

Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No. 417

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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

PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE
COUNTY OF EAST SUSSEX

1. The last order under section 51 of the Local Government Act 1972 in relation to the electoral arrangements for districts in the county of East Sussex was made on 22 April 1980. As required by section 63 and Schedule 9 of the Act, we have now reviewed the electoral arrangements for that county, using the procedures we had set out in our Report No. 6.
2. We informed the East Sussex County Council in a consultation letter dated 1 May 1980 that we proposed to conduct the review, and sent copies of the letter to all local authorities and parish meetings in the county, to the MPs representing the constituencies concerned, to the headquarters of the main political parties and to the editors both of local newspapers circulating in the county and of the local government press. Notices in the local press announced the start of the review and invited comments from members of the public and from interested bodies.
3. On 23 June 1980 the County Council submitted to us a draft scheme in which they suggested 70 electoral divisions for the county, each returning one member in accordance with section 6(2)(a) of the Act.
4. We considered this scheme together with the views expressed by local interests. On 10 February 1981 we issued draft proposals which we sent to all those who had received our consultation letter, or commented on the County Council's draft scheme. Notices were inserted in the local press announcing that the draft proposals had been issued and could be inspected at the County Council's offices.
5. We incorporated the County Council's draft scheme in our draft proposals, subject to the following amendment we adopted to take account of comments we received on the scheme.

Lewes District

We altered the boundary between the Chailey and Ringmer divisions so that the parish of St John Without and the parish ward of Hamsey (North) would be included in the Chailey rather than the Ringmer division.

6. We received comments in response to our draft proposals from the County Council, three district councils, eight parish councils and two county councillors. A list of those who wrote to us is given in Appendix 1 to this report.

7. East Sussex County Council raised no objections to the majority of the draft proposals but asked us to revert to their draft scheme in regard to the Chailey and Ringmer divisions, and to adopt alternative names suggested by Eastbourne Borough Council for the Eastbourne borough electoral divisions.

8. The other comments we received can be summarised as follows:-

(a) Eastbourne Borough

Eastbourne Borough Council objected to the draft proposals as they had done to the draft scheme, maintaining that there should be ten electoral divisions in the borough: they suggested, however, alternative names for the eight proposed divisions, if that arrangement was adhered to.

(b) Wealden District

Wealden District Council objected to the draft proposals because in their view they broke more of the existing local ties than alternative schemes: the alternatives they had in mind appear to have been ones suggested by parish councils in the area when the draft scheme was being prepared; the District Council themselves did not put forward any specific alternatives. They also considered that the timing of the review was premature. Chalvington with Ripe, Laughton and Hellingly Parish Councils objected to the composition of their respective divisions.

(c) Lewes District

Lewes District Council were pleased to note that the draft proposals were in accordance with the alternative scheme they had put forward for the Chailey and Ringmer divisions. They were however disappointed that their suggestion for the division of the Telscombe area had not been accepted but agreed that they would take no further action on this matter.

Barcombe Parish Council objected to the inclusion of their parish in the Ringmer division because in their view it was essentially rural whereas the other parts of the division were urbanised. Councillor R E Brown objected to the modification made by the Commission to the Chailey and Ringmer divisions, maintaining that Hamsey (North) and St John Without did not have many ties with the other parishes in Chailey division. He also objected to the numerical balance that the modification produced.

(d) Rother District

Etchingham Parish Council had no comments to make on the draft proposals. Ticehurst Parish Council objected to the Ticehurst electoral division on the grounds that it covered too extensive an area for one county councillor to represent effectively. Iden and Brede Parish Councils both objected to the grouping of parishes in their respective divisions (Rye and Winchelsea divisions).

County Councillor R Bromley objected to the make up of Rye division, maintaining that Rye Parish had no community of interest with the parishes to the north and west. He reiterated his support for an alternative arrangement that had been put forward by Cllr Mrs De Pree for separating urban and rural communities.

9. When we came to reassess our draft proposals we took account of all the comments we had received. Although some requests were made for a local meeting to be held, we considered we had sufficient information to reach decisions on the evidence before us and came to the conclusions set out below.

(a) Eastbourne Borough

We were unable to accept the request put forward by the Borough Council to increase the number of electoral divisions in the borough from eight to ten as this would give the borough a disproportionate representation as compared with other districts. We accepted that confusion could arise if the county electoral divisions and the borough wards had the same names but different areas and therefore decided to adopt the alternative names that had been suggested for the eight division arrangement by the Borough Council.

(b) Wealden District

We could see no way of meeting the objections raised by the District Council. They did not indicate which alternative arrangements they would have preferred for the district though we assumed that they were referring to earlier suggestions by rural parishes in the area. We had given this matter consideration at the earlier stages of the review, and after further consideration came to the same conclusion, that the County Council's draft scheme which we had adopted as our draft proposals still offered the best reasonable compromise between varying interests. The District Council also maintained that the review should have been deferred until their parish review had been completed. We took the view that in the light of the obligations placed on us by the Act we should give priority to the county electoral review.

We could see no acceptable way of meeting the objections raised by the parish councils of Chalvington with Ripe, Laughton and Hellingly. The alternative schemes put forward by these parishes produced a less even standard of representation than our draft proposals which were supported by the County Council.

(c) Lewes District

We gave careful consideration to the objections put forward by the County Council and Councillor Brown to our modification of the Chailey and Ringmer divisions. They maintained that Hamsey (North) and St John Without did



not have many local ties with the other parishes in Chailey division and were concerned at the numerical imbalance that the modification caused between the two divisions. The modification was, however, part of an alternative scheme put forward by the District Council and had the support of the parishes concerned. The District Council have confirmed their support for this modification. We considered that the slightly less favourable numerical balance was acceptable and decided to confirm our draft proposals in this respect.

Barcombe Parish Council considered that it was inappropriate to link their parish with part of Lewes town. They did not state which other arrangement they would have preferred but at an earlier stage of the review they had indicated that they would rather be in the Chailey than the Ringmer division. We rejected this arrangement in our draft proposals because the standard of representation produced was significantly worse than that in the draft scheme. We saw no reason to alter that decision.

(d) Rother District

We accepted that the division in which Ticehurst parish was included was large geographically but it was not dissimilar in size to other divisions within the district. We therefore saw no reason to adjust our final proposals to take into consideration the parish council's objection. Nor could we see any acceptable way of meeting the objections put forward by Iden and Brede Parish Councils. They would have preferred the alternative arrangement that had been put forward by Cllr Mrs De Pree at the draft scheme stage, for which Cllr R Bromley reiterated his support. We had preferred the County Council's draft scheme to this alternative because it commanded the acceptance of the District Council and was supported by a number of parishes, though opposed by others; the alternative scheme did not offer any numerical advantage.

10. We accordingly decided to confirm our draft proposals as our final proposals for all districts in the county subject only to a change of eight names of divisions in Eastbourne borough referred to in paragraph 9a above.

11. Details of these final proposals are set out in Schedules 1 and 2 to this report and on the attached map. Schedule 1 gives the names of the electoral divisions. A detailed description of the boundaries of the proposed electoral divisions as defined on the map is set out in Schedule 2.

12. PUBLICATION

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

L.S.

Signed:

NICHOLAS MORRISON (CHAIRMAN)

PHYLLIS BOWDEN

TYRRELL BROCKBANK

G E CHERRY

D P HARRISON

R R THORNTON

LESLIE GRIMSHAW (SECRETARY)

18 June 1981

LIST OF THOSE WHO COMMENTED ON THE DRAFT PROPOSALS

	<u>Area concerned</u>
East Sussex County Council	Whole county
 <u>EASTBOURNE BOROUGH</u>	
Eastbourne Borough Council	Whole District
 <u>LEWES DISTRICT</u>	
Barcombe Parish Council	Chailey/Ringmer
Councillor R E Brown	"
Lewes District Council	"
 <u>ROTHER DISTRICT</u>	
Ticehurst Parish Council	Ticehurst
Iden Parish Council	Rye
Brede Parish Council	Winchelsea
Councillor R E Bromley	Whole District
Etchingham Parish Council	Ticehurst
 <u>WEALDEN DISTRICT</u>	
Wealden District Council	Whole District
Chalvington with Ripe and Laughton Parish Councils	Polegate
Hellingly Parish Council	Hellingly

SCHEDULE 1

COUNTY OF EAST SUSSEX

NAMES OF PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS (EACH RETURNING ONE COUNCILLOR)

<u>Borough of Brighton</u>	<u>No. of Councillors</u>
Hanover	1
Hollingbury	1
King's Cliff	1
Marine	1
Moulsecoomb	1
Patcham	1
Preston	1
Queen's Park	1
Regency	1
Rottingdean	1
St Peter's	1
Seven Dials	1
Stanmer	1
Tenantry	1
Westdene	1
Woodingdean	1
 <u>Borough of Eastbourne</u>	
Cavendish	1
College	1
Old Town	1
Park	1
Princes	1
Priory	1
St Mary's	1
Woodlands	1
 <u>Borough of Hastings</u>	
Braybrooke and Castle	1
Broomsgrove and Ore	1
Central St Leonards and Gensing	1
Hollington and Ashdown	1
Old Hastings and Mount Pleasant	1
St Helens and Elphinstone	1
Silverhill and Wishing Tree	1
West St Leonards and Maze Hill	1

No. of Councillors

Borough of Hove

Brunswick and Adelaide	1
Goldsmid	1
Hangleton	1
Nevill	1
Portslade North	1
Portslade South	1
Stanford	1
Vallance	1
Westbourne	1
Wish	1

District of Lewes

Chailey	1
Lewes	1
Newhaven	1
Peacehaven	1
Ringmer	1
Seaford Blatchington	1
Seaford Sutton	1
Telscombe	1

District of Rother

Battle	1
Bexhill East	1
Bexhill North	1
Bexhill South	1
Bexhill West	1
Rye	1
Ticehurst	1
Winchelsea	1

District of Wealden

Buxted ^s Marfield	1
Crowborough Beacon	1
Crowborough Rotherfield	1
Forest Row	1
Hailsham	1

Borough of Hastings (continued)No. of Councillors

Heathfield	1
Hellingly	1
Pevensey	1
Polegate	1
Uckfield	1
Wadhurst	1
Willington	1

The proposed electoral divisions are shown on a map which can be inspected at the Council's offices. A description of the boundaries of the proposed electoral divisions shown on the map is attached at Schedule 2.

