016	1,339	-10%
11	Swanage South	3	4,234	1,411	-3%	4,362	1,454	-2%
12	Wareham	3	4,583	1,528	5%	4,649	1,550	5%

**Table B1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Purbeck District Council**

Ward Name	Number of Councillors	Electorate (2011)	Number of Electors per Councillor	Variance from Average %	Electorate (2017)	Number of Electors per Councillor	Variance from Average %
13 Wool	3	4,836	1,612	10%	4,937	1,646	11%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36,542</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,057</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,462</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,482</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Purbeck District Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each ward varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors.