

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Wealden District Council

Electoral review

March 2016

Translations and other formats

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Contents

Summary	1
1 Introduction	2
2 Analysis and draft recommendations	4
Submissions received	4
Electorate figures	5
Council size	5
Warding patterns	5
Draft recommendations	6
Rural North	7
Crowborough	10
Central	12
Uckfield	14
South	15
Hailsham	19
Conclusions	21
Parish electoral arrangements	21
3 Have your say	26

Appendices

A Table A1: Draft recommendations for Wealden District Council	28
B Submissions received	32
C Glossary and abbreviations	33

Summary

Who we are

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Electoral review

An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed
- How many wards or electoral divisions should there be, where are their boundaries and what should they be called
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division

Why Wealden?

The Commission is carrying out electoral reviews of the county of East Sussex and all the constituent districts. The county currently has a high level of electoral inequality, as do the districts of Hastings and Wealden. This is where some councillors represent many more or many fewer voters than others. This means that the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Wealden. Overall, 26% of wards in Wealden currently have a variance of greater than 10% from the average number of electors per councillor.

Our proposals for Wealden

Wealden District Council currently has 55 councillors. Based on the evidence we received during previous phases of the review, we consider that a reduction of the current council size by 10, to 45 members, will ensure the Council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively.

Electoral arrangements

As Wealden District Council elects by whole-council elections, the Commission can produce a pattern of mixed-member wards. Our draft recommendations propose that Wealden District Council's 45 councillors should represent 41 single-member and two two-member wards across the district. Two of our proposed 43 wards would have an electoral variance of greater than 10% from the average for Wealden by 2021.

You have until 16 June 2016 to have your say on the recommendations. See page 26 for how to have your say.

1 Introduction

1 This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Wealden District Council's ('the Council's') electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district.

What is an electoral review?

2 Our three main considerations in conducting an electoral review are set out in legislation¹ and are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

3 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

Consultation

4 We wrote to the Council inviting the submission of proposals on council size. We then held a period of consultation on warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations. This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
September 2015	Council size decision
22 September 2015	Invitation to submit proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
1 December 2015	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
15 March 2016	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
17 June 2016	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations
20 September 2016	Publication of final recommendations

How will the recommendations affect you?

5 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

¹ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

recommendations.

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

6 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:

Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)

Alison Lowton

Peter Maddison QPM

Sir Tony Redmond

Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

2 Analysis and draft recommendations

7 Legislation² states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors³ 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.

8 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.

9 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors as shown on the table below.

	2015	2021
Electorate of Wealden	119,688	130,228
Number of councillors	45	45
Average number of electors per councillor	2,660	2,894

10 Under our draft recommendations, two of our proposed wards will have electoral variances of greater than 10% from the average for the district by 2021. These electoral variances, of 11% and -11%, are acceptable due to the necessity of avoiding the creation of unviable parish warding arrangements, and to avoid crossing strong and identifiable boundaries between wards. We consider that on the basis of evidence currently received this level of electoral equality provides for the best balance between the statutory criteria. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Wealden.

11 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.

12 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Wealden District Council or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. There is no evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

13 See Appendix B for details of submissions received. All submissions may be inspected at our offices and can also be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Electorate figures

14 As prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2021, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our draft recommendations in 2016. These forecasts were broken down to polling district levels and projected an increase in the electorate of Wealden of approximately 8.8% to 2021. The growth will largely be driven by development in the urban centres of the district.

15 Having considered the information provided by the Council, we are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time and these figures form the basis of our draft recommendations.

Council size

16 Prior to consultation, Wealden District Council submitted a proposal to us to reduce the existing council size of 55 members by either 10 or 13, to 45 or 42 members. We considered that the Council's submission was supported by evidence to justify reducing the current council size, and that 45 was the most appropriate number of councillors, as it allows for coterminosity between wards and county divisions. We are content that the Council has sufficiently demonstrated that the authority can operate efficiently and effectively under this council size and ensure effective representation of local residents. We therefore invited proposals for warding arrangements based on a council size of 45.

17 We received no submissions concerning council size in response to our consultation on warding patterns for Wealden District Council. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a council size of 45 elected members.

Warding patterns

18 During consultation on warding patterns, we received 28 submissions, including two district-wide proposals. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the district.

19 The district-wide scheme received from Wealden District Council provided a warding arrangement of 45 single-member wards. We received another district-wide scheme from a member of the public, which provided for a warding arrangement of 27 wards, made up of 13 single-member, 10 two-member and four three-member wards. This scheme provided for good electoral equality in the rural areas. The Council expressed a preference for single-member wards across the entire district. The Council's scheme provided for good electoral equality across much of the district; however, there were areas in which we have made significant changes to improve adherence to the statutory criteria.

20 Having carefully considered the proposals received, we were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards put forward by the Council resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the district and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries. However, there are areas in which we have recommended changes to provide for clearer boundaries. There are also two areas in which it was not possible to provide good electoral equality whilst maintaining a single-member warding

pattern, necessitating the creation of two two-member wards.

21 Our draft recommendations are for 43 wards, made up of 41 single-member and two two-member wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

22 A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements is set out in Table A1 (on pages 28–31) and on the large map accompanying this report.

23 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations. We also welcome comments on the ward names we have proposed as part of the draft recommendations.

Draft recommendations

24 The tables on pages 7–20 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Wealden. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for convenient and effective local government

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Rural North

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Buxted	1	-4%	This ward comprises the parish of Buxted, excluding the Coopers Green area in the far south-west.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Danehill & Fletching	1	-10%	This ward includes the parish of Danehill, the parish of Fletching excluding Shortbridge, and the rural western part of the Forest Row parish.	We received one submission relating to this ward. This submission related to the parish of Fletching and requested that the boundary of the parish be amended. However, this is outside of the scope of this review. One of the district-wide schemes in this area included a very small area of the parish of Fletching in the proposed Uckfield West with Isfield ward; however, the area included by the Council formed an unviable parish ward of fewer than 100 electors. To improve both the boundaries of the parish ward and the access in the proposed Uckfield West with Isfield ward, we propose to include the Shortbridge area of Fletching in the ward to the south, removing it from the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. Subject to this amendment, we are proposing this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Forest Row	1	7%	This ward includes the town of Forest Row, south of the railway line and east of Kidbrooke Park.	We received one submission directly regarding this ward, which asked for an amendment to the district boundary; however, this is outside the scope of this review. The proposed district-wide scheme proposed by the member of the public included Forest Row as part of a large two-member ward encompassing much of the surrounding rural area. However, we consider that in this area, a single-member ward is the best fit for Forest Row and that the ward proposed by the other district-wide scheme provides for

				good adherence to the statutory criteria. We are therefore confirming it as part of our draft recommendations.
Frant & Wadhurst	2	-4%	This ward comprises the parish of Wadhurst, the parish of Frant (excluding the Eridge Green area to the north-west), and the northernmost part of the parish of Mayfield & Five Ashes.	<p>We received one submission specifically relating to this ward, requesting that the parish and ward boundaries for the parish of Wadhurst remain contiguous; however, this would result in an unacceptably high variance of 38%. One of the district-wide proposals for this area put forward two wards – Frant & Wadhurst North and Wadhurst Central & South. However, these two single-member wards had electoral variances of -25% and 17% respectively, which are too high. The scheme also put forward a boundary between the two wards which split the Wadhurst community. The two-member ward put forward by the member of the public as part of his district-wide scheme comprised the entirety of both the Frant and Wadhurst parishes.</p> <p>Having considered the alternative options available, we consider that combining the proposed single-member wards in this area provides the best adherence to the statutory criteria and is representative of the communities in the area. Whilst we acknowledge the desire for single-member wards across the district, we consider that a two-member ward is the most appropriate solution in this area and are therefore proposing it as part of our draft recommendations, with the name Frant & Wadhurst.</p>
Hadlow Down & Rotherfield	1	-6%	This ward comprises the parish of Hadlow Down and the southern part of the parish of Rotherfield.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that one of the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Hartfield	1	1%	This ward comprises the parish of Hartfield, the	We received one submission relating to the Witherham parish, part of which falls within the proposed Hartfield ward,

			northern rural area of Forest Row parish, and the southern part of Withyham parish.	requesting that the entire Withyham parish remain in one ward. However, in order to construct a warding pattern that fulfils the statutory criteria, we are unable to maintain Withyham within one ward. Having considered alternative options, the district-wide scheme in this area provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria. We propose one change to the proposed Hartfield ward. In order to avoid the creation of an unviable parish ward in the south-east of the ward, we propose including the School Lane area in the Hartfield ward rather than in the Crowborough St Johns ward. Subject to this minor amendment, we are including this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Maresfield	1	9%	This ward contains the entire parish of Maresfield.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that one of the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Mayfield & Five Ashes	1	-1%	This ward comprises the parish of Mayfield & Five Ashes, excluding the northern area.	We received one submission relating to this ward, which requested that the whole of Mayfield & Five Ashes parish be included within one ward, and this option was considered. However, we consider that the ward proposed by on the district-wide proposals as part of their scheme allows for the best adherence to the statutory criteria across this part of the district, as well as following an existing boundary in the north, and are therefore including it as part of our draft recommendations.
Withyham	1	-9%	This ward comprises the northern part of Withyham parish, the northern area of Robertsbridge parish, and the north-western area of Frant parish.	We received one submission relating to the Withyham parish, much of which falls within the proposed Withyham ward, requesting that the entire Withyham parish remain in one ward. However, in order to construct a warding pattern that fulfils the statutory criteria, we are unable to maintain Withyham within one ward. Having considered alternative

				options, one of the district-wide schemes in this area provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and we are therefore confirming it as part of our draft recommendations.
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Crowborough

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Crowborough Central	1	2%	This ward comprises the central area of Crowborough, south of High Street and Crowborough Hill, and east of Beacon Road. The southern boundary runs south of the closes on Montargis Way.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Neither of the district-wide schemes provided for good electoral equality in this area, having variances of -18% and 13%. The proposed ward in this area is based on one of the district-wide schemes with modifications. We have moved the properties on the north side of Blackness Road and east of Whitehill Road into the Crowborough South East ward. The resulting Crowborough Central ward has strong and identifiable boundaries, and provides for good electoral equality.
Crowborough Jarvis Brook	1	-1%	This ward comprises the Jarvis Brook and Poundfield areas of Crowborough.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Neither of the district-wide schemes provided for particularly good electoral equality in this area, having variances of -10% and 14%. One of the district-wide proposals included a variance of -10%. In order to provide for improved levels of electoral equality across Crowborough, we decided to include the northern part of Green Lane in the Jarvis Brook ward. Subject to this amendment, we are including the ward as part of our final recommendations.
Crowborough North	1	5%	This ward includes the northern part of the town of	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. One of the district-wide schemes included a variance of 14%, which we did not consider provided for a reasonable

			Crowborough, north of High Street and Crowborough Hill.	level of electoral equality. In order to provide for better electoral equality across Crowborough, we have included the northern part of Green Lane in the Jarvis Brook ward. Subject to this amendment, we are including this ward as part of our final recommendations.
Crowborough South East	1	5%	This ward includes the south-eastern part of the town of Crowborough, south of the properties on Blackness Road and east of Whitehill Road and Fermor Road. It also includes the properties on Walshes Road.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. The proposed ward in this area is based on one of the district-wide schemes with modifications. We have moved the properties on the north side of Blackness Road and east of Whitehill Road from Crowborough Central into the Crowborough South East ward. The resulting Crowborough South East ward has strong and identifiable boundaries, and provides for good electoral equality.
Crowborough South West	1	7%	This ward comprises the rural southern area of Crowborough parish, along with the properties to the west of Whitehill Road and east of Beacon Road.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. The proposed ward in this area is based on one of the district-wide schemes with modifications to provide for improved electoral equality. We have moved the Swift Close area around Grove Park School into the proposed Crowborough St Johns ward, and the properties north of Southview Close into the proposed Crowborough Central ward. The resulting Crowborough South West ward has strong and identifiable boundaries, and provides for good electoral equality, and we are including it as part of our draft recommendations.
Crowborough St Johns	1	-4%	This ward comprises the western area of Crowborough, including Crowborough Training Camp.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. The proposed ward in this area is based on one of the district-wide schemes with modifications to provide for improved electoral equality. We have moved the Swift Close area around Grove Park School into the proposed Crowborough St Johns ward, and the aforementioned School Lane area has been moved into the Hartfield ward to avoid the creation of an unviable parish ward. The resulting

				Crowborough St Johns ward has strong and identifiable boundaries, and provides for good electoral equality, and we are including it as part of our draft recommendations.
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Central

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron	1	-1%	This ward comprises the parishes of Chiddingly and East Hoathly with Halland, along with the Waldron area of Heathfield & Waldron parish.	We received one submission relating to the Heathfield & Waldron parish, part of which falls within the proposed Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron ward. However, this submission did not provide an alternative to the district-wide scheme in this area. Having considered alternative options, one of the district-wide schemes in this area provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and we are therefore including this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Framfield & Cross-in-Hand	1	-1%	This ward comprises the parish of Framfield and the Cross-in-Hand area of Heathfield & Waldron Parish.	We received one submission relating to the Heathfield & Waldron parish, part of which falls within the proposed Framfield & Cross-in-Hand ward. However, this submission did not provide an alternative to the district-wide scheme in this area. Having considered alternative options, one of the district-wide schemes in this area provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and we are therefore including this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Heathfield North	1	4%	This ward comprises the northern part of the town of Heathfield.	We received one submission relating to the Heathfield & Waldron parish, part of which falls within the proposed Heathfield wards. However, this submission did not provide an alternative to the district-wide proposals in this area. Having considered alternative options, the proposed Heathfield North and Heathfield South wards provide for
Heathfield South	1	1%	This ward comprises the southern part of the town of Heathfield.	

				good adherence to the statutory criteria and we are therefore including these wards as part of our draft recommendations.
Hellingly	1	4%	This ward comprises the parish of Hellingly, along with the Magham Down area of Hailsham parish and the western edge of Herstmonceux parish.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Whilst we considered alternatives, we consider that one of the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Horam & Punnetts Town	2	2%	This ward contains the parishes of Horam and Warbleton, along with the Cowbeech area of Herstmonceux parish, and the Broad Oak and Punnetts Town areas of Heathfield & Waldron parish.	<p>We received one submission relating to the Heathfield & Waldron parish, part of which falls within the proposed Horam & Punnetts Town ward. However, this submission did not provide an alternative to the district-wide schemes in this area. The proposal for this area put forward two wards – Punnetts Town & Rushlake Green and Horam & Old Heathfield. However, these two single-member wards had electoral variances of 13% and -10% respectively. The alternative district-wide scheme proposed splitting this area into three different wards.</p> <p>Having considered the alternative options available, we consider that combining the proposed two single-member wards in this area provides the best adherence to the statutory criteria and is representative of the communities in the area. Whilst we acknowledge the Council's desire for single-member wards across the district, we consider that a two-member ward is the most appropriate solution in this area and are therefore proposing it as part of our draft recommendations, with the name Horam & Punnetts Town.</p>

Uckfield

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Uckfield East	1	-8%	This ward covers the eastern area of Uckfield, north of the railway line and east of High Street.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Whilst we considered alternatives, we consider that the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Uckfield New Town	1	8%	This ward covers the south-eastern area of Uckfield, south of the railway line and east of Eastbourne Road.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Uckfield North	1	-8%	This ward comprises the northern area of the town, along with the Coopers Green area of Buxted parish.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted	1	-10%	This ward comprises the Ridgewood area of Uckfield, along with the parish of Little Horsted.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We acknowledge that the variance here is high, but having considered alternative options, we consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Uckfield West & Isfield	1	-3%	The proposed ward comprises the western area of the town, along with the Shortbridge area of Fletching parish and the parish of Isfield.	We received one submission regarding this ward, which requested that the parish of Isfield be included in the Danehill & Fletching ward. However, this change would result in an Uckfield West ward with a variance of -20%, which is outside of the acceptable levels of electoral equality. One of the district-wide schemes in this area included a very small area of the parish of Fletching in the proposed Uckfield

				West with Isfield ward; however, the area included would create an unviable parish ward of fewer than 100 electors. To improve both the boundaries of the parish ward and the access in the proposed Uckfield West with Isfield ward, we propose to include the Shortbridge area of Fletching in the ward to the south, removing it from the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. Subject to this amendment, we are proposing this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
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South

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Arlington	1	-11%	This ward comprises the parishes of Alciston, Arlington, Berwick, Chalvington with Ripe, Laughton and Selmeston.	We received 11 submissions directly regarding this ward. One of these submissions was positive, agreeing with the decision to include Berwick parish in its entirety in this entirely rural ward. The remaining 10 submissions all commented on one of the district-wide proposals to include two small areas of the parish of Arlington in Hailsham West and Hailsham South, and stated that this was not reflective of community identity in the area. We visited the area as part of a tour of the review area, and the A22 provides a strong boundary between the parish of Arlington and the town of Hailsham, with few crossing points. The two areas identified by one of the proposals for inclusion in the Hailsham wards are also very small, and would lead to the creation of two unviable parish wards of fewer than 100 electors. For these reasons, we propose to include the entirety of the parish of Arlington in the Arlington ward. We note that the electoral variance for the proposed ward falls outside 10%; however, we consider that the evidence provided regarding the

				community identity of the Arlington parish is persuasive to justify the higher variance.
Herstmonceux, Ninfield & Wartling	1	7%	This ward comprises the parishes of Ninfield and Wartling, and the village of Herstmonceux. It also includes Herstmonceux Castle and Observatory.	We received one submission regarding the parish of Herstmonceux; however, the submission did not provide an alternative warding pattern. One of the district-wide proposals for this ward, including the parish of Hooe, had a variance of 25%, which is unacceptably high. We therefore propose to include the parish of Hooe in the proposed Pevensey & Westham ward. Subject to this amendment, we are including this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Lower Willingdon	1	-4%	This ward contains the villages of Jevington and Filching, along with the western Willingdon area south of Polegate.	We received one submission relating to this area, which favoured the inclusion of the Willingdon Watermill area in this ward instead of in the proposed Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill ward. However, this would lead to two unacceptable variances, of 25% and -25% respectively. We considered alternative options for this ward; however, we consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Pevensey & Westham	1	0%	This ward comprises the parish of Pevensey north of the railway line, along with the main urban area of Westham and the parish of Hooe. It also includes the caravan park and golf course at the southern end of Pevensey seafront.	We received one submission for this area, which referred to the allocation of councillors but did not comment on a particular warding pattern. Building on one of the district-wide schemes in this area, we have included the parish of Hooe, which allows a better level of electoral equality elsewhere in the district, as well as using strong and identifiable boundaries. We also propose to include the caravan park and golf course at the southern end of Pevensey seafront in this ward, to avoid creating an unviable parish ward. We propose moving the Hankham area from the proposed Pevensey & Westham ward into the proposed

				Stone Cross ward, to provide better levels of electoral equality across the area.
Pevensey Bay	1	-2%	This ward comprises the Pevensey Bay area.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. With the exclusion of the golf course and caravan park at the southern end of the bay, as mentioned above, we consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Polegate Central	1	-3%	This ward comprises the Dittons area of Polegate along Dittons Road and towards the railway station.	We received one submission regarding this area, which supported the district-wide proposed scheme. Subject to two minor alterations in the south to align with the parish boundary, we consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Polegate North	1	9%	This ward comprises the northern part of Polegate, and its southern, northern and eastern boundaries follow the current ward boundaries.	We received one submission regarding this area, which supported one of the district-wide proposed schemes. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill	1	5%	This ward comprises the area of Polegate south of the A2270 and the railway line.	We received two submissions relating to this area, one of which was positive, and one which favoured the inclusion of the Willingdon Watermill area in the Lower Willingdon ward instead of this ward. However, this would lead to two unacceptable variances, of 25% and -25% respectively. We considered alternative options for this ward; however, we consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.

South Downs	1	-10%	This ward comprises the parishes of Alfriston, Cuckmere Valley, East Dean & Friston and Long Man.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Whilst we acknowledge that the variance here is relatively high, and we considered alternatives, we consider that the rural nature of the ward means that district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Stone Cross	1	-6%	This ward comprises the Stone Cross area along with the Hankham area of Westham parish.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. One of the district-wide submissions in this area had a variance of -19%, which is too high. To correct this, we propose to include the Hankham area in this ward. Whilst we considered alternatives, we consider that making this change to the district-wide proposal provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Upper Willingdon	1	1%	This ward comprises the eastern Willingdon area to the south of Polegate.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Whilst we considered alternatives, we consider that the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.

Hailsham

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Hailsham Central	1	7%	This ward comprises the central area of Hailsham to the east of the railway line.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. Whilst we considered alternatives, we consider that the district-wide proposals in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Hailsham East	1	6%	This ward comprises the eastern part of Hailsham, including the rural area to the east of the urban centre.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Hailsham North	1	4%	This ward comprises the northern area of Hailsham to the east of The Cuckoo Trail and north of Hawthylands Crescent.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Hailsham North West	1	11%	This ward comprises the area of Hailsham to the west of The Cuckoo Trail and north of Hempstead Lane.	We did not receive any submissions directly regarding this ward. We consider that the district-wide pattern in this area provided for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and therefore have included this ward as part of our draft recommendations.
Hailsham South	1	-2%	The proposed ward comprises the area of Hailsham south of Diplocks Way and west of The Cuckoo Trail. It is bounded in the east by the A22.	We received 10 submissions relating to these wards, all of which related to the proposed inclusion of part of Arlington parish in Hailsham. These submissions all commented on the proposal to include two small areas of the parish of Arlington in Hailsham West and Hailsham South, and stated that this was not reflective of community identity in the area. We visited the area as part of a tour of the review area, and the A22 provides a strong boundary between the parish of
Hailsham West	1	7%	The proposed ward comprises the area of Hailsham north of Diplocks Way and west of The	

			<p>Cuckoo Trail. It is bounded in the east by the A22.</p>	<p>Arlington and the town of Hailsham, with few crossing points. The two areas identified by the district-wide pattern for inclusion in the Hailsham wards are also very small, and would lead to the creation of two unviable parish wards of fewer than 100 electors. For these reasons, we propose to include the entirety of the parish of Arlington in the Arlington ward. Subject to this amendment, which sees the boundary run down the A22, we proposed to include these wards as part of our draft recommendations.</p>
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Conclusions

25 Table 1 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2015 and 2021 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2015	2021
Number of councillors	45	45
Number of electoral wards	43	43
Average number of electors per councillor	2,660	2,894
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Draft recommendation
 Wealden District Council should comprise 45 councillors serving 43 wards representing 41 single-member wards and two two-member wards. The details and names are shown in Table A1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping
Sheet 1, Map 1 illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Wealden. **You can also view our draft recommendations for Wealden on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>**

Parish electoral arrangements

26 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.

27 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, Wealden 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.

28 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Buxted, Crowborough, Fletching, Forest Row, Frant, Hailsham, Heathfield & Waldron, Herstmonceux, Pevensey, Polegate, Uckfield, Westham, Willingdon & Jevington and Withyham parishes.

29 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Buxted parish.

Draft recommendation
Buxted Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Buxted (returning nine members), Coopers Green (returning one member) and High Hurstwood (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

30 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Crowborough parish.

Draft recommendation
Crowborough Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Crowborough Central (returning three members), Crowborough Jarvis Brook (returning two members), Crowborough North (returning three members), Crowborough South East (returning three members), Crowborough South West (returning three members) and Crowborough St Johns (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

31 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Fletching parish.

Draft recommendation
Fletching Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Fletching (returning eight members) and Shortbridge (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

32 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Forest Row parish

Draft recommendation

Forest Row Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Charlwood (returning one member), Hammerwood (returning two members) and Forest Row (returning 12 members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

33 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Frant parish.

Draft recommendation

Frant Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Bells Yew Green (returning three members), Frant (returning seven members) and Eridge Green (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

34 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hailsham parish.

Draft recommendation

Hailsham Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards: Hailsham East (returning four members), Hailsham South (returning three members), Hailsham West (returning four members), Hailsham North West (returning four members), Hailsham North (returning four members), Hailsham Central (returning four members) and Magham Down (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

35 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Heathfield & Waldron parish.

Draft recommendation

Heathfield & Waldron Parish Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Waldron (returning one member), Cross in Hand (returning three members), Heathfield North (returning six members), Heathfield South (returning six members) and Punnetts Town (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

36 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Herstmonceux parish.

Draft recommendation

Herstmonceux Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Golden Cross (returning one member), Trolliloes (returning two members), Castle (returning seven members) and Cowbeech (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

37 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Pevensey parish.

Draft recommendation

Pevensey Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Pevensey Bay (returning 12 members), and Pevensey Rural (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

38 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Polegate parish.

Draft recommendation

Polegate Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Polegate North (returning seven members), Polegate South (returning five members), and Polegate Central (returning three members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

39 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Uckfield parish.

Draft recommendation

Uckfield Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Uckfield East (returning three members), Uckfield New Town (returning four members), Uckfield North (returning three members), Uckfield Ridgewood (returning three members) and Uckfield West (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

40 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Westham parish.

Draft recommendation

Westham Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Westham (returning five members), Stone Cross (returning six members) and Dittons (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

41 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Willingdon & Jevington parish.

Draft recommendation

Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council should comprise 19 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Upper Willingdon (returning nine members), Lower Willingdon (returning eight members) and Watermill (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

42 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Withyham parish.

Draft recommendation

Withyham Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Groombridge (returning 10 members) and Marden's Hill (returning three members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

3 Have your say

43 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of whom it is from or whether it relates to the whole district or just a part of it.

44 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Wealden, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

45 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at [**consultation.lgbce.org.uk**](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

46 Submissions can also be made by emailing [**reviews@lgbce.org.uk**](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (Wealden)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP**

The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Wealden which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively

A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government

Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?

47 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 representations will be placed on deposit at our offices in Millbank (London) and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

48 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.

49 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.

50 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 Wealden District Council in 2019.

Equalities

51 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

Appendix A

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Wealden District Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Arlington	1	2,354	2,354	-11%	2,585	2,585	-11%
2	Buxted	1	2,664	2,664	0%	2,792	2,792	-4%
3	Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron	1	2,667	2,667	0%	2,856	2,856	-1%
4	Crowborough Central	1	2,738	2,738	3%	2,966	2,966	2%
5	Crowborough Jarvis Brook	1	2,799	2,799	5%	2,865	2,865	-1%
6	Crowborough North	1	2,737	2,737	3%	3,053	3,053	5%
7	Crowborough South East	1	2,842	2,842	7%	3,052	3,052	5%
8	Crowborough South West	1	2,767	2,767	4%	3,091	3,091	7%
9	Crowborough St Johns	1	2,770	2,770	4%	2,777	2,777	-4%
10	Danehill & Fletching	1	2,453	2,453	-8%	2,595	2,595	-10%
11	Forest Row	1	2,983	2,983	12%	3,097	3,097	7%
12	Framfield & Cross-in-Hand	1	2,507	2,507	-6%	2,867	2,867	-1%

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Wealden District Council (cont.)

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13	Frant & Wadhurst	2	5,132	2,566	-4%	5,558	2,779	-4%
14	Hadlow Down & Rotherfield	1	2,590	2,590	-3%	2,730	2,730	-6%
15	Hailsham Central	1	2,366	2,366	-11%	3,089	3,089	7%
16	Hailsham East	1	2,896	2,896	9%	3,061	3,061	6%
17	Hailsham North	1	2,567	2,567	-3%	3,011	3,011	4%
18	Hailsham North West	1	2,341	2,341	-12%	3,226	3,226	11%
19	Hailsham South	1	2,623	2,623	-1%	2,839	2,839	-2%
20	Hailsham West	1	2,930	2,930	10%	3,097	3,097	7%
21	Hartfield	1	2,813	2,813	6%	2,919	2,919	1%
22	Heathfield North	1	2,892	2,892	9%	3,004	3,004	4%
23	Heathfield South	1	2,808	2,808	6%	2,915	2,915	1%
24	Hellingly	1	2,452	2,452	-8%	3,001	3,001	4%

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Wealden District Council (cont.)

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
25	Herstmonceux, Ninfield & Wartling	1	2,964	2,964	11%	3,101	3,101	7%
26	Horam & Punnetts Town	2	5,519	2,760	4%	5,879	2,940	2%
27	Lower Willingdon	1	2,655	2,655	0%	2,771	2,771	-4%
28	Maresfield	1	3,014	3,014	13%	3,156	3,156	9%
29	Mayfield & Five Ashes	1	2,789	2,789	5%	2,865	2,865	-1%
30	Pevensey & Westham	1	2,511	2,511	-6%	2,901	2,901	0%
31	Pevensey Bay	1	2,393	2,393	-10%	2,825	2,825	-2%
32	Polegate Central	1	2,803	2,803	5%	2,803	2,803	-3%
33	Polegate North	1	2,823	2,823	6%	3,152	3,152	9%
34	Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill	1	2,872	2,872	8%	3,025	3,025	5%
35	South Downs	1	2,554	2,554	-4%	2,606	2,606	-10%
36	Stone Cross	1	2,136	2,136	-20%	2,711	2,711	-6%

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Wealden District Council (cont.)

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
37	Uckfield East	1	2,617	2,617	-2%	2,671	2,671	-8%
38	Uckfield New Town	1	2,747	2,747	3%	3,117	3,117	8%
39	Uckfield North	1	2,618	2,618	-2%	2,650	2,650	-8%
40	Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted	1	2,012	2,012	-24%	2,596	2,596	-10%
41	Uckfield West & Isfield	1	2,764	2,764	4%	2,812	2,812	-3%
42	Upper Willingdon	1	2,791	2,791	5%	2,913	2,913	1%
43	Withyham	1	2,415	2,415	-9%	2,629	2,629	-9%
	Totals	45	119,688	–	–	130,228	–	–
	Averages	–	–	2,660	–	–	2,894	–

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward 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.

Appendix B

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/east-sussex/wealden>

Local authority

- Wealden District Council

Councillors

- Councillor D. White

Political groups

- Willingdon & Jevington Liberal Democrats
- Willingdon Liberal Democrats

Parish and town councils

- Arlington Parish Council
- Berwick Parish Council
- Fletching Parish Council
- Heathfield & Waldron Parish Council
- Herstmonceux Parish Council
- Isfield Parish Council
- Mayfield & Five Ashes Parish Council
- Polegate Town Council
- Wadhurst Parish Council
- Westham Parish Council
- Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council
- Withyham Parish Council

Local organisations

- Arlington Road West, The Glade, & Robin Post Lane Residents' Association (two submissions)

Residents

- 10 local residents

Appendix C

Glossary and abbreviations

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 inequality	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
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
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
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 borough, 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 borough council