

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
DERBYSHIRE DALES

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

November 1998

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Derbyshire Dales.

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Local Government Commission for England

24 November 1998

Dear Secretary of State

On 2 December 1997 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of the district of Derbyshire Dales under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements in June 1998 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have confirmed our draft recommendations in their entirety, although we are proposing to modify a ward name in the light of further evidence (see paragraph 59). This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Derbyshire Dales.

We recommend that Derbyshire Dales District Council should continue to be served by 39 councillors representing 25 wards, and that some changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that whole council elections should continue to take place every four years.

We note that you have now set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the District Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Derbyshire Dales on 2 December 1997. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 2 June 1998, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we have received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Derbyshire Dales because:

- **in eight of the 25 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and four wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2002, electoral equality is expected to deteriorate further, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in nine wards, and by more than 20 per cent in three wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraph 59) are that:

- **Derbyshire Dales District Council should continue to be served by 39 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should continue to be 25 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 20 of the existing 25 wards should be modified, while five wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **whole council elections should continue to take place every four years.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each district councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 24 of the 25 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to remain constant over the next five years.**

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

- **new warding arrangements for Ashbourne Town Council.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 5 January 1999:

**The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Review
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Ashbourne North	2	Ashbourne district ward and parish (part); Clifton & Bradley ward (part – Offcote & Underwood parish)	Large Map
2 Ashbourne South	2	Ashbourne district ward and parish (part)	Large Map
3 Bakewell	3	Bakewell ward and parish; Ashford & Longstone ward (part – the parishes of Ashford in the Water and Sheldon); Youlgreave ward (part – Over Haddon parish); Stanton ward (part – Nether Haddon parish)	Map 2
4 Bradwell	1	Bradwell ward (the parishes of Bradwell, Great Hucklow, Little Hucklow, Grindlow and Hazlebadge); Eyam & Stoney Middleton ward (part – Foolow parish)	Map 2
5 Brailsford	1	Brailsford ward (part – the parishes of Brailsford, Mercaston, Hollington and Longford)	Map 2
6 Calver	1	Calver ward (the parishes of Calver, Curbar and Froggatt); Eyam & Stoney Middleton ward (part – Stoney Middleton parish)	Map 2
7 Carsington Water	1	Brassington & Parwich ward (part – the parishes of Kniveton, Brassington, Carsington, Hopton, Ballidon, Bradbourne, Aldwark and Ible); Hulland ward (part – the parishes of Hognaston and Atlow); Winster & South Darley ward (part – Ivonbrook Grange parish)	Map 2
8 Chatsworth	1	<i>Boundary unchanged</i> (Currently called Baslow ward – the parishes of Baslow & Bubnell, Beeley, Chatsworth, Edensor and Pilsley)	Map 2
9 Clifton & Bradley	1	Clifton & Bradley ward (part – the parishes of Bradley, Clifton & Compton, Edlaston & Wyaston, Osmaston and Yeldersley); Norbury ward (part – Snelston parish); Brailsford ward (part – Shirley parish)	Map 2
10 Darley Dale	3	Darley Dale ward (part – Darley Dale parish)	Map 2

Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
11 Dovedale & Parwich	1	Hartington & Dovedale ward (part – the parishes of Eaton & Alsop, Newton Grange, Fenny Bentley, Hartington Nether Quarter, Mappleton, Lea Hall, Tissington and Thorpe); Brassington & Parwich ward (part – Parwich parish)	Map 2
12 Doveridge & Sudbury	1	Doveridge ward (part – the parishes of Doveridge and Sudbury)	Map 2
13 Hartington & Taddington	1	Taddington ward (part – the parishes of Chelmorton, Flagg, Hartington Middle Quarter, Blackwell in the Peak, Brushfield and Taddington); Hartington & Dovedale ward (part – Hartington Town Quarter parish)	Map 2
14 Hathersage & Eyam	2	Hathersage ward (the parishes of Hathersage, Outseats, Grindleford, Abney & Abney Grange, Offerton and Highlow); Eyam & Stoney Middleton ward (part – Eyam parish)	Map 2
15 Hulland	1	Hulland ward (part – the parishes of Hulland, Hulland ward, Biggin by Hulland, Callow and Kirk Ireton)	Map 2
16 Lathkill & Bradford	1	Youlgreave ward (part – the parishes of Youlgreave, Middleton & Smerrill and Harthill); Taddington ward (part – Monyash parish)	Map 2
17 Litton & Longstone	1	Ashford & Longstone ward (part – the parishes of Great Longstone, Hassop, Rowland, Little Longstone and Wardlow); Tideswell ward (part – Litton parish)	Map 2
18 Masson	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Matlock Bath, Cromford and Bonsall)	Map 2
19 Matlock All Saints	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Dimple Road East parish ward, Dimple Road West & South of the River parish ward and North of Jackson Road parish ward of Matlock parish)	Map 2
20 Matlock St Giles	3	<i>Boundary unchanged</i> (Currently called St Giles & Tansley ward – Chesterfield Road East parish ward, Hurst Farm Road parish ward, Matlock Green parish ward and Starkholmes & Riber parish ward of Matlock parish; Tansley parish)	Map 2

continued overleaf

*Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
21 Norbury	1	Norbury ward (part – the parishes of Boylestone, Alkomonton, Hungry Bentley, Cubley, Rodsley, Yeaveley, Norbury & Roston and Marston Montgomery); Doveridge ward (part – Somersal Herbert parish)	Map 2
22 Stanton	1	Stanton ward (part – the parishes of Stanton in Peak, Rowsely and Birchover); Darley Dale ward (part – Northwood & Tinkersley parish)	Map 2
23 Tideswell	1	Tideswell ward (part – the parishes of Tideswell and Wheston)	Map 2
24 Winster & South Darley	1	Winster & South Darley ward (part – the parishes of Winster and South Darley); Stanton ward (part – the parishes of Gratton and Elton)	Map 2
25 Wirksworth	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Wirksworth Town parish ward and Wirksworth Bolehill parish ward of Wirksworth Town; Middleton parish)	Map 2

Notes: 1 The district is entirely parished.

2 Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Derbyshire Dales.

2 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996, supplemented in September 1996 and updated in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 2 December 1997, when we wrote to Derbyshire Dales District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Member of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 9 March 1998. At Stage Two, we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

5 Stage Three began on 2 June 1998 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Derbyshire Dales* and ended on 27 July 1998. Comments were

sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

6 The district of Derbyshire Dales comprises the four market towns of Ashbourne, Bakewell, Matlock and Wirksworth with the rest of the district being characterised by small settlements with populations of between 40 and 1,500. Half of the district lies within the Peak District National Park and about one third of the National Park lies within the Derbyshire Dales. The district has a population of some 67,600 covering an area of approximately 79,500 hectares - about one-third of the county.

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

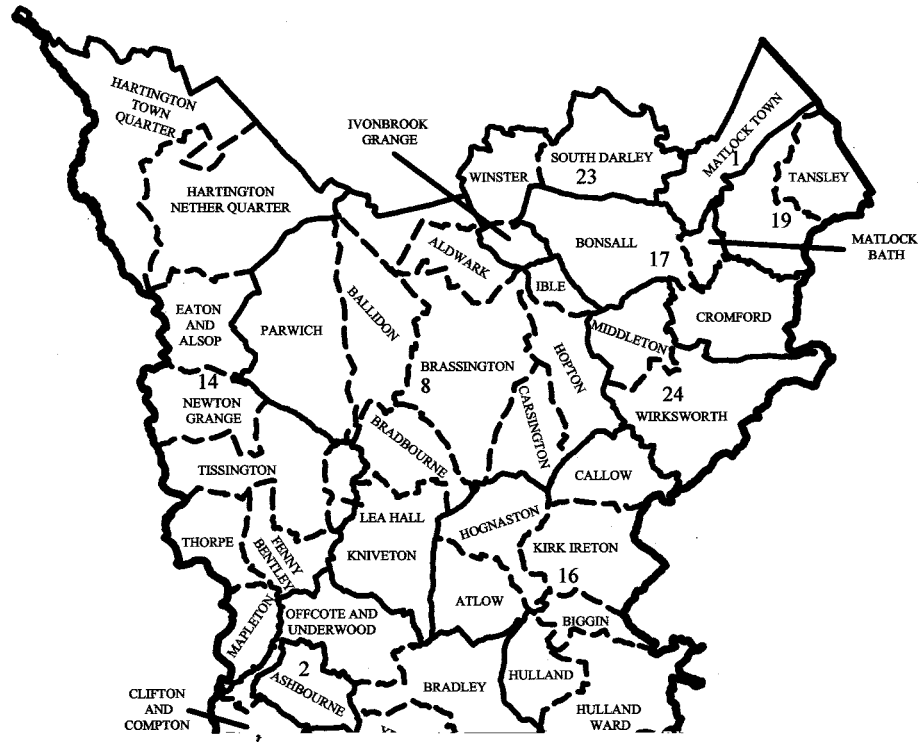
8 The electorate of the district (February 1997) is 56,064. The Council presently has 39 councillors who are elected from 25 wards (Map 1 and Figure 2). Of these, six wards are each represented by three councillors, two wards each elect two councillors, while the remaining 17 are each represented by a single councillor. The whole Council is elected together every four years.

9 Since the last electoral review in Derbyshire Dales was completed in 1976, there has been a relatively large increase in population in the district, with around 11 per cent more electors. At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,438 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,468 by the year 2002 if the present number of councillors is maintained. The number of electors per councillor in eight of the 25 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average and in four wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Tideswell ward, in which the number of electors per councillor is 35 per cent above the district average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Derbyshire Dales



Map 1 (continued):
Existing Wards in Derbyshire Dales



*Figure 2:
Existing Electoral Arrangements*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 All Saints	3	4,261	1,420	-1	4,476	1,492	2
2 Ashbourne	3	5,358	1,786	24	5,538	1,846	26
3 Ashford & Longstone	1	1,406	1,406	-2	1,384	1,384	-6
4 Bakewell	3	3,287	1,096	-24	3,441	1,147	-22
5 Baslow	1	1,521	1,521	6	1,449	1,449	-1
6 Bradwell	1	1,433	1,433	0	1,447	1,447	-1
7 Brailsford	1	1,458	1,458	1	1,523	1,523	4
8 Brassington & Parwich	1	1,584	1,584	10	1,646	1,646	12
9 Calver	1	1,152	1,152	-20	1,177	1,177	-20
10 Clifton & Bradley	1	1,463	1,463	2	1,487	1,487	1
11 Darley Dale	3	4,671	1,557	8	4,856	1,619	10
12 Doveridge	1	1,569	1,569	9	1,600	1,600	9
13 Eyam & Stoney Middleton	1	1,333	1,333	-7	1,346	1,346	-8
14 Hartington & Dovedale	1	1,307	1,307	-9	1,329	1,329	-9
15 Hathersage	2	2,328	1,164	-19	2,361	1,181	-20
16 Hulland	1	1,743	1,743	21	1,768	1,768	20
17 Masson	2	2,738	1,369	-5	2,769	1,385	-6
18 Norbury	1	1,395	1,395	-3	1,450	1,450	-1
19 St Giles & Tansley	3	4,471	1,490	4	4,601	1,534	4
20 Stanton	1	1,376	1,376	-4	1,362	1,362	-7
21 Taddington	1	1,258	1,258	-12	1,267	1,267	-14
22 Tideswell	1	1,943	1,943	35	1,932	1,932	32
23 Winster & South Darley	1	1,177	1,177	-18	1,211	1,211	-18

Figure 2 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
24 Wirksworth	3	4,456	1,485	3	4,454	1,485	1
25 Youlgreave	1	1,376	1,376	-4	1,388	1,388	-5
Totals	39	56,064	—	—	57,262	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,438	—	—	1,468	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Derbyshire Dales District Council's submission.

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, electors in Bakewell ward are relatively over-represented by 24 per cent, while electors in Hlland ward are relatively under-represented by 21 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

10 During Stage One, we received representations from Derbyshire Dales District Council, West Derbyshire Conservative Association and two parish councils. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Derbyshire Dales*.

11 Our draft recommendations were largely based on the District Council's scheme, which we considered achieved a good balance between securing reasonable electoral equality and reflecting the interests and identities of local communities in the district. However, we proposed to depart from that scheme in two areas. First, we proposed to adopt the Conservatives' proposals for a new two-member Hathersage & Grindleford ward to be formed by adding Eyam parish to the existing Hathersage ward. We considered that this would provide a better alternative to the Council's proposal to divide the area into two single-member wards because it minimized disruption and avoided artificially splitting the small and remote parishes of Abney, Offerton and Highlow from their nearest large village, Hathersage. Second, we proposed to make a minor boundary modification between the proposed Ashbourne North and Ashbourne South wards in order to achieve a better level of electoral equality in the town. We proposed that:

- (a) Derbyshire Dales District Council should be served by 39 councillors representing 25 wards;
- (b) the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified, while five wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- (c) elections of the whole council should continue to take place every four years.

Draft Recommendation

Derbyshire Dales District Council should comprise 39 councillors, serving 25 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

12 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 24 of the 25 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was projected to remain constant over the next five years.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

13 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, eight representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Derbyshire Dales District Council and the Commission.

Derbyshire Dales District Council

14 The District Council considered that the Commission's recommendations were "acceptable" with the single exception that the proposed Hathersage & Grindleford ward be renamed Hathersage & Eyam. The District Council also asked the Commission to "take account of any views expressed by Hathersage and Outseats parish councils."

Derbyshire County Council

15 The County Council supported our draft recommendations. However it expressed "some concern" about the proposed two-member Hathersage and Grindleford ward, and requested that the Commission consider further the views of the parish councils involved.

High Peak Labour Party

16 High Peak Labour Party suggested the Hathersage and Grindleford area be represented by two single member wards, with one councillor representing Hathersage and one representing Grindleford, Eyam and other smaller communities.

West Derbyshire Conservative Association

17 West Derbyshire Conservative Association supported the Commission's draft recommendations. In particular it argued that the existing local government links between Hathersage and Grindleford wards work well, and the addition of Eyam should not impact on this. The Conservatives also expressed their support for the District Council's proposal to rename this ward Hathersage & Eyam ward.

Parish Councils

18 Hathersage Parish Council considered that the District Council's original proposals in relation to Hathersage would offer a better warding arrangement than our draft recommendation. It argued that Hathersage is a "commuter and service village", and had different priorities from Eyam and Grindleford, and that it would therefore be better served by a single councillor "committed to its needs."

19 Outseats Parish Council proposed the formation of a single-member ward, comprising the parishes of Hathersage, Outseats, Abney, Offerton and Highlow. It argued that Hathersage was the "amenity village" for the area and that these parishes geographically formed one unit.

20 Kniveton Parish Council expressed its support for the Commission's draft recommendations for Carsington Water ward.

Other Representations

21 We received one other representation from a local resident who supported our draft recommendations. In particular, he endorsed the proposals for the Hathersage area, and commented that the Commission had "made an effort to understand everyone's needs."

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

22 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Derbyshire Dales is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

23 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

24 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for 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.

25 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an imbalance of more than 10 per cent in

any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

26 During Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2002, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 2 per cent from 56,064 to 57,262 over the five-year period from 1997 to 2002. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

27 At Stage Three, we received no comments on the Council's electorate forecasts and remain satisfied that they provide the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

28 Our *Guidance* indicates that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district or borough council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

29 Derbyshire Dales District Council is at present served by 39 councillors. At Stage One, the District Council argued that there should be no change to the existing council size. No other submissions were received on the matter. In our draft recommendations report we concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a continuing council of 39 members. We have not received evidence during Stage Three to persuade us to move away from this view, and we are therefore confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 39 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

30 Having considered all representations received during Stage Three of the review, we have further considered our draft recommendations. We are endorsing our draft recommendations in their entirety, although we propose to rename the proposed Hathersage & Grindleford ward to reflect a number of views put to us at Stage Three.

31 The following sections outline the Commission's analysis and final recommendations for the future electoral arrangements for Derbyshire Dales, which are summarised in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report. The following wards are considered in turn.

- (a) Ashbourne ward;
- (b) Brailsford, Clifton & Bradley, Doveridge and Norbury wards;
- (c) Brassington & Parwich, Hulland and Wirksworth wards;
- (d) Hartington & Dovedale, Taddington and Youlgreave wards;
- (e) Darley Dale, Masson, Stanton and Winster & South Darley wards;
- (f) All Saints and St Giles and Tansley wards;
- (g) Ashford & Longstone, Bakewell, Baslow, and Tideswell wards;
- (h) Bradwell, Calver, Eyam & Stony Middleton and Hathersage wards;

Ashbourne ward

32 At present, the existing ward of Ashbourne is coterminous with the Ashbourne Town Council area, and is represented by three councillors. It has a high level of electoral inequality, with 24 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (26 per cent by 2002).

33 At Stage One, the District Council argued that the town should be split into two new wards, Ashbourne North and Ashbourne South, each to be represented by two councillors. In order to facilitate this warding arrangement, it proposed that the town council be represented by four new town wards, with the proposed new town wards of Parkside and Belle Vue being combined with Offcote & Underwood parish to form Ashbourne North ward, and the proposed new town wards of

St Oswalds and Hilltop forming Ashbourne South ward. In our draft recommendations report we broadly endorsed the District Council's proposal, which we considered would represent a better balance of the statutory criteria and the need to ensure electoral equality than the current arrangements. However, we proposed a boundary modification between the two proposed Ashbourne wards in order to secure a better level of electoral equality, with the new boundary following the centre of Church Street and Park Road.

34 At Stage Three the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association accepted our draft recommendations for Ashbourne Town. No other representations were received. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. Our final recommendations would result in a much improved level of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Ashbourne North and Ashbourne South wards varying by 2 per cent and 1 per cent from the district average respectively. Details of the proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Brailsford, Clifton & Bradley, Doveridge and Norbury wards

35 Under current arrangements, the four wards at the southernmost end of the district all achieve reasonable levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Brailsford, Clifton & Bradley and Norbury wards varying by less than 3 per cent from the district average, while the number of electors per councillor in Doveridge ward varies by 9 per cent from the average.

36 In our draft recommendations report we adopted the District Council's proposals for changes to the four wards. We proposed that the parishes of Shirley (Brailsford ward) and Snelston (Norbury ward) should be transferred to Clifton & Bradley ward, that Offcote & Underwood parish be transferred from Clifton & Bradley ward to Ashbourne North ward and that Somersall Herbert parish be transferred from Doveridge ward to Norbury ward. We considered that these proposals retained the integrity of the existing wards by minimising changes and also reflected the interests and identities of communities in the area. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would vary by less than 9 per cent from the district average in the proposed Clifton &

Bradley, Doveridge & Sudbury and Norbury wards. The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Brailsford ward would initially vary by 13 per cent from the average (although this is projected to improve to 11 per cent over the next five years).

37 At Stage Three our draft recommendations were supported by the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three we remain satisfied that our draft recommendations in this area represent the best possible balance of the statutory criteria and the need for electoral equality, and we therefore confirm them as final.

Brassington & Parwich, Hulland and Wirksworth wards

38 Under current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor in Wirksworth ward varies by 3 per cent from the district average, while the number of electors per councillor in Brassington & Parwich and Hulland wards varies by 10 per cent and 21 per cent respectively (12 per cent and 20 per cent by 2002).

39 At Stage One, the District Council proposed that a new Carsington Water ward should be formed based on the existing Brassington & Parwich ward – less Parwich parish (to be transferred to a new Dovedale & Parwich ward), but with the addition of the parishes of Hognaston and Atlow (from Hulland ward). It argued that this proposal would retain the integrity and identity of the existing ward, although its focus would centre on the Carsington Water area – a water resource, recreational centre and major visitor attraction. No change was proposed to the existing Wirksworth ward. We considered that these warding arrangements would represent a better balance of our statutory criteria and the need to secure electoral equality than the current arrangements and accordingly we were persuaded to adopt them as our draft recommendations for this area. The proposals resulted in a much improved level of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varying by less than 4 per cent from the district average.

40 At Stage Three, the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association accepted our draft recommendations. Kniveton Parish Council indicated that it had “no objections” to the draft recommendations and that

it was in favour of the ward name of Carsington Water. Having considered the representations received, we remain satisfied that our draft recommendations achieve a good balance between the need for electoral equality and our statutory criteria, and we therefore confirm them as final.

Hartington & Dovedale, Taddington and Youlgreave wards

41 Currently, the number of electors per councillor in Hartington & Dovedale, Taddington and Youlgreave wards varies from the district average by 9 per cent, 12 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral inequality is projected to remain constant over the next five years.

42 At Stage One, the District Council proposed that Hartington Town Quarter parish be transferred from Hartington & Dovedale ward to Taddington ward and that Parwich parish be transferred from Brassington & Parwich ward to Hartington & Dovedale ward. It also proposed that the existing Youlgreave ward be modified by the loss of Over Haddon parish to Bakewell ward but the addition of Monyash parish from Taddington ward. As a result of those changes, it proposed that the reconfigured Hartington & Dovedale ward be renamed Dovedale & Parwich ward, that Taddington ward be renamed Hartington & Taddington ward and that Youlgreave ward be renamed Lathkill & Bradford ward. In our draft recommendations report we endorsed these proposals which we considered represented a better balance of the statutory criteria and the need to ensure electoral equality. In particular we noted that these proposals would produce a more compact union of parishes in the proposed new Hartington & Taddington ward than the current arrangements, and that there was commonality within the proposed Dovedale & Parwich ward, with the constituent parishes being connected by the principal A515 road.

43 At Stage Three the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association accepted our draft recommendations in this area. No other representations were received. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three we confirm our draft recommendations as final. Our recommendations would provide an improvement in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Dovedale & Parwich and Hartington & Taddington wards varying by 1 per cent and 9 per cent from the average respectively,

while the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Lathkill & Bradford ward would be equal to the average.

Darley Dale, Masson, Stanton and Winster & South Darley wards

44 At present, while Darley Dale, Masson and Stanton wards achieve reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 8 per cent, 5 per cent and 4 per cent respectively, there are 18 per cent fewer electors per councillor in Winster & South Darley ward. This level of electoral inequality is projected to remain relatively constant over the next five years.

45 In our draft recommendations report we adopted the warding arrangements put forward by the District Council. We proposed that Northwood & Tinkersley parish be transferred from Darley Dale ward to Stanton ward, that Nether Haddon parish be transferred from Stanton ward to Bakewell ward and that the parishes of Gratton and Elton be transferred from Stanton ward to Winster & South Darley ward. We proposed no change to the existing electoral arrangements of Masson ward. Our proposals provided for much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all four wards varying by less than 7 per cent from the district average.

46 At Stage Three the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association accepted our draft recommendations in this area. No other representations were received. Having considered the representations received we remain of the view that the proposed re-configuration of parishes, as set out in our draft recommendations report, would offer a better warding arrangement than the current warding pattern. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendations as final.

All Saints and St Giles & Tansley wards

47 At present, Matlock Town is divided into two wards, each represented by three councillors. Currently, both wards achieve good equality of representation, with the number of electors per councillor in the two wards varying by 1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is forecast to remain constant over the next five years.

48 At Stage One, the District Council proposed that there should be no change to the existing electoral arrangements for the two wards other than to rename the wards Matlock All Saints and Matlock St Giles. It indicated that it had initially considered the possibility of single-member wards in Matlock, but that this had found little support. It also considered that the retention of multi-member wards in Matlock would ensure consistency with other urban centres in the district. In our draft recommendations report we endorsed the District Council's proposal for the retention of the existing electoral arrangements given that the town currently achieves reasonable electoral equality, and that this proposal was supported by Matlock Town Council.

49 At Stage Three the District Council, the County Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association accepted our draft recommendations for the area. No other representations were received. Having considered the representations submitted at Stage Three, we are satisfied that our draft recommendations provide the most appropriate warding arrangement for the Matlock area and therefore confirm them as final.

Ashford & Longstone, Bakewell, Baslow and Tideswell wards

50 At present, the wards of Ashford & Longstone and Baslow enjoy reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 2 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. However, the wards of Bakewell and Tideswell are currently subject to high levels of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 24 per cent and 35 per cent respectively. This equality of representation in the four wards is forecast to remain reasonably constant over the next five years.

51 In its Stage One submission, the District Council proposed that Bakewell ward be expanded to include adjoining parishes on its south, west and north-west boundaries; namely the parishes of Ashford in the Water and Sheldon (from Ashford & Longstone ward), Over Haddon (from Yulgreve ward) and Nether Haddon (from Stanton ward). It also proposed that Litton parish be transferred from Tideswell ward to the remaining parishes in Ashford & Longstone ward which, it considered, should be renamed Litton & Longstone ward to reflect these suggested changes. No change was proposed to Baslow ward other than that it should be renamed Chatsworth ward

because the constituent parishes surrounded Chatsworth House and were regarded as “Estate Villages”. Its proposals provided for improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by no more than 7 per cent from the district average in all wards. In our draft recommendations report we endorsed the proposals submitted by the District Council. We considered that they would provide a better level of electoral equality than the current arrangements and would be supported by Bakewell Town Council, if the retention of the existing arrangements was not an option.

52 During Stage Three the District Council and West Derbyshire Conservative Association both supported our draft recommendations. No other representations were received. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we endorse our draft recommendations as final. We remain persuaded that the proposed new ward of Litton & Longstone represents a sensible grouping of parishes, while the parishes to be combined with Bakewell are well connected to the town.

Bradwell, Calver, Eyam & Stony Middleton and Hathersage wards

53 Under current arrangements, the wards of Bradwell and Eyam & Stony Middleton have reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor being equal to the district average in Bradwell ward and varying by 7 per cent in Eyam & Stony Middleton ward. However, the wards of Calver and Hathersage are currently subject to high levels of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 20 per cent and 19 per cent from the average respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to remain constant over the next five years.

54 At Stage One the District Council proposed that the parishes of Grindleford, Abney & Abney Grange, Offerton and Highlow be transferred from the existing Hathersage ward and combined with Eyam parish, forming a new Eyam & Grindleford ward, with the parishes of Hathersage and Outseats comprising Hathersage ward. The District Council proposed that the two wards should each be represented by a single councillor. It further proposed that Bradwell ward should be expanded to include Foolow parish (from Eyam & Stony Middleton ward) and that Calver ward be expanded to include Stony Middleton ward (from Eyam & Stony Middleton). A submission was also

received from West Derbyshire Conservative Association who considered that a new Hathersage & Grindleford ward should be formed by the addition of Eyam parish to the existing two-member Hathersage ward.

55 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that each of the two proposed schemes had merit. However, while the two schemes achieved reasonable electoral equality, we noted that the Conservatives’ scheme achieved this with minimal disruption to existing ward boundaries. On balance, we considered that the Conservatives’ scheme appeared to better reflect the interests and identities of communities in the area. In particular, we considered that there was merit in retaining the parishes of Abney, Offerton and Highlow together with Hathersage village.

56 At Stage Three, the District Council and the County Council accepted our draft recommendations, although both asked the Commission to take account of the views of Hathersage and Outseats parish councils. The District Council also argued that the proposed Hathersage & Grindleford ward should be renamed Hathersage & Eyam ward. West Derbyshire Conservative Association welcomed our draft recommendations, and supported the suggested name change for the proposed Hathersage & Grindleford ward. High Peak Labour Party argued that the proposed two-member Hathersage ward should be split, with a single councillor representing Hathersage and one representing Grindleford, Eyam and other smaller communities. Outseats Parish Council proposed that a new-single member Hathersage ward be formed comprising the parishes of Hathersage, Outseats, Abney, Offerton and Highlow. Hathersage Parish Council supported the District Council’s original proposal and contended that Hathersage had different priorities to Eyam and Grindleford and as a result would be better served by a single councillor. A local resident supported our draft recommendation.

57 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we have not been persuaded that the alternative warding arrangements put forward would represent an improvement on our draft recommendations in this area. In particular, we note that the warding arrangements put forward by the High Peak Labour Party and Outseats Parish Council would result in poor electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hathersage ward varying from the district average by 20 per

cent (under the Labour Party’s proposal) and 10 per cent (under Outseats Parish Council’s proposal). We note that Hathersage Parish Council has indicated that it would prefer the adoption of the District Council’s original proposals. However, although the District Council’s proposals would provide good electoral equality, we remain persuaded that our draft recommendations would better reflect community interests and identities in the area. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final, although we have been persuaded that there is merit in changing the name of the proposed Hathersage & Grindleford ward to Hathersage & Eyam ward to better reflect the make up of the new ward.

Electoral Cycle

58 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that the present system of elections of the whole council every four years be retained. At Stage Three we received no representations on this matter, and we confirm our draft recommendation as final.

Conclusions

59 Having considered carefully all the evidence and representations received, we have decided to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to modifying the name of Hathersage & Grindleford ward to Hathersage & Eyam ward to reflect

representations received at Stage Three.

We have concluded that in Derbyshire Dales:

- (a) there should continue to be 39 councillors, as at present;
- (b) there should be 25 wards, as at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 20 of the existing 25 wards should be modified;
- (d) elections of the whole council should continue to be held every four years.

60 Figure 3 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 and 2002 electorate figures.

61 As Figure 3 shows, our recommendations would reduce the number of wards with electoral variances greater than 10 per cent from the district average from eight to one. This level of electoral equality is expected to improve over the next five years. Under these proposals, the average number of electors per councillor would remain at 1,438. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

*Figure 3:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1997 electorate		2002 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	39	39	39	39
Number of wards	25	25	25	25
Average number of electors per councillor	1,438	1,438	1,468	1,468
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	1	9	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	4	0	3	0

Final Recommendation

Derbyshire Dales District Council should comprise 39 councillors serving 25 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report. The whole Council should continue to be elected every four years.

Final Recommendation

Elections for parish and town councils should continue to be held at the same time as elections for the district council.

Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

⁶² In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district.

⁶³ In our draft recommendations we proposed that Ashbourne Town Council should in future comprise 13 town councillors representing four new wards. We also proposed that the town wards should reflect the proposed new district ward boundary between Ashbourne North and Ashbourne South wards as illustrated on the large map at the back of the report. We received no representations in relation to our draft recommendation at Stage Three and we therefore confirm this as final.

Final Recommendation

Ashbourne Town Council should comprise 13 parish councillors representing four town wards, with the town wards of Belle Vue, Parkside and St Oswalds each returning three town councillors and Hilltop town ward returning four town councillors. The new town wards should reflect the proposed new district ward boundary between Ashbourne North and Ashbourne South wards, as illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

⁶⁴ We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the district.

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Derbyshire Dales

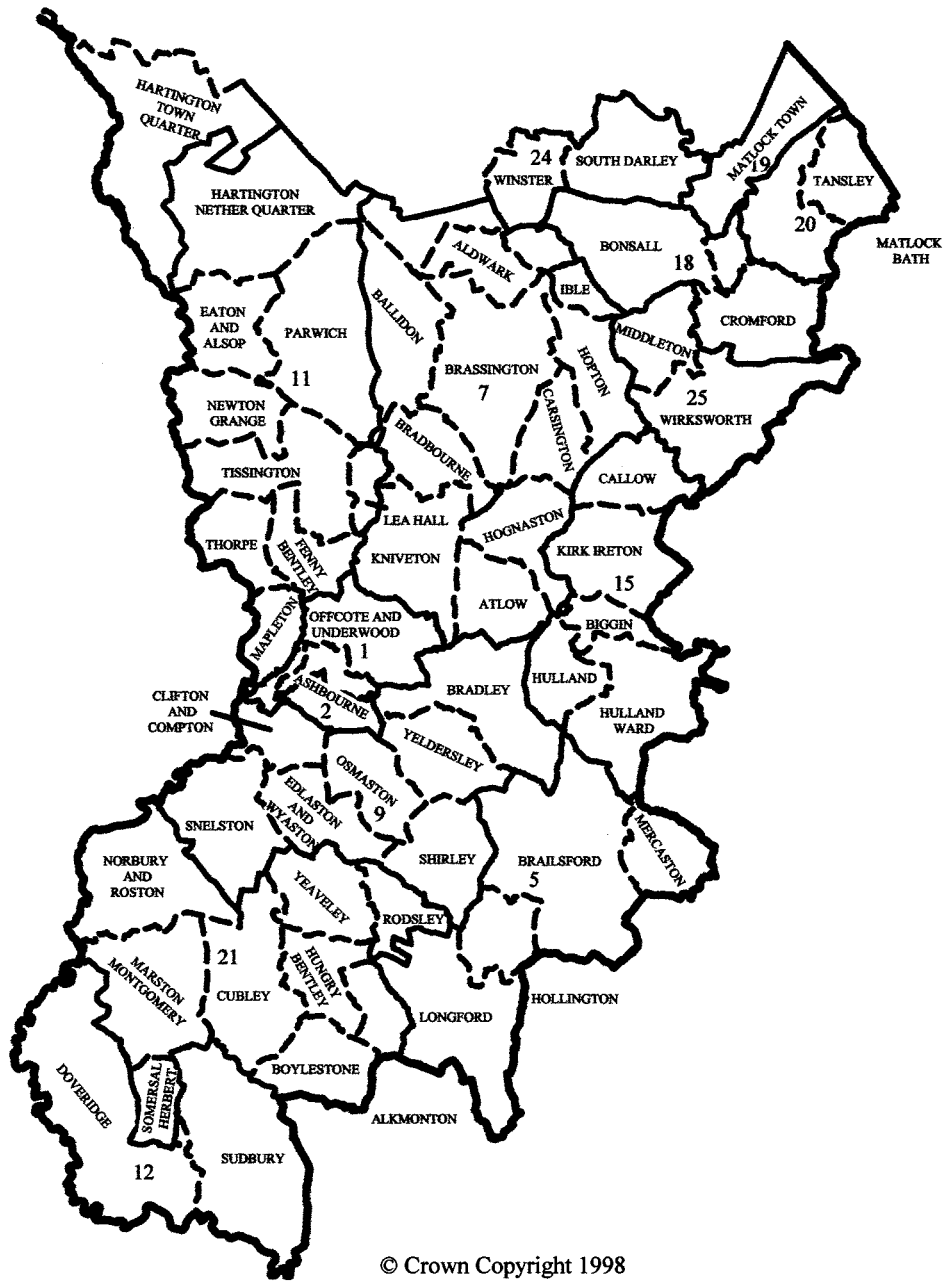


Key to Wards

- 1 Ashbourne North
- 2 Ashbourne South
- 3 Bakewell
- 4 Bradwell
- 5 Brailsford
- 6 Calver
- 7 Carsington Water
- 8 Chatsworth
- 9 Clifton and Bradley
- 10 Darley Dale
- 11 Dovedale and Parwich
- 12 Doveridge and Sudbury
- 13 Hartington and Taddington
- 14 Hathersage and Eyam
- 15 Hulland
- 16 Lathkill and Bradford
- 17 Litton and Longstone
- 18 Masson
- 19 Matlock All Saints
- 20 Matlock St Giles
- 21 Norbury
- 22 Stanton
- 23 Tideswell
- 24 Winster and South Darley
- 25 Wirksworth

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Map 2 (continued):
 The Commission's Final Recommendations for Derbyshire Dales



KEY	
PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY	—————
EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY	- - - - -

Figure 4:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Derbyshire Dales

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Ashbourne North	2	2,932	1,466	2	2,957	1,479	1
2 Ashbourne South	2	2,839	1,420	-1	3,001	1,501	2
3 Bakewell	3	3,992	1,331	-7	4,140	1,380	-6
4 Bradwell	1	1,566	1,566	9	1,581	1,581	8
5 Brailsford	1	1,253	1,253	-13	1,309	1,309	-11
6 Calver	1	1,573	1,573	9	1,602	1,602	9
7 Carsington Water	1	1,482	1,482	3	1,532	1,532	4
8 Chatsworth	1	1,521	1,521	6	1,449	1,449	-1
9 Clifton & Bradley	1	1,395	1,395	-3	1,427	1,427	-3
10 Darley Dale	3	4,139	1,380	-4	4,303	1,434	-2
11 Dovedale & Parwich	1	1,425	1,425	-1	1,459	1,459	-1
12 Doveridge & Sudbury	1	1,512	1,512	5	1,542	1,542	5
13 Hartington & Taddington	1	1,312	1,312	-9	1,324	1,324	-10
14 Hathersage & Eyam	2	3,107	1,554	8	3,148	1,574	7
15 Hulland	1	1,450	1,450	1	1,471	1,471	0
16 Lathkill & Bradford	1	1,438	1,438	0	1,450	1,450	-1
17 Litton & Longstone	1	1,344	1,344	-7	1,327	1,327	-10
18 Masson	2	2,738	1,369	-5	2,769	1,385	-6
19 Matlock All Saints	3	4,261	1,420	-1	4,476	1,492	2
20 Matlock St Giles	3	4,471	1,490	4	4,601	1,534	4
21 Norbury	1	1,312	1,312	-9	1,362	1,362	-7
22 Stanton	1	1,538	1,538	7	1,549	1,549	5
23 Tideswell	1	1,495	1,495	4	1,487	1,487	1

Figure 4 (continued):

The Commission's Final Recommendations for Derbyshire Dales

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
24	Winster & South Darley	1	1,513	1,513	5	1,542	1,542	5
25	Wirksworth	3	4,456	1,485	3	4,454	1,485	1
	Totals	39	56,064	—	—	57,262	—	—
	Averages	—	—	1,438	—	—	1,468	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Derbyshire Dales District Council's submission.

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.

6. NEXT STEPS

65 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Derbyshire Dales and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

66 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

67 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State
Local Government Review
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Derbyshire Dales: Detailed Mapping

The **large map** inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Ashbourne Town.

