

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
Mid Sussex

*February 2002*

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead is inserted inside the back cover of this report.



# WHAT IS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND?

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke CBE (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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

With effect from 1 April 2002, the Electoral Commission will assume the functions of the Local Government Commission for England and take over responsibility for making Orders putting in place the new arrangements resulting from periodic electoral reviews (powers which currently reside with the Secretary of State). As part of this transfer the Electoral Commission will set up a Boundary Committee which will take over responsibility for the conduct of PERs from the Local Government Commission. The Boundary Committee will conduct electoral reviews following the same rules and in the same manner as the Local Government Commission for England. Its final recommendations on future electoral arrangements will then be presented to the Electoral Commission which will be able to accept, modify or reject the Boundary Committee's findings. Under these new arrangements there will remain a further opportunity to make representations directly to the Electoral Commission after the publication of the final recommendations. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to send comments to the Electoral Commission.



## SUMMARY

We began a review of Mid Sussex's electoral arrangements on 10 July 2001.

- **This report summarises the submissions we received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.**

We found that the current arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Mid Sussex:

- **in 21 of the 30 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district and 11 wards vary by more than 20 per cent;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 21 wards and by more than 20 per cent in 11 wards.**

Our main proposals for Mid Sussex's future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 84-85) are that:

- **Mid Sussex District Council should have 54 councillors, the same as at present;**
- **there should be 26 wards, instead of 30 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 27 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and three wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 23 of the proposed 26 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 improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Burgess Hill, Cuckfield Rural, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Lindfield Rural and Slaugham.**

This report sets out our draft recommendations on which comments are invited.

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 26 February 2002. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission which, with effect from 1 April 2002 will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also decide when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 22 April 2002:

**Review Manager  
Mid Sussex Review  
LGCE  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU**

**Fax: 0207 404 6142  
E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)**

Table 1: Draft Recommendations: Summary

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1	Ashurst Wood	1	The parish of Ashurst Wood; part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead Ashurst parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
2	Balcombe	2	The parishes of Ardingly and Balcombe; part of Slaugham parish (the proposed Handcross & Pease Pottage parish ward)	Maps 2 and A2
3	Bolney	1	The parishes of Albourne, Bolney, Twineham; part of Slaugham parish (the proposed Slaugham Village parish ward)	Maps 2 and A2
4	Burgess Hill Chanctonbury	2	Part of Burgess Hill parish (the proposed Burgess Hill Chanctonbury parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
5	Burgess Hill Dunstall	2	Part of Burgess Hill parish (the proposed Burgess Hill Dunstall parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
6	Burgess Hill Franklands	2	Part of Burgess Hill parish (the proposed Burgess Hill Franklands parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
7	Burgess Hill Leylands	2	Part of Burgess Hill parish (the proposed Burgess Hill Leylands parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
8	Burgess Hill St Andrews	2	<i>Unchanged</i> – Burgess Hill St Andrews parish ward	Map 2 and Large Map
9	Burgess Hill Victoria	2	Part of Burgess Hill parish (the proposed Burgess Hill Victoria parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
10	Copthorne & Worth	2	<i>Unchanged</i> – part of Worth parish (the parish ward of Copthorne & Worth)	Map 2
11	Cuckfields	2	The parishes of Cuckfield and Cuckfield Rural	Map 2
12	East Grinstead Ashplats	2	Part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead Ashplats parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
13	East Grinstead Imberhorne	2	Part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead Imberhorne parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
14	East Grinstead New South	2	Part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead New South parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
15	East Grinstead North West	2	Part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead North West parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
16	East Grinstead Town Centre	2	Part of East Grinstead parish (the proposed East Grinstead Town Centre parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
17	Hassocks	3	The parish of Hassocks	Map 2
18	Haywards Ashenground	2	<i>Unchanged</i> – parish ward of Haywards Heath Ashenground	Map 2 and Large Map
19	Haywards Bentswood	2	Part of Haywards Heath parish (the proposed Haywards Bentswood parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
20	Haywards Franklands	2	Part of Haywards Heath parish (the proposed Haywards Franklands parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
21	Haywards Harlands	2	Part of Haywards Heath parish (the proposed Haywards Harlands parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
22	Haywards Heath	2	Part of Haywards Heath parish (the proposed Haywards Heath parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
23	Horsted	2	The parishes of Horsted Keynes and West Hoathly; part of Lindfield Rural parish (the proposed Lindfield East parish ward)	Map 2
24	Lindfield	3	Lindfield Urban ward; part of Lindfield Rural parish (the proposed Lindfield West parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
25	Low Weald & Downs	3	The parishes of Fulking, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common; Newtimber; Poynings and Pyecombe	Map 2
26	Turners	3	The parish of Turners Hill; part of Worth parish (the Crawley Down parish ward)	Map 2

*Notes: 1 The whole district is parished.*

*2 The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2, Map A1, A2 and Map A3 in Appendix A.*

*We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.*

Table 2: Draft Recommendations for Mid Sussex

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ashurst Wood	1	2,083	2,038	12	2,038	2,038	9
2	Balcombe	2	3,934	1,967	8	4,059	2,030	8
3	Bolney	1	2,024	2,024	11	2,024	2,024	8
4	Burgess Hill Chanctonbury	2	3,487	1,744	-5	3,646	1,823	-3
5	Burgess Hill Dunstall	2	3,589	1,795	-2	3,589	1,795	-4
6	Burgess Hill Franklands	2	3,784	1,892	4	3,993	1,997	6
7	Burgess Hill Leylands	2	3,603	1,802	-1	3,691	1,846	-2
8	Burgess Hill St Andrews	2	3,462	1,731	-5	3,581	1,791	-5
9	Burgess Hill Victoria	2	3,923	1,962	7	3,923	1,962	5
10	Copthorne & Worth	2	3,621	1,811	-1	3,621	1,811	-3
11	Cuckfields	2	3,699	1,850	1	3,790	1,895	1
12	East Grinstead Ashplats	2	3,733	1,867	2	3,794	1,897	1
13	East Grinstead Imberhorne	2	3,565	1,783	-2	3,608	1,804	-4
14	East Grinstead New South	2	3,627	1,814	-1	3,627	1,814	-3
15	East Grinstead North West	2	3,679	1,840	1	3,679	1,840	-2
16	East Grinstead Town Centre	2	3,301	1,651	-10	3,426	1,713	-9
17	Hassocks	3	5,715	1,905	4	5,733	1,911	2
18	Haywards Ashenground	2	3,914	1,957	7	3,914	1,957	4
19	Haywards Bentswood	2	3,984	1,992	9	4,057	2,029	8
20	Haywards Franklands	2	3,333	1,667	-9	3,801	1,901	1
21	Haywards Harlands	2	2,702	1,351	-26	3,550	1,775	-5
22	Haywards Heath	2	3,657	1,829	0	3,712	1,856	-1
23	Horsted	2	3,926	1,963	7	3,926	1,963	5

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2001)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2006)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
24	Lindfield	3	5,460	1,820	0	5,460	1,820	-3
25	Low Weald & Downs	3	5,497	1,832	0	5,558	1,853	-1
26	Turners	3	5,429	1,810	-1	5,479	1,826	-3
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>98,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>101,279</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,876</b>	<b>-</b>

*Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Mid Sussex District Council.*

*Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the district of Mid Sussex, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the seven districts in West Sussex as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Mid Sussex. Mid Sussex's last review was carried out by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in February 1980 (Report no. 374). The electoral arrangements of West Sussex County Council were last reviewed in June 1984 (Report no. 473). We expect to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of this year.

3 In carrying out these reviews, we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, i.e. the need to:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Full details of the legislation under which we work are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the reviews.

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

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been created locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local people are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configurations are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while also reflecting the identities and interests of local communities.

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

8 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any

proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

9 The review is in four stages (see Table 3).

*Table 3: Stages of the Review*

Stage	Description
One	Submission of proposals to us
Two	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper called *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one, half of the district council would be elected, in year two, half of the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral wards in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. The proposals were taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, states that the Secretary of State may make Orders to change authorities' electoral cycles. However, until such time as the Secretary of State makes any Order under the 2000 Act, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas, and our current *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 10 July 2001, when we wrote to Mid Sussex District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified West Sussex County Council, Sussex Police Authority, the local authority associations, Sussex Local Councils Association, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the South East Region and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Mid Sussex District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of submissions (the end of Stage One) was 15 October 2001.

12 At Stage Two we considered all the submissions received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

13 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 26 February 2002 and will end on 22 April 2002, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore**

**important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

14 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to modify them, and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Electoral Commission accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, it will make an Order and decide when any changes come into effect.



## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

15 The district of Mid Sussex in the county of West Sussex borders Surrey to the north and Brighton & Hove to the south. Mid Sussex is a largely rural area with a number of village communities with the Ouse Valley running through the northern part of the district. It also includes the urban towns of Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath. East Grinstead is home to a number of distinctive buildings of considerable age and interest. Haywards Heath is a mainly residential area and the administrative centre of the district while Burgess Hill features a thriving light industrial area.

16 The district is completely parished, containing 24 civil parishes. The towns of Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath comprise approximately 60 per cent of the district's total electorate.

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

18 The electorate of the district is 98,686 (February 2001). The Council presently has 54 members who are elected from 30 wards, 14 of which are relatively urban in Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath, with the remainder being mainly rural. Six of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 12 are each represented by two councillors and 12 are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

19 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,828 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,867 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration since the last review, the number of electors per councillor in 21 of the 30 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, 11 wards by more than 20 per cent and four wards by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Burgess Hill North ward where the councillor represents 188 per cent more electors than the district average.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Mid Sussex*

Table 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ardingly	1	1,188	1,188	-35	1,162	1,162	-38
2	Balcombe	1	1,431	1,431	-22	1,431	1,431	-24
3	Bolney	1	1,591	1,591	-13	1,591	1,591	-15
4	Burgess Hill– Chanctonbury	1	1,884	1,884	3	1,994	1,994	6
5	Burgess Hill– Franklands	2	3,946	1,973	8	4,155	2,078	11
6	Burgess Hill –North	1	5,268	5,268	188	5,359	5,359	186
7	Burgess Hill – St Andrews	2	3,462	1,731	-5	3,581	1,791	-5
8	Burgess Hill –Town	2	2,693	1,347	-26	2,739	1,370	-27
9	Burgess Hill – Victoria	2	4,595	2,298	26	4,595	2,298	22
10	Clayton	1	1,559	1,559	-15	1,577	1,577	-16
11	Copthorne & Worth	2	3,621	1,811	-1	3,621	1,811	-3
12	Crawley Down	2	4,143	2,072	13	4,143	2,072	10
13	Cuckfield	2	3,371	1,686	-8	3,462	1,731	-8
14	East Grinstead –East	1	1,300	1,300	-29	1,300	1,300	-31
15	East Grinstead – North	3	6,257	2,086	14	6,379	2,126	13
16	East Grinstead – South	3	6,131	2,044	12	6,195	2,065	10
17	East Grinstead –West	3	6,255	2,085	14	6,298	2,099	12
18	Haywards Heath – Ashenground	2	3,914	1,957	7	3,914	1,957	4
19	Haywards Heath – Bentswood	2	2,545	1,273	-30	2,618	1,309	-30
20	Haywards Heath – Franklands	2	4,772	2,386	31	5,240	2,620	40
21	Haywards Heath – Harlands	2	3,405	1,703	-7	4,253	2,127	13
22	Haywards Heath – Heath	2	2,954	1,477	-19	3,009	1,505	-20
23	Horsted Keynes	1	1,177	1,177	-36	1,177	1,177	-37
24	Hurstpierpoint	3	5,335	1,778	-3	5,396	1,799	-4

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2001)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2006)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
25	Keymer	3	4,318	1,439	-21	4,318	1,439	-23
26	Lindfield Rural	1	2,040	2,040	12	2,040	2,040	9
27	Lindfield Urban	3	4,507	1,502	-18	4,507	1,502	-20
28	Slaugham	1	2,076	2,076	14	2,227	2,227	19
29	Turners Hill	1	1,286	1,286	-30	1,336	1,336	-29
30	West Hoathly	1	1,662	1,662	-9	1,662	1,662	-11
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>98,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>101,279</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,876</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Mid Sussex District Council.*

Note: *The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Horsted Keynes ward were relatively over-represented by 36 per cent, while electors in Burgess Hill North ward were relatively under-represented by 188 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

### 3 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

20 At the start of this review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Mid Sussex District Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

21 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the LGCE visited the area and met officers and members from the District Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 22 submissions during Stage One, including district-wide schemes from the District Council and Liberal Democrats, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the District Council.

#### **Mid Sussex District Council**

22 The District Council proposed a council size of 50 members, four fewer than at present, serving 26 wards, compared to the existing 30. It proposed a mix of two and three-member wards across the district with one single-member ward in Burgess Hill and the option of a single-member ward in East Grinstead. It had also consulted on two further options before submitting its proposals, a scheme for 54 members and one for 51 members.

#### **Mid Sussex Liberal Democrats**

23 The Mid Sussex Liberal Democrats proposed a council size of 53 members, one fewer than at present, serving 37 wards, seven more than at present. It proposed that Ashurst Wood and the rural areas of the district be represented by single-member wards while the town areas be represented by two-member wards.

24 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals five wards would initially vary by more than 10 per cent from the district average, however, by 2006 an improved level of electoral equality was predicted with no wards varying by more than 10 per cent.

#### **Mid Sussex District Council Labour Group**

25 The Labour Group on the Council submitted a response supporting the Liberal Democrats' proposals for the district.

#### **Parish and Town Councils**

26 We received a further 13 responses from parish and town councils. On grounds of community identity Albourne Parish Council expressed a preference for being part of a single-member ward comprising villages to its north, as proposed by the District Council in both its 54- and 50-member council schemes. It objected to being placed in a ward that would include the parish of Hurstpierpoint. Ardingly Parish Council expressed a preference for maintaining single-member representation. It proposed that the best grouping of parishes in its area would be Ardingly, Turners Hill, and either Balcombe or West Hoathly. Balcombe Parish Council objected to the District Council's 50-member scheme, under which it would be placed in a three-member ward. It expressed a preference for an alternative that would combine it in a ward with no more than two councillors. Burgess Hill Town Council proposed

that if the District Council adopted either a 53- or 54-member scheme the town should be represented by 12 district councillors. It objected to the District Council's 50-member proposals for the area and proposed a number of amendments to the District Council's 54-member scheme for the town. East Grinstead Town Council proposed a six ward arrangement for the East Grinstead and Ashurst Wood area, based upon five two-member wards and a single-member ward.

27 Horsted Keynes Parish Council proposed that it be combined with the village of Scaynes Hill in a single-member ward. Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council proposed that the parish be combined with the parishes of Albourne, Fulking, Newtimber, Pyecombe, Poynings and Twineham in a three-member ward. Poynings Parish Council supported the District Council's 54-member proposals for the area. Slaugham Parish Council expressed opposition to any change to the current warding arrangements. Turners Hill Parish Council proposed that it be combined in either a two- or three-member ward with parishes to its south. Worth Parish Council stated it was content with all three District Council consultation schemes. Cuckfield Rural Parish Council supported the District Council's proposals to unite the entire parish within a two-member ward under either its 50 or 54-member scheme. Hassocks Parish Council proposed that its current parish warding arrangements remain unchanged.

## **Other Submissions**

28 We also received a further five submissions. Councillor Cutler member for Burgess Hill-Town ward expressed support for the Liberal Democrats' proposals. Haywards Heath Labour Party also submitted a response, supporting the proposals of the Liberal Democrats. Ashurst Wood Community Association expressed a preference for being represented by a single councillor on the District Council. Two local residents proposed that the parish of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common be combined with the parishes of Albourne, Fulking, Newtimber, Pyecombe, Poynings and Twineham while another resident objected to the District Council's proposals for the Turners Hill area.

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

**29 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Mid Sussex and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names, and parish and town council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.**

30 As described earlier, our primary aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Mid Sussex is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities – and Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

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

### **Electorate Forecasts**

34 Since 1975 there has been a 23 per cent increase in the electorate of Mid Sussex district. The District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 3 per cent from 98,686 to 101,279 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Cuckfield ward. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

35 The Liberal Democrats’ electorate forecast for Mid Sussex included developments that they argued had been left out of the District Council’s electorate estimates. They therefore proposed 2006 estimates of 102,048. However, in response to the Liberal Democrats’ forecast the District Council acknowledged that there may be possible additional growth in Haywards Heath. We know that forecasting electorates is difficult, and having looked at the District

Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. However, we would welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during the consultation period of Stage Three.

## **Council Size**

36 As explained earlier, we start by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

37 Mid Sussex District Council presently has 54 members serving 30 wards. After public consultation the District Council proposed a council of 50 members serving 21 wards. However, it provided no evidence as to how it would operate effectively with a reduction of four members. This 50-member scheme allocated Burgess Hill 11 members, East Grinstead 10 members and Haywards Heath nine members. The remaining 20 members would be allocated to the district's rural areas. It argued that this scheme would provide a "good fit" for the urban areas and an acceptable fit for rural parishes and communities. However, within its own Stage One submission the District Council admitted that "new political structures were implemented from May 2001, and no evidence is available, as yet, to support a radical reduction in council size". The District Council also submitted district-wide proposals for 51- and 54- member schemes upon which it had also consulted.

38 The Liberal Democrats' proposed a council size of 53 members. This proposal was supported by Councillor Cutler, member for Burgess Hill-Town ward, who expressed the view "that those villages, which are adjacent to one another, are fiercely independent and have no wish to share a councillor unless they have to". However, we noted that the Liberal Democrats' scheme allocated the rural area 20 members instead of 19 which it merits given the number of electors.

39 As stated above will not generally seek a substantial increase or decrease in council size but we are prepared to consider the case for change where there is persuasive evidence. In this case we are not persuaded that a case has been made for a change in council size. We note that there has not been local consensus as to the appropriate future council size and having received no evidence to the contrary, we assume that the existing council size of 54 members will continue to secure effective and convenient local government. Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by retaining a council size of 54 members.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

40 We have considered all the district-wide schemes presented to us and have taken into account all the submissions received. In view of the support given to large elements of the Council's consultation proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we have based the majority of our recommendations on the District Council's 54-member scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. However, to improve electoral equality further and bearing in mind local community identities and interests, we are moving away from the District

Council's proposals in two areas. Within East Grinstead we have decided to adopt the Liberal Democrats' warding pattern for the town as this provides the correct allocation of 11 members and the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Within Burgess Hill we also recommend minor boundary modifications to the District Council's proposals in order to achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Bolney, Clayton, Cuckfield, Hurstpierpoint and Keymer wards;
- (b) Ardingly, Balcombe, Cophorne & Worth, Crawley Down, Horsted Keynes, Lindfield Rural, Turners Hill, Slaugham and West Hoathly wards;
- (c) Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury, Burgess Hill-Franklands, Burgess Hill-North, Burgess Hill-Town, Burgess Hill-St Andrews and Burgess Hill-Victoria wards;
- (d) Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead North, East Grinstead South, East Grinstead West wards;
- (e) Haywards Heath-Ashenground, Haywards Heath-Bentswood, Haywards Heath-Franklands, Haywards Heath-Harlands, Haywards Heath-Heath and Lindfield Urban wards.

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

### **Bolney, Clayton, Cuckfield, Hurstpierpoint and Keymer wards**

42 These five wards are located in the south of the district. The wards of Bolney and Clayton are each represented by a single councillor, Cuckfield ward is represented by two councillors and Hurstpierpoint and Keymer wards are each represented by three councillors. Bolney ward comprises the parishes of Albourne, Bolney and Twineham. Clayton ward comprises the parish of Pyecombe and the parish wards of Clayton, part of Keymer South and Stonepound of Hassocks parish. Cuckfield ward comprises Cuckfield parish and part of Cuckfield Rural, Ansty parish ward. Keymer ward comprises the whole of the Keymer North parish ward and parts of the parish wards of Clayton, Keymer South and Stonepound, all of which are part of Hassocks parish. Hurstpierpoint ward comprises the parishes of Fulking, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common, Newtimber and Poynings. The number of electors per councillor is 13 per cent below the district average in Bolney ward (15 per cent below the average in 2006), 15 per cent below the district average in Clayton ward (16 per cent below the average in 2006), 8 per cent below the district average in Cuckfield ward (8 per cent below the average in 2006), 3 per cent below the district average in Hurstpierpoint ward (4 per cent below the average in 2006) and 21 per cent below the district average in Keymer ward (23 per cent below the average in 2006).

43 During Stage One, as part of its 50-member district-wide scheme, the District Council proposed two options. Its first option proposed two three-member wards and one two-member ward for this area. The District Council's second option proposed that this area should be represented by a pattern of three three-member wards.

44 The District Council's 54-member consultation option proposed that this area should be represented by a pattern of one single-member ward, one two-member ward and two three-member wards. It proposed a single-member Bolney ward comprising the parishes of Albourne, Bolney and Twineham parishes and a proposed Slaugham Village parish ward of

Slaugham parish, comprising that part of the parish to the south of Brantridge Road. It further proposed that the remainder of Slaugham parish, the area to the north of Brantridge Road form a new Handcross & Pease Pottage parish ward, which would be included in a modified Balcombe ward. The District Council proposed a two-member Cuckfield ward comprising both the parishes of Cuckfield and Cuckfield Rural. It also proposed a new three-member ward comprising the present Clayton and Hurstpierpoint wards. The District Council further proposed a new three-member Hassocks ward comprising the parish wards of Hassocks Clayton, Hassocks Keymer North, Hassocks Keymer South and Hassocks Stonepound.

45 The Liberal Democrats proposed that the southern area of the district be represented by a pattern of seven single-member wards.

46 Albourne Parish Council expressed support for a single-member ward for its area under the District Council's 50 and 54-member options. Cuckfield Rural Parish Council supported the District Council's proposals for the location of Cuckfield Rural and Cuckfield parishes in a single two-member ward. Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council proposed that it be included within a ward comprising the parishes of Albourne, Fulking, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common, Newtimber, Poynings, Pyecombe and Twineham. These proposals were also supported by two local residents. The Parish Council further suggested that this ward should be named Low Weald & Downs.

47 Poynings Parish Council stated that it would prefer that the current Hurstpierpoint ward be maintained. Slaugham Parish Council stated that it would prefer the existing arrangements to be maintained. It particularly objected to the proposal to link Slaugham with Balcombe and Turners Hill wards due to the "significant diversity between these areas".

48 We have considered the various options for this area put forward by the District Council, the Liberal Democrats and the parish councils. We considered the proposal of Poynings Parish Council to maintain the current Hurstpierpoint ward and note that it would secure a good level of electoral equality both now and in 2006. However, we also note that there would be high levels of electoral inequality in surrounding wards. We further note the objection of Slaugham Parish Council to it being warded and its proposal that the current warding arrangements be maintained. However, we cannot view any area in isolation and note the high levels of electoral equality that currently exist in the area. We also note that Slaugham parish comprises a number of settlements that are geographically distinct and are of the view that warding the parish between district wards would not significantly impact on community identity in the area and would achieve the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria for the area as a whole. We have considered the proposals of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council but note that its proposals would not achieve as good a level of electoral equality in the area as those under the District Council's 54-member scheme. Therefore we are content to adopt these proposals as part of our draft recommendations.

49 Having considered all the options received at Stage One, and having visited the area, we consider that the District Council's 54-member proposals would provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and have decided to adopt them as part of our draft recommendations.

50 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent above the district average in Bolney ward (8 per cent above the average in 2006), 1 per

cent above the district average in Cuckfield ward (1 per cent above the average in 2006), 4 per cent above the district average in Hassocks ward (2 per cent above the average in 2006) and equal to the district average in Low Weald & Downs ward (1 per cent below the average in 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2.

### **Ardingly, Balcombe, Copthorne & Worth, Crawley Down, Horsted Keynes, Lindfield Rural, Turners Hill, Slaugham and West Hoathly wards**

51 These nine wards are located in the north of the district. Ardingly, Balcombe, Horsted Keynes, Lindfield Rural, Slaugham, Turners Hill and West Hoathly wards are each represented by a single member. Copthorne & Worth and Crawley Down wards are each represented by two members. Ardingly, Balcombe, Horsted Keynes, Lindfield Rural, Turners Hill and West Hoathly are all coterminous with the parishes of the same names. Copthorne & Worth ward comprises the Copthorne and Worth parish ward of Worth parish. Crawley Down ward comprises the Crawley Down parish ward of Worth parish. Slaugham ward comprises Slaugham parish and Cuckfield Rural-Staplefield parish ward. The number of electors per councillor is 35 per cent below the district average in Ardingly ward (38 per cent below the average in 2006), 22 per cent below the district average in Balcombe ward (24 per cent below the average in 2006), 1 per cent below the district average in Copthorne & Worth ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006), 13 per cent above the district average in Crawley Down (10 per cent above the average in 2006), 36 per cent below the district average in Horsted Keynes ward (37 per cent below the average in 2006), 12 per cent above the district average in Lindfield Rural ward (9 per cent above the average in 2006), 30 per cent below the district average in Turners Hill ward (29 per cent below the average in 2006), 14 per cent above the district average in Slaugham ward (19 per cent above the district average in 2006) 9 per cent below the district average in West Hoathly ward (11 per cent below the district average in 2006).

52 Under the District Council's 50-member scheme this area would be represented by a pattern of three two-member wards and two three-member wards. Under its 54-member consultation option the District Council proposed that the area should have a pattern of three two-member wards and one three-member ward. As mentioned above it proposed a two-member Balcombe ward comprising Ardingly and Balcombe parishes along with the proposed Handcross & Pease Pottage parish ward of Slaugham parish. It further proposed a ward comprising the parishes of Horsted Keynes, West Hoathly and a proposed Lindfield East parish ward of Lindfield Rural parish to form a two-member Horsted ward. The District Council also proposed a three-member Crawley Down & Turners Hill ward comprising the current Crawley Down and Turners Hill wards. The District Council further proposed that Copthorne and Worth ward be maintained on its present boundaries.

53 Ardingly Parish Council stated that it would prefer to be placed in a ward with Turners Hill, and either Balcombe or West Hoathly. It objected to the ward pattern proposed under the District Council's 54-member option. Balcombe Parish Council objected to the District Council's 50-member scheme and stated that it would consider alternative schemes that were "administratively viable" and in which it was not represented by more than two councillors at district ward level. Turners Hill Parish Council supported proposals for a 54-member council. However, it objected to being located in a ward with the more urban Crawley Down parish ward. It stated that it preferred to be linked with the villages of Ardingly and West Hoathly in a two-member ward, or with Ardingly, West Hoathly and Balcombe served by three

members. Worth Parish Council stated that it was happy to support any of the three options proposed by the District Council. Councillor Curtis, member for Copthorne & Worth ward, objected to proposals that the parishes of Turners Hill and Balcombe be combined within a three-member ward with Copthorne & Worth on the grounds of community identity. Horsted Keynes Parish Council expressed support for being located in a single-member ward consisting of Horsted Keynes parish and the village of Scaynes Hill, citing that this arrangement reflected the community identity and interests of the area.

54 Having considered the various proposals submitted at Stage One, we believe that the District Council's 54-member proposals for this area provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting them as our draft recommendations. We noted the objections of Turners Hill Parish Council to being placed in Crawley Down ward. However, we have been persuaded that within a 54-member scheme, in order to facilitate the best balance between levels of electoral equality and the statutory criteria, the District Council's proposals provide the best pattern for this area. However to provide clarity we propose renaming Crawley Down ward Turners ward. We also propose adopting the name Horsted for the ward comprising Horsted Keynes, West Hoathly and the proposed Lindfield East parish ward of Lindfield Rural parish. We welcome further comments on appropriate ward names during our Stage Three consultation period.

55 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent above the district average in Balcombe ward (8 per cent above the average in 2006), 1 per cent below the district average in Copthorne & Worth ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006), 7 per cent above the district average in Horsted ward (5 per cent above the average in 2006) and 1 per cent below the district average in Turners ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2.

### **Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury, Burgess Hill-Franklands, Burgess Hill-North, Burgess Hill-Town, Burgess Hill-St Andrews and Burgess Hill-Victoria wards**

56 The town of Burgess Hill is located in the south of the district. Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury and Burgess Hill-North wards are both represented by a single councillor. Burgess Hill-Franklands, Burgess Hill-St Andrews, Burgess Hill-Town and Burgess Hill-Victoria wards are each represented by two councillors. Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury, Burgess Hill-Franklands, Burgess Hill-St Andrews, Burgess Hill-Town and Burgess Hill-Victoria wards are coterminous with the parish wards of the same name. Burgess Hill-North ward comprises Burgess Hill-Dunstall and Burgess Hill-Leylands parish wards. The number of electors per councillor is 3 per cent above the district average in Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury ward (6 per cent above the average in 2006), 8 per cent above the district in Burgess Hill-Franklands ward (11 per cent above the average in 2006), 188 per cent above the district average in Burgess Hill-North ward (186 per cent above the average in 2006), 5 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill-St Andrews ward (5 per cent below the average in 2006), 26 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill-Town ward (27 per cent below the average in 2006) and 26 per cent above the district average in Burgess Hill-Victoria ward (22 per cent above the average in 2006).

57 As part of its Stage One 50-member proposals the District Council proposed that Burgess Hill be divided into one single-member ward, two two-member wards and two three-member

wards. Under the District Council's 54-member consultation scheme it proposed that Burgess Hill town should be represented by a pattern of six two-member wards. It proposed that Burgess Hill Chanctonbury ward would comprise all of the present Burgess Hill-Chanctonbury ward with the boundary being extended northwards to run along Park Road. It further proposed that an area to the east of the railway line along Silverdale Road, including the Tower House properties, be located within this ward. Burgess Hill Dunstall ward would comprise part of the present Burgess Hill-North ward, west of the boundary with the proposed Burgess Hill Leylands ward, part of the present Burgess Hill-Victoria ward including West Park Crescent and Denham Road, and the area to the north of and including Robin Road.

58 The District Council proposed a new Burgess Hill Franklands ward comprising the current Burgess Hill-Franklands ward, less the area along Church Road mentioned above. The District Council further proposed a new Burgess Hill Leylands ward comprising that part of the present Burgess Hill-Town ward to the north of the properties on Park Road and that part of the current Burgess Hill-North ward to the east of London Road. It proposed that the majority of the current Burgess Hill-Victoria ward be maintained except for an area in the north-west of the ward. The District Council also proposed that Burgess Hill St Andrews ward should maintain its present boundaries.

59 The Liberal Democrats proposed that Burgess Hill be divided into six two-member wards, Dunstall, Franklands, Leylands, St Andrews, Town Centre and Victoria. Its proposals were similar to those contained within the District Council's 54-member proposals.

60 Burgess Hill Town Council proposed that the town should be represented by 12 district councillors, as proposed by the District Council under its draft 53- and 54-member options and the Liberal Democrats. It particularly objected to the District Council's 50-member scheme, as it did not "reflect natural communities or natural boundaries". In response to District Council's draft 53- and 54-member schemes the Town Council proposed that West Park Crescent and Denham Road should be located in Burgess Hill Victoria ward as opposed to Burgess Hill Dunstall ward. On the grounds of community identity it also proposed that Tower House be located in Burgess Hill Franklands ward. The Town Council further proposed that the northern boundary of Burgess Hill Chanctonbury ward run to the rear of the properties on Park Road as "their natural community is 'the town', they face south and are part of the Conservation Area".

61 Within in a council size of 54 members Burgess Hill merits representation by 12 councillors. Having considered the various proposals submitted at Stage One, we consider that the District Council's 54-member proposals for this area provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and we have decided to adopt them as the basis for our recommendations. However, to further improve electoral equality within Burgess Hill we intend making two amendments proposed by Burgess Hill Town Council. Between the Burgess Hill Leylands and Burgess Hill Chanctonbury wards we propose moving the boundary on Park Road to the rear of the properties on the northern side of the road. In Burgess Hill Dunstall ward we propose that the boundary run to the north of West Park Crescent along Malthouse Lane and then south to the west of the Nature Reserve.

62 We have considered the Town Council's concerns about the Tower House area. However, given the need to achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality within the Burgess Hill area, we have not been persuaded to include the Tower House area within Burgess Hill Franklands ward.

63 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill Chanctonbury ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006), 2 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill Dunstall ward (4 per cent below the average in 2006), 4 per cent above the district average in Burgess Hill Franklands ward (6 per cent above the average in 2006), 1 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill Leylands ward (2 per cent below the average in 2006), 5 per cent below the district average in Burgess Hill St Andrews ward (5 per cent below the average in 2006) and 7 per cent above the district average in Burgess Hill Victoria ward (5 per cent above the average in 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **East Grinstead East, East Grinstead North, East Grinstead South, East Grinstead West wards**

64 The town of East Grinstead is located in the north-east of the district. East Grinstead North, East Grinstead South and East Grinstead West wards are each represented by three members whilst East Grinstead East ward is represented by a single member. East Grinstead East ward comprises Ashurst Wood parish. East Grinstead North, East Grinstead South and East Grinstead South wards are all coterminous with the parish wards of East Grinstead parish that share the same name. The number of electors per councillor is 29 per cent below the district average in Ashurst Wood ward (31 per cent below the average in 2006), 14 per cent above the district average in East Grinstead North ward (13 per cent above the average in 2006), 12 per cent above the district average in East Grinstead South ward (10 per cent above the average in 2006) and 14 per cent above the district average in East Grinstead West ward (12 per cent below the average in 2006).

65 The District Council's 50-member scheme proposed that this area should be represented by 10 members. It submitted two options for this area, the first of which proposed a pattern of two three-member wards (East Grinstead North and East Grinstead South) and two two-member wards (East Grinstead East and East Grinstead West). Under its second option East Grinstead North, East Grinstead South and East Grinstead West wards would each be represented by three members, while East Grinstead East ward (including Ashurst Wood) would be represented by a single member. Under the District Council's 54-member proposal this area would be allocated 11 councillors. Under this option the area would be represented by three three-member wards and a single two-member East Grinstead East ward incorporating Ashurst Wood.

66 The Liberal Democrats proposed a pattern of five two-member wards and one single-member ward for this area. Their proposed Ashplats, Imberhorne, New South, North-West and Town Centre wards would all be represented by two members while the Ashurst Wood area would remain within a single-member ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed that Ashurst Wood ward comprise the present Ashurst Wood ward and an area in the east of East Grinstead. The area would extend from Horseshoe Farm in the south to Dutton Homestall Farm in the north-west. The Liberal Democrats also proposed that Ashplats ward comprise the current East Grinstead North ward, less the areas generally surrounding Woodbury Avenue, that are accessed by Lewes Road to the south and on the western boundary the area, generally west of Blackwell Hollow and Bourg-De-Peage Avenue.

67 The Liberal Democrats further proposed that Imberhorne ward should comprise part of the current East Grinstead West ward less the area generally north and to the rear of the properties

on Halsford Road and London Road which would then comprise the whole of a new East Grinstead North West ward.

68 The proposed East Grinstead New South ward would comprise part of the present East Grinstead South ward less that area it proposed transferring into the proposed Ashurst Wood ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed that the northern boundary of this ward would run to the rear of the properties on Hurst Farm Road, Hermitage Lane and the area generally north of Glendyne Way. It further proposed that the Town Centre ward should comprise the area north of the proposed East Grinstead New South ward and west of the proposed East Grinstead Ashplats ward. It proposed that the western boundary of this ward should follow the dismantled railway from the district boundary in the north to its intersection with Garden Wood Road towards the south.

69 Ashurst Wood Community Association proposed that the Ashurst Wood form a single-member ward within its “present parish council boundary” or be combined with a sufficient number of the electorate from the eastern areas of East Grinstead. It argued that this arrangement would continue to provide more effective local government for the recently created parish. East Grinstead Town Council expressed support for the Liberal Democrat proposals for a pattern of five two-member wards and one single-member ward for the East Grinstead and Ashurst Wood area.

70 Due to our overall recommendation of the retention of a council size of 54 members, the East Grinstead and Ashurst Wood area would be entitled to 11 district councillors. Neither of the District Council’s proposed 50-member options for the East Grinstead town and Ashurst Wood parish area would provide for the correct number of councillors.

71 The Liberal Democrats’ proposals provided the correct allocation of 11 members. These proposals would also achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality and provided boundary patterns that reflected local communities. This scheme also received the support of the East Grinstead Town Council and would accommodate the proposals of Ashurst Wood Community Association for a single-member Ashurst Wood Ward. While the District Council’s 54-member scheme provided good levels of electoral equality, we consider that the ward boundaries would not adequately reflect community identities within East Grinstead.

72 Having considered the various proposals submitted at Stage One, we consider that the Liberal Democrat proposals for this area would provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We have therefore decided to adopt them without amendment.

73 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 12 per cent above the district average in Ashurst Wood ward (9 per cent above the average in 2006), 1 per cent above the district average in East Grinstead North West ward (2 per cent below the average in 2006), 10 per cent below the district average in East Grinstead Town Centre ward (9 per cent below the average in 2006), 2 per cent above the district average in East Grinstead Ashplats ward (1 per cent above the average in 2006), 1 per cent below the district average in East Grinstead New South ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006) and 2 per cent below the district average in East Grinstead Imberhorne ward (4 per cent below the district average in 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Haywards Heath-Ashenground, Haywards Heath-Bentswood, Haywards Heath-Franklands, Haywards Heath-Harlands, Haywards Heath-Heath and Lindfield Urban wards**

74 The town of Haywards Heath is located towards the centre of the district while Lindfield Rural lies to the east of the town. Haywards Heath-Ashenground, Haywards Heath-Bentswood, Haywards Heath-Franklands, Haywards Heath-Harlands and Haywards Heath-Heath wards are all represented by two-members while Lindfield Urban ward is represented by three-members. Each district ward within the town is coterminous with the parish of the same name. Lindfield Urban is also coterminous with the parish ward of the same name and is represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the district average in Haywards Heath-Ashenground ward (4 per cent above the average in 2006), 30 per cent below the district average in Haywards Heath-Bentswood wards (30 per cent below the average in 2006), 31 per cent above the district average in Haywards Heath-Franklands ward (40 per cent above the average in 2006), 7 per cent below the district average in Haywards Heath-Harlands ward (13 per cent above the average in 2006) and 19 per cent below the district average in Haywards Heath-Heath ward (20 per cent below the average in 2006) and 18 per cent below the district average in Lindfield Urban ward (20 per cent below the average in 2006).

75 Under its 50-member scheme, the District Council proposed a pattern of three two-member wards and one three-member ward. Under the District Council's 54-member consultation option it proposed that Haywards Heath town be represented by five two-member wards. Its proposed that Haywards Ashenground ward would retain the same boundaries as the present Haywards Heath-Ashenground ward. The District Council also proposed that Haywards Bentswood ward should comprise the present Haywards Heath-Bentswood ward and the area to the rear of properties on Woodlands Road, Fields End Close and Oathall Road. It further proposed that Haywards Franklands ward should comprise the present Haywards Heath Franklands ward less the area transferred to the proposed Haywards Bentswood ward mentioned above.

76 The District Council proposed that Haywards Harlands ward should comprise the current Haywards Heath Harlands ward, less areas west of Balcombe Road up to the rear of the properties on Penland Road and a small area west of Milton Road, both of which it proposed to transfer into the proposed Haywards Heath ward. It further proposed that Haywards Heath ward would comprise all of the current Haywards Heath-Heath ward and those areas transferred from the proposed Haywards Heath ward as mentioned above.

77 The District Council also proposed a new Lindfield ward comprising the present Lindfield Urban ward and a proposed Lindfield East parish ward of Lindfield Rural. The parish ward boundaries would extend from the Scrace Stream on the side west of Lindfield parish along to Great Walstead Farm and down to Lyoth Lane.

78 The Liberal Democrats proposed that Haywards Heath be represented by 10 councillors representing five wards. Their proposed Ashenground, Bentswood, Franklands, Harlands and Heath wards would each be represented by two councillors. Their proposals in the Haywards Heath area were almost identical to those of the District Council's 54-member scheme. They proposed that the parish of Lindfield Urban be divided between three single-member wards, Lindfield Central, Lindfield South-East and Lindfield West.

79 Having considered the various proposals submitted at Stage One, we consider that the District Council's proposals for this area provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and have decided to adopt them without amendment. These were similar to the Liberal Democrat proposals for Haywards Heath. However, we are persuaded that the District Council's proposals under its 54-member option provided more identifiable boundaries.

80 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 26 per cent below the district average in Haywards Harlands ward (5 per cent below the average in 2006), equal to the district average in Haywards Heath ward (1 per cent below the average in 2006), 7 per cent above the district average in Haywards Ashenground ward (4 per cent above the average in 2006), 9 per cent above the district average in Haywards Bentswood ward (8 per cent above the average in 2006), 9 per cent below the district average in Haywards Franklands ward (1 per cent above the average in 2006) and equal to the district average in Lindfield ward (3 per cent below the average in 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Electoral Cycle**

81 The District Council stated that it had received no representations regarding the amendment of the electoral cycle from whole council elections every four years.

82 At Stage One Ardingly Parish Council supported "keeping whole Council elections at every four years at Parish Council level".

83 We considered carefully all the comments received. At present, the majority view appears to be that the present electoral cycle should be retained. We therefore make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

## **Conclusions**

84 Having considered all the evidence and submissions received during the first stage of the review, we propose that:

- a council size of 54 members should be retained;
- there should be 26 wards;
- the boundaries of 27 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and three wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council.

85 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the District Council's proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- in East Grinstead we propose adopting the Liberal Democrat proposals for the wards in East Grinstead town and the Ashurst Wood area; and

- we propose that the boundaries of Burgess Hill Dunstall, Burgess Hill Victoria, Burgess Hill Leylands and Burgess Hill Chanctonbury should be modified to improve electoral equality.

86 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will effect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements (based on 2001 electorate figures) and with forecast electorates for the year 2006.

*Table 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	54	54	54	54
Number of wards	30	26	30	26
Average number of electors per councillor	1,828	1,828	1,876	1,876
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	21	3	21	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	11	1	11	0

87 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Mid Sussex District Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 21 to three initially. By 2006 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent.

### **Draft Recommendation**

Mid Sussex District Council should comprise 54 councillors serving 26 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A, including the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

## **Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

88 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parishes of Burgess Hill, Cuckfield Rural, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Lindfield and Slaugham.

89 The parish of Burgess Hill is currently served by 19 councillors representing seven wards: Burgess Hill-Chantonbury, Burgess-Hill Dunstall, Burgess-Hill Franklands, Burgess-Hill Leylands, Burgess-Hill St Andrews, Burgess-Hill Town and Burgess-Hill Victoria. We propose modifying the parish ward boundaries to correspond with those of the district council wards within the town.

**Draft Recommendation**  
Burgess Hill Parish Council should comprise 19 councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Burgess Hill-Chantonbury parish ward (returning three councillors), Burgess-Hill Dunstall parish ward (returning two councillors), Burgess-Hill Franklands parish ward (returning three councillors), Burgess-Hill Leylands parish ward (returning three councillors), Burgess-Hill St Andrews parish ward (returning three councillors), Burgess-Hill Town parish ward (returning three councillors) and Burgess-Hill Victoria parish ward (returning two councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

90 The parish of Cuckfield Rural is currently served by 9 councillors representing two wards: Ansty and Staplefield. Cuckfield Rural Parish Council proposed warding this parish into three parish wards. It proposed that Ansty be represented by five councillors, Staplefield be represented by three councillors and Brook Street and Borde Hill be represented by one councillors. We propose modifying the parish ward boundaries of Cuckfield Rural parish to correspond with those proposed by Cuckfield Rural Parish Council.

**Draft Recommendation**  
Cuckfield Rural Parish Council should comprise 9 councillors, as at present, representing wards: Ansty (returning five councillors), Staplefield (returning three councillors) and Brook Street and Borde (returning one councillor). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed parish ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map A3.

91 The parish of East Grinstead is currently served by 18 councillors representing three wards: East Grinstead-North (returning six councillors), East Grinstead-South (returning six councillors) East Grinstead-West (returning six councillors). We propose that in the light of our proposed district warding arrangements that East Grinstead parish should comprise six parish wards: East Grinstead Ashurst returning two councillors, East Grinstead Ashplats returning four councillors, East Grinstead Imberhorne returning three councillors, East Grinstead New South returning three councillors, East Grinstead North West returning three councillors and East Grinstead Town Centre returning three councillors. We propose modifying the parish ward boundaries to correspond with those of the district wards within the town.

**Draft Recommendation**

East Grinstead Parish Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing five parish wards: East Grinstead Ashurst (returning two councillors), East Grinstead Ashplats (returning four councillors), East Grinstead Imberhorne (returning three councillors), East Grinstead New South (returning four councillors), East Grinstead North West (returning four councillors) and East Grinstead Town Centre (returning three councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

92 The parish of Haywards Heath is currently served by 16 councillors representing five wards. Haywards Heath–Ashenground (returning three councillors), Haywards Heath–Bentswood (returning three councillors), Haywards Heath–Franklands (returning four councillors), Haywards Heath–Harlands (returning three councillors) and Haywards Heath–Heath (returning three councillors). We propose that in the light of our proposed district warding arrangements, Haywards Heath parish should comprise five parish wards: Haywards Ashenground returning three councillors, Haywards Bentswood returning four councillors, Haywards Franklands returning three councillors, Haywards Harlands returning three councillors and Haywards Heath returning three councillors. We propose modifying the parish ward boundaries to correspond with those of the District Council wards within the parish.

**Draft Recommendation**

Haywards Heath Parish Council should comprise 16 parish councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Haywards Heath Ashenground parish ward (returning three councillors), Haywards Heath Bentswood parish ward (returning four councillors), Haywards Heath Franklands parish ward (returning three councillors), Haywards Heath Harlands parish ward (returning three councillors) and Haywards Heath Harlands (returning three councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of this report.

93 The parish of Lindfield Rural is currently served by nine councillors and is not warded. We propose that in the light of our proposed district warding arrangements: Lindfield Rural parish should comprise two parish wards: Lindfield East returning four councillors and Lindfield West returning five councillors.

**Draft Recommendation**

Lindfield Rural Parish Council should comprise 9 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Lindfield East (returning four councillors) and Lindfield West (returning five councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards of Lindfield East and Lindfield West should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

94 The parish of Slaugham is currently served by 13 councillors. We propose warding this parish in order to facilitate the ward pattern for this area of the district. We propose that in the light of our proposed district warding arrangements, Slaugham parish should comprise two parish wards: Handcross & Pease Pottage, returning seven councillors and Slaugham Village, returning six councillors.

**Draft Recommendation**

Slaugham Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two parish wards: Handcross & Pease Pottage (returning seven councillors) and Slaugham Village (returning six councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards of Handcross & Pease Pottage and Slaugham Village should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Map A2.

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

**Draft Recommendation**

For parish and town councils, whole elections should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that of the District Council.

*Map 2: Draft Recommendations for Mid Sussex*

## 5 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

96 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Mid Sussex contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 22 April 2002. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the District Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

97 Express your views by writing directly to us:

Review Manager  
Mid Sussex Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)

[www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)

98 In the light of responses received, we will review our draft recommendations to 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 our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Electoral Commission, which cannot make the Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after it receives them.



## Appendix A

### **Draft Recommendations for Mid Sussex: Detailed Mapping**

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

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

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed parish warding of Slaugham Parish.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposed parish warding of Cuckfield Rural Parish.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath & Lindfield.

*Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Mid Sussex: Key Map*

*Map A2: Proposed Warding of Slaugham Parish*

*Map A3: Proposed Warding of Cuckfield Rural Parish (map does not include proposed district warding)*

## Appendix B

### Code of Practice on Written Consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, [www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm](http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm), requires all Government Departments and Agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Non-Departmental Public Bodies, such as the Local Government Commission for England, are encouraged to follow the Code.

The Code of Practice applies to consultation documents published after 1 January 2001, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

*Table B1: LGCE compliance with Code criteria*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Compliance/departure</b>
Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.	We comply with this requirement.
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.	We comply with this requirement.
A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.	We comply with this requirement.
Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.	We comply with this requirement.
Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.	We consult on draft recommendations for a minimum of eight weeks, but may extend the period if consultations take place over holiday periods.
Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analyzed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.	We comply with this requirement.
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.	We comply with this requirement.