

Final recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements  
for Blaby in Leicestershire

Report to The Electoral Commission

*June 2002*

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Blaby Town and Narborough is inserted inside the back cover of this report.



# WHAT IS THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to the Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No 3692). The Order also transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

We are required by law to review the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England. Our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Blaby in Leicestershire.



## SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Blaby's electoral arrangements on 12 June 2001. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 15 January 2002, after which it undertook an eight-week period of consultation. As a consequence of the transfer of functions referred to earlier, it falls to us, the Boundary Committee for England, to complete the work of the LGCE and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.

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

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

- **in 16 of the 21 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district and eight wards vary by more than 20 per cent;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 17 wards and by more than 20 per cent in nine wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs (77-78) are that:

- **Blaby District Council should have 39 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 18 wards, instead of 21 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries.**

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

- **In 17 of the proposed 18 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards, expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Blaby, Braunstone, Enderby, Glenfields, Kirby Muxloe, Narborough and Whetstone.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Electoral Commission, to arrive no later than 18 July 2002:

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

*Table 1: Final Recommendations: Summary*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1	Blaby South	2	part of Blaby parish (the proposed Blaby South parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A5
2	Cosby with South Whetstone	2	Cosby parish; part of Whetstone parish (the proposed South Whetstone parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A4
3	Countesthorpe	3	<i>Unchanged</i> – the parishes of Countesthorpe and Kilby	Map 2 and Map A1
4	Croft Hill	1	the parishes of Croft, Elmesthorpe, and Potters Marston	Map A2
5	Ellis	2	part of Glenfields parish (the proposed Ellis parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A2
6	Enderby & St John's	2	Lubbesthorpe parish; part of Enderby parish (the proposed Enderby and St John's parish wards)	Map 2 and the large map
7	Fairestone	2	part of Glenfields parish (the proposed Faire and Stone parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A2
8	Forest	3	Leicester Forest East parish; part of Kirby Muxloe parish (the proposed Hinckley parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A3
9	Glen Parva & Blaby North	3	Glen Parva parish; part of Blaby parish (the proposed Blaby North parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A5
10	Millfield	1	part of Braunstone parish (the proposed Millfield parish ward)	Map 2 and the large map
11	Muxloe	2	part of Kirby Muxloe parish (the proposed Kirby parish ward)	Map 2
12	Narborough & Littlethorpe	2	part of Narborough parish (the proposed Narborough & Littlethorpe parish ward)	Map 2, Map A2 and the large map
13	Normanton	1	<i>Unchanged</i> – the parishes of Huncote, Leicester Forest West and Thurlaston	Map 2
14	North Whetstone	2	part of Whetstone parish (the proposed North Whetstone parish ward)	Map 2 and Map A4
15	Pastures	2	part of Enderby parish (the proposed West Enderby parish ward); part of Narborough parish (the proposed Pastures parish ward)	Map 2 and the large map
16	Ravenhurst & Fosse	3	part of Braunstone parish (the proposed Fosse and Ravenhurst parish wards)	Map 2 and the large map
17	Stanton	3	the parishes of Aston Flamville, Sapcote, Sharnford, Stoney Stanton and Wigston Parva	Map 2
18	Winstanley	3	part of Braunstone parish (the proposed Winstanley parish ward)	Large Map and Map 2

*Notes: 1 The whole district is parished.*

*2 The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and Maps A1-A5 in Appendix A.*

Table 2: Final Recommendations for Blaby

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Blaby South	2	3,775	1,888	4	3,762	1,881	2
2	Cosby with South Whetstone	2	3,565	1,783	-1	3,556	1,778	-4
3	Countesthorpe	3	5,463	1,821	1	5,445	1,815	-2
4	Croft Hill	1	1,764	1,764	-2	1,762	1,762	-4
5	Ellis	2	3,979	1,990	10	4,022	2,011	9
6	Enderby & St John's	2	3,281	1,641	-9	3,467	1,734	-6
7	Fairestone	2	3,871	1,936	7	3,927	1,964	8
8	Forest	3	5,302	1,767	-2	5,260	1,753	-5
9	Glen Parva & Blaby North	3	5,282	1,761	-3	5,519	1,840	0
10	Millfield	1	1,908	1,908	6	1,892	1,892	3
11	Muxloe	2	3,461	1,731	-4	3,481	1,741	-6
12	Narborough & Littlethorpe	2	3,944	1,972	9	3,926	1,963	6
13	Normanton	1	1,988	1,988	10	1,988	1,988	8
14	North Whetstone	2	3,822	1,911	6	3,787	1,894	3
15	Pastures	2	3,764	1,882	4	3,744	1,872	2
16	Ravenhurst & Fosse	3	5,475	1,825	1	5,435	1,863	1
17	Stanton & Flamville	3	5,776	1,925	6	5,934	1,978	7
18	Winstanley	3	4,104	1,368	-24	5,017	1,672	-9
	Totals	<b>39</b>	<b>70,524</b>	-	-	<b>71,919</b>	-	-
	Averages	-	-	<b>1,808</b>	-	-	<b>1,844</b>	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Blaby 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 Blaby in Leicestershire. The seven two-tier districts in Leicestershire and the unitary authority of Leicester City have now been reviewed as part of the programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England started by the LGCE in 1996. We have inherited that programme, which we currently expect to complete in 2004

2 Blaby's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in July 1980 (Report no. 387). The electoral arrangements of Leicestershire County Council were last reviewed in March 1983 (Report no. 441). We expect to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of the year.

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

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

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

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

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

7 The LGCE was not prescriptive on council size. In so far as Blaby is concerned, it started from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but was willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, the LGCE found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and that any proposal for an increase in council size would need to be fully justified. In particular, it did not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 12 June 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Blaby District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Leicestershire Local Councils Association, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the district, the Members of the European

Parliament for the East Midlands region and the headquarters of the main political parties. It 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 3 September 2001. At Stage Two it considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared its draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 15 January 2002 with the publication of the LGCE's report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Blaby in Leicestershire*, and ended on 11 March 2002. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 The district of Blaby is situated in the county of Leicestershire to the south and west of the city of Leicester. The district is divided between a mainly urban northern and a more rural southern area made up of undulating countryside dotted with attractive villages. The district is well connected to the country's motorway system, via the M1 and M69, and has direct east-west rail links with easy connection to the north and south. The district is also in easy reach of Birmingham International and East Midlands airports. Blaby district has a number of major employers in the service and manufacturing sectors. The district contains 24 civil parishes and is entirely parished.

11 The electorate of the district is 70,524 (February 2001). The Council presently has 39 members who are elected from 21 wards, seven of which are relatively urban on the edge of Leicester City, with the remainder being more rural in character. Three of the wards are each represented by three councillors, twelve are each represented by two councillors and six are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

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

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,808 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,844 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration since the last review, the number of electors per councillor in 16 of the 21 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, eight wards by more than 20 per cent and four wards by more than thirty per cent. The worst imbalance is in Whetstone ward where the councillor represents 155 per cent more electors than the district average.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Blaby*

*Table 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements*

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Cosby	2	2,783	1,392	-23	2,774	1,387	-25
2	Countersthorpe	3	5,463	1,821	1	5,445	1,815	-2
3	Croft Hill	1	1,342	1,342	-26	1,336	1,336	-28
4	Ellis	2	2,889	1,445	-20	2,888	1,444	-22
5	Enderby	2	3,197	1,599	-12	3,198	1,599	-13
6	Fairestone	3	4,961	1,654	-9	5,061	1,687	-9
7	Flamville	2	3,040	1,520	-16	3,215	1,608	-13
8	Fosse	1	1,509	1,509	-17	1,500	1,500	-19
9	Glen Parva	2	4,156	2,078	15	4,393	2,197	19
10	Kirby	2	3,784	1,892	5	3,804	1,902	3
11	Leicester Forest East	2	4,970	2,490	38	4,937	2,469	34
12	Millfield	1	1,589	1,589	-12	1,573	1,573	-15
13	Narborough	2	6,447	3,224	78	6,400	3,200	74
14	Normanton	1	1,988	1,988	10	1,988	1,988	8
15	Northfield	2	2,305	1,153	-36	2,314	1,157	-37
16	Ravenshurst	3	4,468	1,489	-18	4,427	1,476	-20
17	St John's	1	1,342	1,342	-26	1,539	1,539	-17
18	Stanton	2	3,158	1,579	-13	3,145	1,573	-15
19	Whetstone	1	4,6904	4,604	155	4,569	4,569	148
20	Winchester	2	2,569	1,298	-28	2,574	1,287	-30
21	Winstanley	2	3,924	1,962	8	4,839,	2,420	31

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Blaby 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. For example, in 2001, electors in Northfield ward were relatively over-represented by 36 per cent, while electors in Whetstone ward were relatively under-represented by 155 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*



### 3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One the LGCE received eight representations, including a district-wide scheme from Blaby District Council, and representations from the Labour and Liberal Democrat groups on the Council and five parish and town councils. In the light of these representations and evidence available to it, the LGCE reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Blaby in Leicestershire*.

15 The LGCE's draft recommendations drew upon aspects of the District Council's proposals. However, it also put forward a number of its own proposals. It moved away from the District Council's scheme in Blaby town, Braunstone town, Enderby and Narborough, putting forward of its own proposals. These proposals achieved improvements in electoral equality, and provided a mixed pattern of single-, two- and three-member wards across the district. It proposed that:

- Blaby District Council should be served by 39 councillors, the same as at present, representing 18 wards, three fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified, while two wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for the parishes of Blaby, Braunstone, Enderby, Glenfields, Kirby Muxloe, Narborough and Whetstone.

**Draft Recommendation**

Blaby District Council should comprise 39 councillors, serving 18 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

16 The LGCE's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 17 of the 18 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 10 per cent from the average in 2006.



## 4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

17 During the consultation on its draft recommendations report, the LGCE received 14 representations. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Blaby District Council.

### **Blaby District Council**

18 The District Council broadly accepted the draft recommendations. However, it proposed amending the boundary between our proposed single-member North Whetstone and three-member Cosby with Whetstone wards. It proposed that the boundary between the two wards be moved southwards to create two two-member wards. It argued that this would result in a “more easily recognisable boundary” and would better reflect community identity in the area. It also proposed a number of ward name changes around the district to better reflect community identity.

### **Leicestershire County Council**

19 The County Council argued that some of the LGCE’s draft recommendations in the seven Leicestershire districts would be difficult to use as building blocks for the creation of future county divisions. It also argued that the practice of using the name of County towns in the name of district wards should be adopted.

### **Parish and Town Councils**

20 The LGCE received representations from eight parish and town councils. Blaby Parish Council objected to the LGCE’s proposed Glen Parva & Blaby North and Blaby South & Winchester wards. It argued that the proposed district wards and the consequential parish warding would poorly reflect community identity in the area. It proposed that an alternative part of Glen Parva parish should be warded with Blaby parish at district ward level.

21 Braunstone Town Council endorsed the draft recommendations for Braunstone town but proposed renaming the LGCE’s proposed three-member Braunstone ward, Ravenhurst & Fosse ward. Cosby Parish Council objected to the LGCE’s proposed Cosby with Whetstone and North Whetstone wards. It proposed the same alternative warding arrangement in the area as Councillor Tanner, for two new two-member wards in the area, as opposed to a single-member ward and a three-member ward.

22 Enderby Parish Council accepted the District Council’s proposals in its area but proposed a reallocation of parish councillors between the LGCE’s proposed parish wards in Enderby parish. Elmesthorpe Parish Council objected to the LGCE’s proposed Croft Hill ward arguing the parish of Elmesthorpe has no community identity and poor transport links with Croft Hill parish. Glen Parva Parish Council expressed its agreement with the submission of Blaby Parish Council.

23 Narborough Parish Council broadly accepted the draft recommendations in the Narborough area. However, it proposed a number of ward name changes in the area to better reflect community identity, arguing that the proposed Narborough Town & Littlethorpe and Red Hill & Enderby wards should be renamed Narborough & Littlethorpe and Pastures respectively.

24 Sapcote Parish Council objected to the LGCE’s proposed Stanton ward arguing that the area should not lose a district councillor at district level.

## **District Councillors**

25 The LGCE received two representations from Blaby district councillors. Councillor Dilks objected to the LGCE's proposed Cosby with Whetstone and North Whetstone wards. Councillor Tanner also objected to the LGCE's proposed Cosby with Whetstone and North Whetstone wards and proposed alternative warding arrangements similar to the ones proposed by the District Council.

## **Other Representations**

26 A further two representations were received in response to the draft recommendations from a local organisation and a local resident. The Thorpe Astley Community Association objected to the proposed parish wards of Braunstone Town Council. It stated that its particular area should be contained within its own parish ward in either Braunstone or Leicester Forest East parishes. Alternatively it proposed that Thorpe Astley should form a parish of its own. A local resident objected to the proposed Cosby with Whetstone and North Whetstone wards.

## 5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

27 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Blaby is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended) – the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

28 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place over the next five years. We also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

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

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

### **Electorate Forecasts**

31 Since 1975 there has been a 31 per cent increase in the electorate of Blaby district. At Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 2 per cent, from 70,524 to 71,919 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in the existing , Glen Parva St John’s and Winstanley wards. To prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, the LGCE stated in its draft recommendations report that it was satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

32 The LGCE received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

### **Council Size**

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

34 At Stage One the District Council argued that the existing levels of electoral inequality could be addressed through a revision of the ward structure of the district rather than a change in the existing council size. It went on to state that after analysing the “present and likely future workload [of the council], the working group felt that the current 39-seat council within a revised ward structure would enable the type of inequalities [in the district] to be overcome and continue to provide the effective and convenient local government required by the Commission”.

35 The LGCE also received a representation from the Labour Group. It argued that there should be an increase of four in the council size of Blaby district and that the extra councillors should be allocated to the existing wards of Narborough, Leicester Forest East, Whetstone and Winstanley wards. It argued that because of the increase in electorate over the past ten years these areas were entitled to extra representation and stated “if we increase our councillors by four, then we facilitate the obviously expanding areas [of the district.]”.

36 The LGCE carefully considered the representations received regarding the issue of council size. It noted the arguments put forward by the Labour Group. However it did not believe they had provided sufficient argumentation to justify an increase in the size of the council to 43. The LGCE was of the opinion that the size of a council should not be increased simply to accommodate increases of electorate in specific areas of a district or the district as a whole. It was of the opinion that due to the lack of argumentation for an increase in council size to 43 and the general support for the District Council’s proposal to retain the present current council size of 39, the present council size of 39 should be adopted as part of the draft recommendations.

37 During Stage Three we received no further comments regarding council size. Therefore having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area we decided to confirm a council size of 39 as final.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

38 When formulating the draft recommendations the LGCE decided to draw upon some of the recommendations proposed by the District Council and to put forward some of its own proposals. It noted that the Council’s submission achieved good levels of electoral equality and provided strong boundaries in a number of areas of the district. The LGCE considered that in some areas the District Council’s proposals sacrificed community identity to achieve electoral equality. Therefore, to more effectively represent local community interests and identities it proposed boundary modifications of its own in Blaby town, Braunstone town, Enderby and Narborough. It also proposed minor boundary amendments to the Council’s proposed wards of Ellis, Fairstone, Kirby and Leicester Forest East.

39 In response to the LGCE’s draft recommendations report, a number of respondents expressed the view that the proposed wards in the Cosby and Glen Parva areas did not provide a good balance between electoral equality and community identity. A number of respondents proposed similar alternative warding arrangement in the Cosby area and the two local parish councils proposed the same alternative warding arrangements in the Blaby and Glen Parva areas.

40 The draft recommendations have been reviewed 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) Croft Hill, Flamville, Normanton and Stanton wards;
- (b) Ellis, Fairstone, Kirby and Leicester Forest East wards;
- (c) Fosse, Millfield, Ravenhurst and Winstanley wards;
- (d) Cosby, Enderby, Narborough, St John’s and Whetstone wards;
- (e) Countesthorpe, Glen Parva, Northfield and Winchester wards.

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

### **Croft Hill, Flamville, Normanton and Stanton wards**

42 The existing wards of Croft Hill, a single-member ward (comprising the parishes of Croft Hill and Potters Marston), Flamville, a two-member ward (comprising the parishes of Aston Flamville, Sapcote, Sharnford and Wigston Parva), Normanton, a single-member ward (comprising the parishes of Huncote, Leicester Forest West and Thurlaston) and Stanton, a two-member ward (comprising the parishes of Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton) cover the south-west and west of the district. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Croft Hill, Flamville, Normanton and Stanton wards vary from the district average by 26 per cent, 16 per cent, 10 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. By 2006 this level of electoral equality is expected to worsen in Croft Hill and Stanton wards to 28 per cent and 15 per cent respectively and expected to improve slightly in Flamville and Normanton wards to 13 per cent and 8 per cent respectively.

43 At Stage One Blaby District Council proposed that this area should comprise three wards. It proposed a new three-member Stanton ward, comprising the parishes of the existing Flamville ward together with Stoney Stanton parish, and a new single-member Croft Hill ward, comprising the parishes of the existing Croft Hill ward together with Elmesthorpe parish. It also proposed retaining the existing Normanton ward.

44 Having considered the District Council's representation the LGCE adopted its proposed Croft Hill, Normanton and Stanton wards. It was of the opinion that the Council's warding arrangements provided the best available level of electoral equality.

45 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in Croft Hill (comprising the parishes of Croft, Elmesthorpe and Potters Marston) and Stanton wards (comprising the parishes of Aston Flamville, Sapcote, Sharnford, Stoney Stanton and Wigston Parva) would vary from the district average by 2 per cent and 6 per cent respectively (4 per cent and 7 per cent respectively by 2006). The LGCE adopted the existing Normanton ward as part of its draft recommendations and consequently the levels of electoral equality remained unchanged.

46 At Stage Three the District Council expressed its support for the draft recommendations in this area of the district. It proposed that the name of Stanton ward be changed to Stanton & Flamville ward to better reflect the constituent parts of the proposed ward. Elmesthorpe Parish Council objected to the proposed Croft Hill ward. It argued that Elmesthorpe and Croft Hill parishes should not be placed in the same ward, as there is little community identity and a lack of direct road links between the two parishes. It stated that, "Elmesthorpe shares no common features with Croft Hill and the two parishes are not even connected geographically". Sapcote Parish Council objected to the proposed Stanton ward expressing its concern at "the loss of one seat on the amalgamated Stanton and Flamville wards" and arguing in addition that such a ward would limit the influence of this particular rural area in this district.

47 Having carefully considered the representations received, we have decided to confirm the LGCE's draft recommendation for the area as final. We have noted the arguments put forward by Elmesthorpe and Sapcote parish councils. We have some sympathy with the arguments put forward by Elmesthorpe Parish Council and we are aware of the lack of direct links between the parishes of Croft Hill and Elmesthorpe. However, given the parishes position at the edge of the district we are unable to find any alternative warding arrangements which would address the concerns raised by Elmesthorpe and Sapcote parish councils, provide acceptable levels of electoral equality and not lead to a worsening of electoral equality in other parts of the district.

We are of the opinion that the argumentation put to us has not been strong enough to justify the high levels of electoral equality that would result from the proposed alternative warding arrangements under the final recommendations. Under our final recommendations this part of the district has the correct allocation of councillors therefore any change in the number of councillors representing the area would result in electoral inequality in other areas of the district.

48 Our final recommendations will provide the same level of electoral equality as our draft recommendations as outlined earlier. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 and illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

### **Ellis, Fairstone, Kirby and Leicester Forest East wards**

49 The existing wards of Ellis, a two-member ward (comprising the Ellis parish ward of Glenfields parish), Fairstone, a three-member ward (comprising the Fairstone parish wards of Glenfields parish), Kirby, a two-member ward (comprising Kirby Muxloe parish) and Leicester Forest East, a two-member ward (comprising Leicester Forest East parish) cover the north west of the district. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Ellis, Fairstone, Kirby and Leicester Forest East wards varies from the district average by 20 per cent, 9 per cent, 5 per cent and 38 per cent respectively. By 2006 this level of electoral equality is expected to worsen in Ellis ward to 22 per cent, remain at the same level in Fairstone ward and improve slightly in Kirby and Leicester Forest East wards to 3 per cent and 34 per cent respectively.

50 At Stage One Blaby District Council proposed that this area should comprise three two-member wards, Ellis, Fairstone and Muxloe, and a single three-member Forest ward. It proposed a modification to the boundary between Ellis and Fairstone wards so that it would run in a north-westerly direction to the rear of Sword Close and Wheatfield Crescent then along Alliance Road and Glenfields Crescent and continue in a north-westerly direction along Harrison Close and along Park Drive to rejoin the existing ward boundary. It also proposed amending the boundary between the existing Kirby and Leicester Forest East wards and increasing by one the number of councillors representing Leicester Forest East ward so that it would return three councillors. It also proposed that Kirby ward should be renamed Muxloe and that Leicester Forest East ward should be renamed Forest.

51 The Labour Group on Blaby District Council argued that the number of district councillors allocated to Leicester Forest East should be increased. It argued that the electorate of this part of the district has grown substantially over the last four years and therefore extra representation was called for in the area.

52 As part of its draft recommendations the LGCE decided to adopt the Council's proposals in this area with minor amendments. It proposed modifying the boundary between the proposed Ellis and Fairstone wards so that it would run to the rear of properties in Glenfields Crescent and Harrison Close as opposed to running along the middle of these roads. It also proposed that the boundary between the Council's proposed Muxloe and Forest wards should be amended slightly to provide a more identifiable boundary and to tie it to ground detail. It proposed a minor modification to the proposed northern boundary of Forest ward, so that it would run along the railway line to take Southview Court and the properties on Ellis Drive into Forest ward. It also noted that there was agreement between the Labour Party and the District Council on the need for an extra councillor in the Leicester Forest East area. It therefore proposed that Leicester Forest East ward should return three councillors

53 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the number of electors in Ellis ward (comprising the Ellis parish ward of Glenfields parish), Fairstone ward (comprising the proposed Fairstone parish wards of Glenfields parish), Forest ward (comprising Leicester Forest East parish and the proposed Hinckley Road parish ward of Kirby Muxloe parish), and Muxloe (comprising the proposed Kirby parish ward of Kirby Muxloe parish) wards would vary from the district

average by 10 per cent, 7 per cent, 2 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. (9 per cent, 8 per cent, 5 per cent and 6 per cent respectively by 2006).

54 The District Council expressed its support for the LGCE's draft recommendations in this area. We did not receive any other representations regarding this area and we have therefore decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. Our final recommendations will provide the same level of electoral equality as our draft recommendations as outlined earlier. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables in Tables 1 and 2 and illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

### **Fosse, Millfield, Ravenhurst and Winstanley wards**

55 The existing wards of Fosse, a single member ward (comprising the Fosse parish ward of Braunstone parish), Millfield, a single-member ward (comprising the Millfield parish ward of Braunstone parish), Ravenhurst, a three-member ward (comprising the Ravenhurst parish ward of Braunstone parish) and Winstanley, a two-member ward (comprising the Winstanley parish ward of Braunstone parish) cover Braunstone town, which is situated on the northern fringes of the district. Under current arrangements for Fosse, Millfield, Ravenhurst and Winstanley wards, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average by 17 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. The level of electoral equality is expected to worsen in Fosse, Millfield, Ravenhurst and Winstanley wards to vary from the district average by 19 per cent, 15 per cent, 20 per cent and 31 per cent respectively by 2006.

56 At Stage One the District Council proposed two single-member Fosse and Millfield wards, a two-member Ravenhurst ward and a three-member Winstanley ward. It proposed boundary amendments to all of the existing wards in Braunstone arguing that these boundary amendments would improve the level of electoral equality in Braunstone. Braunstone Town Council proposed an increase in the number of councillors representing Winstanley ward from two to three and stated that the existing boundaries of all wards should remain the same as boundary modifications in the area would affect community ties.

57 When formulating the representations received the LGCE proposed a number of boundary amendments of its own in the area. The LGCE concluded that the maintenance of the status quo in Braunstone as proposed by Braunstone Town Council would not provide good enough levels of electoral equality. It proposed running the boundary between its proposed Ravenhurst and Winstanley wards along the A563 to form a stronger more recognisable boundary on the ground. This boundary modification would not involve transferring any electors. The LGCE also proposed amending the boundary between its proposed Ravenhurst and Fosse wards to provide an adequate reflection of community identity in the area. Therefore, it proposed creating a three-member Braunstone ward arguing that this would create a more cohesive area and would avoid crossing arbitrary boundaries. It was of the opinion that its proposed boundary modifications better reflected community identity in the area.

58 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average in its proposed Millfield ward (comprising the proposed Millfield parish ward of Braunstone parish), Ravenhurst & Fosse ward (comprising the proposed Fosse and Ravenhurst parish wards of Braunstone parish) and Winstanley ward (comprising the Winstanley parish ward of Braunstone parish) by 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 24 per cent respectively (3 per cent, 2 per cent and 9 per cent respectively by 2006).

59 At Stage Three the District Council expressed its support for the LGCE's draft recommendations in the area. Braunstone Town Council also expressed its support for the draft recommendations but proposed that the name of the proposed Braunstone ward be renamed Ravenhurst & Fosse ward. Thorpe Astley Community Association argued that their area, placed in the proposed Winstanley ward under the draft recommendations, should be placed in a parish ward of its own in either Braunstone or Leicester Forest East parishes. Alternatively it proposed the creation of a parish of its own. It argued that the area has nothing in common with the rest of Winstanley parish ward.

60 We have carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period. We have noted the arguments put forward by the Thorpe Astley Community Association. However, we have no power to create or abolish parish councils; the Thorpe Astley Community Association should make representations to Blaby District Council which has the power to review parishing arrangements in its area, under the Local Government and Ratings Act of 1997. We considered the proposal to create a parish ward in this area, however we noted that the Community Association's proposals would not utilise the B563 as a boundary across the entire length of Braunstone parish. We consider that the B563 would have to be utilised from Meridian Way to Hinckley Road. However, as this was not put forward locally we do not propose adopting either this or the Thorpe Astley Community Association's proposal. We propose adopting the name change put forward by Braunstone Town Council which we consider would more accurately reflect the constituent parts of the ward.

61 Our final recommendations will provide the same level of electoral equality as our draft recommendations as outlined earlier. Our final recommendations set out in Tables 1 and 2 are illustrated on, Map 2 and Map A2 and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Cosby, Enderby, Narborough, St John's and Whetstone wards**

62 The existing wards of Cosby, a two-member ward (comprising the parish of Cosby), Enderby, a two-member ward (comprising the parishes of Lubbesthorpe, and the Enderby parish ward of Enderby parish), Narborough, a two-member ward (comprising the parish of Narborough), St John's, a single-member ward (comprising the St John's parish ward of Enderby parish) and Whetstone, a single-member ward (comprising Whetstone parish) cover an area stretching from the centre to the south of the district. Under the current arrangements for Cosby, Enderby, Narborough, St John's and Whetstone wards the number of electors per councillor varies from the district average by 23 per cent, 12 per cent, 78 per cent, 26 per cent and 155 per cent. In 2006 the level of electoral inequality is expected to worsen slightly in Cosby and Enderby wards to vary from the district average by 25 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. It is expected to improve slightly in Narborough, St John's and Whetstone wards to vary from the district average by 74 per cent, 17 per cent and 148 per cent respectively.

63 At Stage One the District Council proposed two new three-member Cosby with Whetstone and Enderby St John's wards and a new North Whetstone single-member ward. As a result of its proposed district ward it put forward new North and South Whetstone parish wards, as outlined later in the chapter. It also proposed creating a new parish ward in Narborough parish. Narborough Parish Council argued that any new district wards in the Narborough area should be coterminous with the existing parishes.. It also argued that the number of councillors representing the Narborough area should be increased to address the high level of electoral inequality and the increase in electorate in the existing wards. The Liberal Democrats objected to the Council's submission arguing that it would "destroy" community identity in the Cosby and Whetstone areas.

64 After considering the representations received the LGCE created three new two-member wards in the area. It proposed a Narborough Town & Littlethorpe ward comprising the existing Littlethorpe parish ward of Narborough parish and part of the existing Narborough parish ward of Narborough parish. It proposed a new Red Hill & Enderby ward comprising a

new Red Hill & Enderby parish ward of Narborough parish covering the area to the north of Red Hill School and Woodlands Day Hospital. It also proposed a new Enderby & St John's ward comprising the existing Lubbesthorpe and a new West Enderby parish wards of Enderby parish. The LGCE argued that its proposed Narborough Town & Littlethorpe ward places the centre of Narborough Town in a ward of its own and recognises its links with the Littlethorpe area. It also argued that its proposed Red Hill & Enderby ward would serve to reflect the links between Narborough and the outlying areas of Enderby. The LGCE also proposed creating a two-member Enderby & St John's ward arguing that the area of the existing Enderby ward, which is placed in this ward, has good links with the St John's area. The LGCE also adopted the District Council's proposed Cosby with Whetstone ward arguing that there are adequate transportation links between the two parishes on both sides of the M1 and the alternatives proposed in the area, which involved crossing the A426 Blaby by-pass or placing part of Cosby parish with Narborough parish, provided wards with worse community identity.

65 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average in its proposed Cosby with Whetstone (comprising Cosby Parish and the proposed South Whetstone parish ward of Whetstone parish), Enderby & St John's (comprising the proposed Enderby & St John's parish ward of Enderby parish), Narborough Town & Littlethorpe (comprising the proposed Narborough Town & Littlethorpe parish ward of Narborough parish), North Whetstone (comprising the proposed North Whetstone parish ward of Whetstone parish) and its proposed two-member Red Hill & Enderby ward (comprising the proposed West Enderby parish ward of Enderby parish and the proposed Red Hill parish ward of Narborough) by 2 per cent, 9 per cent, 9 per cent, 2 per cent and 4 per cent (equal to the district average, 6 per cent, 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 2 per cent respectively by 2006).

66 At Stage Three the District Council, Councillor Tanner, Cosby Parish Council and a local resident proposed amending the boundary between the proposed North Whetstone and Cosby with Whetstone wards to create two new two-member wards. They argued that moving the boundary between the two wards southwards to run along Dog and Gun Lane would create a more easily recognisable boundary and better reflect community identity in the centre of Whetstone Village. The District Council also proposed renaming the proposed Narborough Town & Littlethorpe ward as Narborough & Littlethorpe and the proposed Red Hill & Enderby ward to the Pastures. Enderby Parish Council broadly supported the draft recommendations in the Enderby area but proposed a reallocation of parish councillors to more accurately reflect the electorate of the area.

67 Having considered the representations received we propose broadly adopting the boundary amendment proposed by the District Council and other respondents. However, we propose slightly amending the proposals put to us to provide for a stronger boundary in the area. We propose running the boundary between the two two-member wards along Warwick Road to the north of the industrial estate in the area and then along Whetstone Brook taking in some properties on Otter Way and Badger Drive. We consider that these particular properties are part of the community to the south of Dog and Gun Lane and therefore should be warded with them. We are of the opinion that by moving the boundary southwards, community identity in the centre of Whetstone Village would be better reflected and that outlying areas of the village would be warded with the Cosby area. We are aware that this warding arrangement has been proposed reluctantly by Cosby Parish Council which argues that it still leaves part of Whetstone being warded with Cosby parish on the other side of the M1. However, we conclude that it is the best available option in the area and avoids warding areas of Cosby with Narborough and areas of Whetstone with Blaby, two options that, in our opinion, would be poor reflections of community identity. We also propose adopting the ward name changes proposed by the District Council. We are of the opinion the ward names of Narborough & Littlethorpe and Pastures would better reflect the constituent parts of the two wards.

68 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average in our proposed two-member Cosby with South Whetstone ward (comprising

Cosby parish and the proposed South Whetstone parish ward of Whetstone parish), and our proposed two-member North Whetstone ward (comprising the proposed North Whetstone parish ward of Whetstone parish) by 1 per cent and 6 per cent respectively (4 per cent and 3 per cent respectively by 2006). The levels of electoral equality in our Enderby & St John's, Narborough & Littlethorpe and Pastures wards would be same as the draft recommendations, as outlined earlier. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and Map A4 in Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Countesthorpe, Glen Parva, Northfield and Winchester wards**

69 The existing wards of Countesthorpe, a three-member ward (comprising the parishes of Countesthorpe and Kilby), Glen Parva, a two-member ward (comprising the parish of Glen Parva), Northfield, a two-member ward (comprising the Northfield parish ward of Blaby parish) and Winchester, a two-member ward (comprising the Winchester parish ward of Blaby parish) cover the south-east of the district. Under the current arrangements in Countesthorpe, Glen Parva, Northfield and Winchester wards the number of electors per councillor varies from the district average by 1 per cent, 15 per cent, 36 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is expected to worsen slightly in all the wards to vary from the district average by 2 per cent, 19 per cent, 37 per cent and 30 per cent respectively in 2006.

70 At Stage One Blaby District Council proposed retaining the existing three-member Countesthorpe ward and combining the existing Northfield and Winchester wards with part of the existing Glen Parva ward to create a new three-member Bouskell ward and a revised two-member Glen Parva ward. It argued that the existing Countesthorpe ward should be retained because of its low level of electoral inequality. Glen Parva Parish Council argued that the District Council's proposals would be detrimental to community identity in the area and it proposed an alternative warding arrangement placing parts of Blaby and Whetstone parish in the same ward. The Liberal Democrat Group also objected to the Council's proposed warding arrangements in the Glen Parva area.

71 Having considered the representations it received at Stage One, the LGCE proposed adopting the existing Countesthorpe ward as part of its draft recommendations. It proposed a new three-member Glen Parva & Blaby North ward and a new two-member Blaby South & Winchester ward. It argued that the existing Countesthorpe ward provides good electoral equality and that it has strong recognisable borders. It went on to argue that warding arrangements proposed by respondents in the Glen Parva and Blaby areas would result in the creation of a Glen Parva ward with such poor boundaries that it would be almost detached and that to travel from one end of the Council's proposed Glen Parva ward to the other end it would be necessary to leave the ward. It proposed that, instead of splitting Glen Parva parish and warding some of it across the Grand Union Canal, the existing Glen Parva ward should be kept together and that part of Blaby parish should be included in a new three-member Glen Parva & Blaby North ward. The remainder of Blaby parish should make up a new Blaby South & Winchester ward. It argued that it was possible to split Blaby parish into distinctive communities, something that was not possible in Glen Parva parish.

72 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average in its proposed two-member Blaby South & Winchester ward (comprising the proposed Blaby South & Winchester parish ward of Blaby parish), three-member Countesthorpe ward (comprising the parishes of Countesthorpe and Kilby) and Glen Parva & Blaby North ward (comprising the proposed Blaby North parish ward of Blaby parish and Glen Parva parish) by 4 per cent, 1 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (2 per cent, 2 per cent and equal to the district average respectively by 2006).

73 At Stage Three Blaby Parish Council objected to the LGCE's draft recommendations and proposed warding arrangements in the area similar to the District Council's Stage One submission. It argued that the area covered by Blaby parish should be represented by three

councillors and that Glen Parva parish should be represented by two councillors. It went on to propose that the area of new development in Glen Parva parish around the Newbridge Road area should be placed in a three-member ward with the whole of Blaby parish. Alternatively, it stated that the Newbridge Road area should become part of one of three single-member wards covering Blaby parish. It argued that its proposal “represented the least disturbance and the least number of people affected” and provided good levels of electoral equality for the area. The Parish Council went on to propose that if the Blaby area was divided into three single-member wards it would prefer them to be called Saville, Winchester and Northfield wards. However, if the Commission decided that the area should be represented by a single three-member ward it should be called Blaby Newbridge ward. Glen Parva Parish Council expressed its support for the proposals put forward by Blaby Parish Council. The District Council proposed a ward name change in the area, recommending that Blaby South & Winchester ward be renamed Blaby South ward.

74 We have carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period and we are confirming the draft recommendations in this area as final. We have noted the proposals put forward by Blaby Parish Council. However, the LGCE as at Stage One, have not been convinced that splitting Glen Parva parish provides the best balance between community identity and electoral equality. As at Stage One we are of the opinion that splitting Glen Parva parish would create an almost detached ward and communication links from one end of the ward to the other would be via a neighbouring ward. We consider that Blaby Parish Council has not provided us with strong enough argumentation to justify placing the Newbridge Road area in a different district ward to the rest of Glen Parva parish and to use Leicester Road as a district ward boundary which we consider would be a weak boundary. Nor has it provided strong enough argumentation to justify its assertion that community identity in the Blaby area would be adversely affected by the LGCE’s draft recommendations. We have decided to adopt the District Council’s proposed ward name change and we propose changing the name of Blaby South & Winchester ward to Blaby South.

75 Our final recommendations would provide the same level of electoral equality as the draft recommendations, as outlined earlier. Our final proposals are set out, in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and Map A5 in Appendix A at the back of the report and at the back of the report.

## **Electoral Cycle**

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

## **Conclusions**

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

- we propose that Whetstone parish should be two new two-member wards covering Cosby and Whetstone parishes. These new wards should be called North Whetstone and Cosby with South Whetstone;
- we also propose that the LGCE’s proposed Blaby South & Winchester, Narborough Town & Littlethorpe and Red Hill & Enderby wards should be renamed Blaby South, Narborough & Littlethorpe and Pastures respectively.

78 We conclude that, in Blaby:

- A council of 39 should be retained;
- there should be 18 wards, three fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified.

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

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

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	39	39	39	39
Number of wards	21	18	21	18
Average number of electors per councillor	1,808	1,808	1,844	1,844
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	16	1	17	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	8	1	9	0

80 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 16 to one, with Winstanley ward varying from the district average by 24 per cent. This level of electoral equality would improve further in 2006, with no wards, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

**Final Recommendation**

Blaby District Council should comprise 39 councillors serving 18 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A including the large map inside the back cover.

**Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

81 When reviewing parish electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it should also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. In the LGCE's draft recommendations report it proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for the parishes of Blaby, Braunstone, Enderby, Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Narborough and Whetstone to reflect the proposed district wards.

82 The parish of Blaby is currently served by 18 councillors representing two wards: Northfield (returning eight councillors) and Winchester (returning ten councillors). At Stage One the District Council proposed placing the whole of Blaby parish in a single ward at district level, with a

parish ward of Glen Parva parish. However, the LGCE having adopted its own district warding arrangements in this area, as outlined earlier in the chapter, proposed creating two new parish wards: Blaby North (returning eight parish councillors) and Blaby South & Winchester (returning 10 parish councillors).

83 In response to the LGCE’s consultation report, Blaby Parish Council proposed creating a parish ward from the area of new development around Newbridge Road and placing it in one of three single-member district wards covering Blaby parish or one three-member ward comprising the whole of Blaby parish. No further comments concerning Blaby parish were received during Stage Three. The District Council proposed changing the name of the proposed Blaby South & Winchester ward to Blaby South.

84 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Blaby parish as final. However, we propose changing the name of the proposed Blaby South & Winchester ward to Blaby South.

**Final Recommendation**  
Blaby Parish Council should comprise 18 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Blaby North (returning eight councillors) and Blaby South (returning 10 councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and Map A5 in Appendix A.

85 The parish of Braunstone is currently served by 21 councillors representing four wards: Fosse (returning three councillors), Millfield (returning three councillors), Ravenhurst (returning 10 councillors) and Winstanley (returning five councillors). At Stage One the District Council proposed boundary modifications at district level to all the wards in Braunstone parish. However, the LGCE proposed modifications to the District Council’s proposed district wards and consequently it proposed creating four new parish wards: Fosse (returning three councillors), Millfield (returning three councillors), Ravenhurst (returning ten councillors) and Winstanley (returning five councillors).

86 In response to the LGCE’s consultation report Thorpe Astley Community Association argued that it was not adequately represented at parish level in the Winstanley parish ward of Braunstone Town Council and proposed that the area should be represented by its own parish councillors on Braunstone Town Council, become part of another parish or form a parish of its own. No further comments were received from at Stage Three.

87 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Braunstone parish as final. As stated earlier it is not within our remit as part of a PER to recommend the creation of new parishes, under the Local Government and Rating Act 1997 this power lies with Blaby District Council and Thorpe Astley Community Association should address their concerns to Blaby District Council. We are of the opinion that any parish ward which utilises the B563 as its eastern boundary should use the entire length of the road as its boundary to create a parish ward. The Thorpe Astley Community Association’s proposals would not utilise the whole of the B563 and creates one parish ward which crosses the B563 and another which does not. We consider that such a proposal would be inconsistent and therefore we do not propose adopting it as part of our final recommendations, which will be identical to the draft recommendations.

### **Final Recommendation**

Braunstone Town Council should comprise 21 parish councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Fosse ward (returning three councillors), Millfield (returning three councillors), Ravenhurst (returning 10 councillors) and Winstanley (returning five councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

88 The parish of Enderby is currently served by 16 councillors representing two wards: Enderby (returning 11 councillors) and St John's (returning five councillors). At Stage One the District Council proposed placing the whole of the parish within the same district ward. However, the LGCE proposed modifications to the District Council's proposed Enderby and Narborough wards and consequently it proposed creating a new West Enderby parish ward. The LGCE proposed retaining the existing boundaries of St John's parish ward (returning four councillors) and creating two new parish wards: Enderby (returning 10 councillors) and West Enderby (returning two councillors).

89 In response to the LGCE's consultation report Enderby Parish Council proposed a reallocation of parish councillors between parish wards to more accurately reflect the electorates of the respective parish wards. It proposed that Enderby parish wards should be represented by eight parish councillors and St John's and West Enderby parish wards should be served by four parish councillors each. No further comments regarding Enderby parish were received at Stage Three.

90 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we proposed reallocating the number of parish councillors between the three wards of the parish. This provides a pattern of parish wards which accurately reflect the balance of the electorate across the parish. We received no comments regarding the proposed parish ward boundaries of Enderby parish and therefore we are retaining the proposed boundaries in the parish.

### **Final Recommendation**

Enderby Parish Council should comprise 16 parish councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Enderby (returning eight councillors) St John's (returning four councillors) and West Enderby (returning four councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

91 The parish of Glenfields is currently served by 21 councillors: Ellis parish ward (returning eight councillors), Faire parish ward (returning eight councillors) and Stone parish ward (returning five councillors). At Stage One the Parish Council requested that each parish ward be allocated seven parish councillors. The LGCE proposed endorsing this proposal as part of its draft recommendations. It also amended the boundary between Ellis and Fairestone district wards, and consequently it proposed amending the boundary between Ellis and Stone parish wards.

92 In response to the LGCE's consultation report, the District Council endorsed our recommendations for Glenfields parish. No further comments were received at Stage Three.

93 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Glenfields parish as final.

**Final Recommendation**  
Glenfields Parish Council should comprise 21 parish councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Ellis parish ward (returning seven councillors), Faire parish ward (returning seven councillors) and Stone parish ward (returning seven councillors). The boundaries between these three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

94 The parish of Kirby Muxloe is currently served by 14 councillors and is not warded. At Stage One the District Council proposed creating a new parish ward covering the Hinckley Road area. The LGCE made a slight boundary amendment to the District Council’s proposed district wards in the area and consequently proposed amending the boundaries of the proposed Hinckley Road parish ward. It proposed creating two new parish wards: Hinckley Road (returning one councillor) and Kirby (returning 13 councillors).

95 At Stage Three no further comments were received regarding Kirby Muxloe parish.

96 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Kirby Muxloe parish as final.

**Final Recommendation**  
Kirby Muxloe Parish Council should comprise 14 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Hinckley Road (returning one councillor) and Kirby (returning 13 councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and Map A3 in Appendix A.

97 The parish of Narborough is currently represented by 19 councillors representing two parish wards: Littlethorpe (returning five councillors) and Narborough (returning 14 councillors). At Stage One the District Council proposed creating a new parish ward in Narborough to reflect its district ward proposals. However, the LGCE proposed its own district warding arrangements in this area and consequently it proposed creating two new parish wards: Narborough & Littlethorpe (returning seven councillors) and Red Hill & Enderby (returning 12 councillors).

98 In response to the LGCE’s consultation report Narborough Parish Council proposed that the LGCE’s proposed parish wards of Narborough Town & Littlethorpe and Red Hill & Enderby should be renamed Narborough & Littlethorpe and Pastures respectively in order to more accurately reflect the areas. The District Council also proposed that Narborough Town & Littlethorpe parish ward be renamed Narborough & Littlethorpe ward. No further comments were received regarding Yarbrough parish at Stage Three.

99 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Narborough parish as final. However, we propose changing the name of Narborough Town & Littlethorpe parish ward to Narborough & Littlethorpe and Red Hill & Enderby parish ward to Pastures.

**Final Recommendation**

Narborough Parish Council should comprise 19 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Narborough & Littlethorpe ward (returning seven councillors) and Pastures ward (returning 12 councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary as illustrated and named on the large map in the back of the report.

100 Whetstone parish is currently represented by 15 councillors and is not warded. At Stage One the District Council proposed creating a new single-member North Whetstone district ward in the north of the parish and a South Whetstone parish ward in the remaining area of the parish. The LGCE adopted the Council's proposals at district level and consequently proposed creating two new parish wards: North Whetstone (returning four councillors) and South Whetstone (returning 11 councillors).

101 In response to the LGCE's consultation report the District Council, Cosby Parish Council, a local councillor and a local resident proposed amending the boundaries of the proposed district wards of North Whetstone and Cosby with Whetstone to create two new two-member North Whetstone and South Whetstone with Cosby wards. Consequentially it proposed creating two new parish wards: North Whetstone and South Whetstone. No further comments concerning Whetstone parish were received at Stage Three.

102 Having considered all the evidence received we have decided to adopt the Council's proposed amendments to the North Whetstone and Cosby with Whetstone wards at district level and consequently we propose creating two new parish wards of North Whetstone and South Whetstone. However, we propose amendments to the Council's proposed boundary, as outlined earlier in the chapter.

**Final Recommendation**

Whetstone Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing two new wards: North Whetstone (returning four councillors) and South Whetstone (returning 11 councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and Map A4 in Appendix A.

*Map 2: Final Recommendations for Blaby*



## 6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

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

104 It is now up to the Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 18 July 2002.

105 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be sent to the Electoral Commission at the address below no later than 18 July 2002:

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



## APPENDIX A

### **Final Recommendations for Blaby: Detailed Mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Blaby area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on Maps A2, A3, A4, A5 and the large map at the back of this report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding of Glenfields parish.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposed warding of Kirby parish.

**Map A4** illustrates the proposed warding of Whetstone parish.

**Map A5** illustrates the proposed warding of Blaby parish.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Blaby town and Narborough.

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

*Map A2: Proposed warding of Glenfields parish*

*Map A3: Proposed warding of Kirby parish*

*Map A4: Proposed Warding of Whetstone parish*

*Map A5: Proposed Warding of Blaby parish*