

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Lewes in East Sussex

February 2001

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 to the Government on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of wards and electoral divisions – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective 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, and the number of councillors and ward names. We can also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the district.

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CONTENTS

	page
SUMMARY	<i>v</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>5</i>
3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED	<i>9</i>
4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>11</i>
5 NEXT STEPS	<i>25</i>
APPENDICES	
A Draft Recommendations for Lewes: Detailed Mapping	<i>27</i>
B Lewes District Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements	<i>31</i>
C The Statutory Provisions	<i>33</i>
D Code of Practice on Written Consultation	<i>37</i>

A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford is inserted inside the back cover of this report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Lewes on 25 July 2000.

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

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

- **in 13 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 nine wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2005 this unequal representation is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 13 wards and by more than 20 per cent in 11 wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 72-73) are that:

- **Lewes District Council should have 41 councillors, seven fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, instead of 25 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net decrease of two, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

These draft 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 19 of the proposed 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **An improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue with the number of electors per councillor in 19 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2005.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the re-distribution of councillors for the parishes of Chailey, Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 20 February 2001. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. 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 and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.**
- **It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 23 April 2001:

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Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (without)	1	Barcombe ward (Barcombe parish); Hamsey ward (part - the parishes of Hamsey and St John Without)	Map 2
2	Chailey & Wivelsfield	2	Chailey ward (Chailey parish); Wivelsfield ward (Wivelsfield parish)	Map 2
3	Ditchling & Westmeston	1	Ditchling ward (Ditchling parish); Plumpton ward (part - Westmeston parish)	Map 2
4	East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs	3	Telscombe ward (Telscombe Cliffs parish ward of Telscombe parish); East Saltdean ward (East Saltdean parish ward of Telscombe parish)	Map 2
5	Kingston	1	<i>Unchanged</i> - the parishes of Falmer, Iford, Kingston Near Lewes, Piddinghoe, Rodmell, St Ann (Without), Southease	Map 2
6	Lewes Bridge	2	Lewes Bridge ward (part)	Map 2 and Map A2
7	Lewes Castle	2	Lewes Castle ward (part); Lewes Bridge ward (part)	Map 2 and Map A2
8	Lewes Priory	3	Lewes Priory ward; Lewes Castle ward (part)	Map 2 and Map A3
9	Newhaven Denton & Meeching	3	Newhaven Denton ward; Newhaven Meeching ward (part); Newhaven Valley ward (part)	Map 2
10	Newhaven Valley	2	Newhaven Valley ward (part); Newhaven Meeching ward (part)	Map 2
11	Newick	1	<i>Unchanged</i> - Newick parish	Map 2
12	Ouse Valley & Ringmer	3	Ouse Valley ward (parishes of Beddingham, Firle, Glynde, South Heighton and Tarring Neville); Ringmer ward (parish of Ringmer)	Map 2
13	Peacehaven East	2	Peacehaven East ward; Peacehaven North ward (part); Peacehaven West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
14	Peacehaven North	2	Peacehaven North ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
15	Peacehaven West	2	Peacehaven West ward (part); Peacehaven North ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
16	Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington	1	Plumpton Streat & East Chiltington ward (part - the parishes of East Chiltington, Plumpton & Streat)	Map 2

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
17	Seaford Central	2	Seaford central ward (part); Seaford North ward (part); Seaford West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
18	Seaford East	2	Seaford East ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
19	Seaford North	2	Seaford North ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
20	Seaford South	2	Seaford East ward (part); Seaford Central ward (part); Seaford North ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
21	Seaford West	2	Seaford West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map

Notes: 1 The whole district is parished.

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

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Lewes

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Barcombe & Hamsey	1	1,590	1,590	-9	1,607	1,607	-11
2 Chailey & Wivelsfield	2	3,631	1,816	4	3,793	1,897	5
3 Ditchling & Westmeston	1	1,769	1,769	1	1,771	1,771	-2
4 East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs	3	5,705	1,902	9	5,737	1,912	6
5 Kingston	1	1,574	1,574	-10	1,595	1,595	-12
6 Lewes Bridge	2	3,330	1,665	-5	3,544	1,772	-2
7 Lewes Castle	2	3,587	1,794	2	3,670	1,835	1
8 Lewes Priory	3	5,180	1,727	-1	5,233	1,744	-4
9 Newhaven Denton & Meeching	3	5,184	1,728	-1	5,504	1,835	1
10 Newhaven Valley	2	2,826	1,413	-19	3,728	1,864	3
11 Newick	1	1,865	1,865	6	1,875	1,875	4
12 Ouse Valley & Ringmer	3	4,986	1,662	-5	4,962	1,654	-9
13 Peacehaven East	2	3,572	1,786	2	3,591	1,796	-1
14 Peacehaven North	2	3,486	1,743	0	3,507	1,754	-3
15 Peacehaven West	2	3,375	1,688	-4	3,393	1,697	-6
16 Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington	1	1,587	1,587	-9	1,663	1,663	-8
17 Seaford Central	2	3,652	1,826	4	3,742	1,871	3
18 Seaford East	2	3,804	1,902	9	3,897	1,949	8

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
19 Seaford North	2	3,760	1,880	7	3,845	1,923	6
20 Seaford South	2	3,588	1,794	2	3,716	1,858	3
21 Seaford West	2	3,757	1,879	7	3,816	1,908	5
Totals	41	71,808	–	–	74,189	–	–
Averages	–	–	1,751	–	–	1,809	–

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lewes 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 draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Lewes in East Sussex on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the five districts in East 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 currently expected to be completed by 2005.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Lewes. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in 1979 (Report No. 326). The electoral arrangements of East Sussex County Council were last reviewed in August 1981 (Report No. 417). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, ie 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 (see Appendix C).

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the District Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also make recommendations on the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the district.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). This sets out our approach to the reviews.

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

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equality of representation across the district as a whole. Having regard to the statutory criteria, our aim is to achieve as low a level of electoral imbalance as is practicable. We will require particular justification for schemes which

would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. 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 general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that district 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 a district’s electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a district council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other districts.

9 The review is in four stages (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Stages of the Review

Stage	Description
One	Submission of proposals to the Commission
Two	The Commission’s 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, *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, ie in year one half of the district council would be elected, in year two half 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 have been taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, provides 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 present *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 25 July 2000, when we wrote to Lewes District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Police Authority, the local authority associations, East Sussex Local Councils

Association, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the South Eastern Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 16 October 2000.

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

13 Stage Three began on 20 February 2001 and will end on 23 April 2001. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations 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 our draft recommendations.**

14 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to move away from them in any areas, and submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, he will make an Order. The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

15 The district of Lewes in East Sussex covers an area of 29, 211 hectares and has a population of some 85,900. Its geographical centre is the county town of Lewes. Other important settlements are the towns of Newhaven, Seaford, Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs. Newhaven provides a busy cross-channel ferry service, and the areas of Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs are undergoing rapid expansion. The district includes the South Downs, a designated Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and also the River Ouse. The district of Lewes has 28 parishes and is entirely parished.

16 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 using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

17 The electorate of the district is 71,808 (February 2000). The Council presently has 48 members who are elected from 25 wards, 16 of which are relatively urban in character with the remainder being predominantly rural. Seven of the wards are each represented by three councillors, nine are each represented by two councillors and nine are single-member wards. The Council is elected by thirds.

18 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Lewes District, with around 15 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments. The most notable increases have been in Peacehaven North and Chailey wards.

19 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,496 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,552 by the year 2005 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 13 of the 25 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, nine wards by more than 20 per cent and three wards by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Peacehaven North ward where the councillor represents 83 per cent more electors than the district average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Lewes

Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)
1	Barcombe	1	1,077	1,077	-28	1,083	1,083	-30
2	Chailey	1	2,121	2,121	42	2,253	2,253	46
3	Ditchling	1	1,526	1,526	2	1,539	1,539	0
4	East Saltdean	2	2,343	1,172	-22	2,357	1,179	-24
5	Hamsey	1	821	821	-45	868	868	-44
6	Kingston	1	1,574	1,574	5	1,595	1,595	3
7	Lewes Bridge	3	4,034	1,345	-10	4,286	1,429	-8
8	Lewes Castle	3	3,627	1,209	-19	3,680	1,227	-21
9	Lewes Priory	3	4,436	1,479	-1	4,481	1,494	-3
10	Newhaven Denton	2	2,322	1,161	-22	2,370	1,185	-23
11	Newhaven Meeching	2	3,027	1,514	1	3,987	1,994	29
12	Newhaven Valley	2	2,661	1,331	-11	2,875	1,438	-7
13	Newick	1	1,865	1,865	25	1,875	1,875	21
14	Ouse Valley	1	1,371	1,371	-8	1,379	1,379	-11
15	Peacehaven East	2	2,360	1,180	-21	2,372	1,186	-23
16	Peacehaven North	2	5,465	2,733	83	5,496	2,748	78
17	Peacehaven West	2	2,608	1,304	-13	2,623	1,312	-15
18	Plumpton	1	1,522	1,522	2	1,551	1,551	0
19	Ringmer	2	3,615	1,808	21	3,583	1,792	16
20	Seaford Central	3	4,790	1,597	7	4,948	1,649	7
21	Seaford East	3	4,503	1,501	0	4,621	1,540	0
22	Seaford North	3	4,342	1,447	-3	4,439	1,480	-4

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)
23	Seaford West	3	4,926	1,642	10	5,008	1,669	8
24	Telscombe Cliffs	2	3,362	1,681	12	3,380	1,690	9
25	Wivelsfield	1	1,510	1,510	1	1,540	1,540	0
	Totals	48	71,808	-	-	74,189	-	-
	Averages	-	-	1,496	-	-	1,546	-

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lewes 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 2000, electors in Peacehaven North ward were relatively over-represented by 83 per cent, while electors in Hamsey ward were relatively under-represented by 45 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

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

21 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission 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 eight representations during Stage One, including a district-wide scheme from the District Council, all of which may be inspected at the offices of the District Council and the Commission.

Lewes District Council

22 The District Council proposed a council of 41 members, seven fewer than at present, serving 21 wards, compared to the existing 25. It proposed a mixed pattern of four single-member wards, 14 two-member wards and three three-member wards. The Council undertook an extensive consultation exercise and modified its proposals in the light of the views received. The Council proposed multi-member wards in the urban areas, but asked that we also consider alternative arrangements in Lewes town and Newhaven which would provide for a pattern of seven and five single-member wards respectively. Under the District Council's proposals only one ward would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average by 2005. The Council's scheme is summarised at Appendix B.

Lewes Constituency Labour Party

23 Lewes Constituency Labour Party expressed support for the Council's proposals, but argued that the Council's proposed two-member Ouse Valley ward should be divided along the River Ouse to form two single-member wards, one on either side of the river. It also proposed seven single-member wards for Lewes, arguing "that each of the new wards should, as far as possible, incorporate elements of the core of Lewes old town as well as a segment of newer dwellings in the outer area".

Parish Councils

24 Hamsey Parish Council supported the Council's proposals in relation to its area, but stated that the new ward should be named Barcombe, Hamsey & St John Without ward. Barcombe Parish Council proposed that Barcombe and Hamsey parishes should form a single-member ward. Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council stated that the Council's proposed Ouse Valley ward "is extremely large and unwieldy".

Other Representations

25 Saltdean Residents' Association opposed a reduction in the number of councillors representing East Saltdean, arguing that whilst such a proposal was tenable on numbers alone, the area included the proposed site for the Regional Sewage and Sludge Treatment Centre for Brighton & Hove and Lewes and that "any ward which could accommodate such an emotive and necessary facility... should not have its representation reduced". A local resident stated that the review should consider amending the external boundary between Brighton & Hove Council and Lewes Council, which currently splits Saltdean between two districts. A local resident opposed a reduction in councillors for Lewes, particularly as the population in Lewes is set to rise, and argued that the status quo, namely three three-member wards, is the best option. The local resident also outlined a second preference whereby if a reduction in representation in Lewes was necessary, then Lewes town should be split into four two-member wards.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

26 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Lewes is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities – and Schedule 11 to 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”.

27 In relation to Schedule 11, 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 next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

28 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.

29 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective 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 start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity and interests. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates.

Electorate Forecasts

30 The District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 4 per cent from 71,808 to 74,480 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expected most of the growth to be in the urban areas, particularly in Newhaven. 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. At Stage One Hamsey Parish Council queried the Council’s 2005 electorate projections for Hamsey parish. We asked the Council to confirm its projections and after revisiting its 2005 projections the Council provided amended figures for Hamsey parish and a number of other areas in the district.

31 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the District Council’s figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can

reasonably be made at this time. Advice from the District Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

Council Size

32 As already explained, the Commission’s starting point is to assume 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.

33 Lewes District Council presently has 48 members. The District Council proposed a reduction in council size to 41, arguing that the current political management model, with its concomitant reduction in committee places means that a reduction in council size, “will assist in ensuring that councillors continue to play a full part in the activities of the council”, and that a council size of 41 facilitates a scheme which meets the criteria and rules for the review.

34 We received only one further representation in relation to council size, from a local resident who argued that, as the population of the district was increasing, the number of councillors should not be reduced. However, we note that there is some support for the arrangements proposed by the council, which were the subject of local consultation, and having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 41 members.

Electoral Arrangements

35 As mentioned earlier, we received one district-wide scheme for Lewes, based on a council size of 41, from the District Council, which provides for a mixed pattern of three three-member and eleven two-member wards in the urban areas of Lewes, and three two-member and four single-member wards in the rural areas. While we note Lewes Constituency Labour Party’s proposal for seven single-member wards in Lewes town, each representing “a reasonable cross-section of the Lewes electorate”, we are not persuaded that such an arrangement would provide a better reflection of community identities and interests in the area concerned than under the scheme put forward by the District Council. We consider that the Council’s proposals for the district generally provide a satisfactory reflection of the statutory criteria whilst achieving substantial improvements to electoral equality. We propose adopting the District Council’s scheme as the basis for our draft recommendations subject to a number of amendments where we judge that further improvements to electoral equality can be secured having regard to the statutory criteria.

36 For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North and Seaford West wards;
- (b) Newhaven Denton, Newhaven Meeching and Newhaven Valley wards;
- (c) East Saltdean, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North, Peacehaven West wards and Telscombe Cliffs wards;
- (d) Kingston, Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards;
- (e) Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards;
- (f) Barcombe, Chailey, Ditchling, Hamsey, Newick, Streat and Wivelsfield wards.

37 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Maps 2, A2 and A3 at Appendix A and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

Seaford (four wards)

38 The town of Seaford (comprising Seaford parish) is currently covered by the four three-member wards of Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North and Seaford West, and forms part of a larger ribbon of urban development which runs along the south coast of Lewes district. Under the existing 48 member council Seaford Central, Seaford West and Seaford East wards have 7 per cent more, 10 per cent more and equal to the district average number of electors per councillors respectively (7 per cent more, 8 per cent more and equal to the average by 2005), while Seaford North has 3 per cent fewer than the average (4 per cent fewer by 2005).

39 The District Council proposed a revised pattern of five two-member wards covering Seaford. The Council proposed retaining the existing Seaford East ward with the exception of the properties to the east of Eastbourne road and north of Sutton Avenue and the area around Green Walk (which would be transferred to the proposed Seaford South ward). The proposed Seaford South ward would also comprise the existing Seaford Central ward, less those properties to the west of Broad Street, Mill Drive, Saxon Lane and Sutton Road (which would be transferred to the revised Seaford Central ward), as well as the area around Hindover Road and Haven Brow (currently in Seaford North ward) to form a new Seaford South ward. The remainder of the existing Seaford Central ward would be combined with properties to the west of Blatchington Hill (currently in Seaford North ward), and properties to the east of Beacon Drive, Carlton Road and Westdown Road (currently in Seaford west ward) to form a revised Seaford Central ward. The remainder of Seaford North ward would form a revised Seaford North ward, while the remainder of Seaford West ward would form a revised Seaford West ward. The Council argued that it was necessary to redraw boundaries in Seaford in order to improve electoral equality, but that wherever necessary it had attempted “to try and keep to the general areas of the existing wards”.

40 Under the District Council’s proposals Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North and Seaford West wards would have 7 per cent, 10 per cent, 9 per cent and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (7 per cent, 9 per cent, 8 per cent and 6 per cent more than the average by 2005), while Seaford South ward would have 4 per cent fewer than the average (3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

41 We have carefully considered the District Council's proposals in this area. While we note that they provide for a good reflection of the statutory criteria, we consider that electoral equality can be improved further, particularly in the light of the over-representation in the Council's proposed Seaford South ward compared to the under-representation in the other proposed Seaford wards. Accordingly, we propose adopting the Council's proposals subject to a number of minor boundary amendments. We propose moving the Council's boundary between Seaford East and Seaford South ward further to the east, transferring properties on Cuckmere Road, Fairways Road and Rodmell Road into the Council's proposed Seaford South ward. In addition, we propose amending the northern boundary of Seaford South ward to follow the northern edge of the allotment gardens, rather than bisecting them, which provides for a more easily recognisable boundary and transfers a number of properties on Sutton Drove and all the properties on the Byeway into the Council's proposed Seaford South ward. Finally, we propose transferring those properties to the south of Sutton Park Road from the Council's proposed Seaford Central ward to the proposed Seaford South ward. We consider that these proposals provide a good reflection of local community identities whilst providing for improved levels of electoral equality.

42 Under our draft recommendations Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North, Seaford South and Seaford West wards would have 4 per cent, 9 per cent, 7 per cent, 2 per cent and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (3 per cent, 8 per cent, 6 per cent, 3 per cent and 5 per cent more than the average by 2005). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

Newhaven (three wards)

43 Newhaven (comprising Newhaven parish) is situated in the middle of the urban development that runs along the coastal area of Lewes district and currently comprises three two-member wards. Under the current 48-member council Newhaven Denton and Newhaven Valley wards have 22 per cent and 11 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (23 per cent and 7 per cent fewer than the average by 2005), while Newhaven Meeching ward has 1 per cent more than the average (29 per cent more by 2005).

44 The District Council proposed substantial modifications to electoral arrangements in this area. It proposed that a new three-member Newhaven Denton & Meeching ward should comprise the existing Newhaven Denton ward and the existing Newhaven Meeching ward (less the area around Dacre Road which would be transferred into Newhaven Valley ward), along with two small areas of Newhaven Valley ward containing no electors. The remainder of Newhaven Valley ward would be combined with an area around Dacre Road currently in Newhaven Meeching ward to form a revised two-member Newhaven Valley ward.

45 The District Council argued that its proposals improved electoral equality whilst taking account of local views which it had received during its own consultation. In addition to its own proposals the Council requested that consideration should be given to a proposal by Newhaven

Town Council to divide the town into five single-member wards, three of which would occupy the same area as the Council's proposed Newhaven Denton & Meeching ward and two of which would occupy the same area as the Council's proposed Newhaven Valley ward.

46 Under the District Council's proposals, Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley wards would have 1 per cent and 19 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (1 per cent and 3 per cent more than the average by 2005).

47 We consider that the District Council's proposals provide for a good balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and propose adopting them as part of our draft recommendations. We have noted the Council's request to consider five single-member wards for Newhaven, but in the absence of further information on these proposals, we are unable to give further consideration to this proposal. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

East Saltdean, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North, Peacehaven West and Telscombe Cliffs wards

48 Under the current 48-member council, the two-member wards of East Saltdean and Telscombe Cliffs (which together comprise the parish of Telscombe) currently have 22 per cent fewer and 12 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (24 per cent fewer and 9 per cent more than the average by 2005). The three two-member wards of Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West (together comprising the parish of Peacehaven) currently have 21 per cent fewer, 83 per cent more and 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (23 per cent fewer, 78 per cent more and 15 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

49 Under its 41-member scheme the District Council proposed combining the existing East Saltdean ward with the existing Telscombe Cliffs ward to form a new three-member East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs ward. In Peacehaven, it proposed that all the properties to the east of Bramber Avenue that are currently in Peacehaven West ward, and all the properties to the east of Bramber Avenue and Hoyle Road that are currently in Peacehaven North ward, should be included in an enlarged two-member Peacehaven East ward. The remainder of Peacehaven West ward would be combined with those properties to the south of Firle Road and Southview Road that are currently in Peacehaven North ward, to form a revised two-member Peacehaven West ward. The remainder of Peacehaven North ward would be retained as a revised two-member Peacehaven North ward. The Council stated that alternative warding arrangements proposed during its consultation exercise resulted in high levels of electoral inequality that would not have been acceptable to the Commission.

50 Under the District Council's proposals East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West wards would have 9 per cent more, 2 per cent more,

equal to and 4 per cent fewer than the district average number of electors per councillor respectively (6 per cent more, 1 per cent fewer, 3 per cent fewer and 6 per cent fewer by 2005).

51 Saltdean Residents' Association opposed a reduction in the number of councillors representing East Saltdean, arguing that whilst such a proposal provided good electoral equality, the area included the proposed site for the Regional Sewage and Sludge Treatment Centre for Brighton & Hove and Lewes and that "any ward which could accommodate such an emotive and necessary facility... should not have its representation reduced". A local resident argued that the urban area of Saltdean would be better represented if it was under the administration of one local authority rather than, as at present, being split between Brighton & Hove Council and Lewes District Council. However, we cannot recommend amendments to external district boundaries as part of this review.

52 We have carefully considered the views which we have received during Stage One. While we note the opposition of Saltdean Residents' Association to a reduction in representation, we consider the high level of electoral inequality under alternative arrangements to be unacceptable. Furthermore, we consider that the Council's proposals provide for good electoral equality whilst reflecting community identities and interests and are therefore adopting them as part of our draft recommendations. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

Kingston, Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards

53 These three wards are situated in the centre of the district. Ringmer ward (comprising the parish of Ringmer) is represented by two councillors while Kingston ward (comprising the parishes of Falmer, Iford, Kingston Near Lewes, Rodmell, Saint Ann (without) and Southease) and Ouse Valley ward (comprising the parishes of Beddingham, Firle, Glynde, South Heighton and Tarring Neville) are each represented by a single councillor. Under the current 48-member council Kingston, Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards currently have 5 per cent more, 8 per cent fewer and 21 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (3 per cent more, 11 per cent fewer and 16 per cent more than the average by 2005).

54 Under its 41-member scheme the District Council proposed combining the existing Kingston ward with the existing Ouse Valley ward to form a new two-member Ouse Valley ward, arguing that the high level of electoral inequality which would result (18 per cent less than the average by 2005) was justified because of the large geographical area covered by the ward, and moreover, this option provided the best solution in terms of the scheme for the area as a whole. It proposed no change to Ringmer ward as it has good electoral equality.

55 Under the District Council's proposals Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards would have 16 per cent and 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (18 per cent fewer and 1 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

56 The Labour Party supported the Council's proposals in the light of changes made after the Council's consultation exercise, but considered that further improvements could be made by dividing the proposed Ouse Valley ward along the River Ouse into two single-member wards. It argued that although this would result in a high level of electoral inequality "it would have the merit of defining the area of responsibility of each councillor". Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council stated that the proposed Ouse Valley ward "is extremely large and unwieldy".

57 Having carefully considered the representations received, we note that the proposed Ouse Valley ward provides for poor electoral equality, is geographically large and is divided by the River Ouse, over which there are no vehicle crossing points within the ward. We are not convinced, therefore, that the Council's proposed Ouse Valley ward provides for an appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We recognise that the Labour Party's proposal provides for stronger boundaries, but consider that the level of electoral inequality under these proposals would be unacceptable, particularly to the east of the River Ouse. We therefore propose amending the Labour Party's proposals to combine the existing Ringmer ward with the existing Ouse Valley ward in a three-member Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward, which would achieve an improved level of electoral equality whilst retaining the River Ouse as a boundary. To the west of the River Ouse we propose retaining the existing Kingston ward unchanged. We consider that this represents the best available balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, whilst facilitating a good scheme for the wider area.

58 Under our draft recommendations Kingston and Ouse Valley & Ringmer wards would have 10 per cent and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (12 per cent and 9 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 in Appendix A.

Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards

59 The town (and parish) of Lewes is covered by the three three-member wards of Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory which currently have 10 per cent, 19 per cent and 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (8 per cent, 21 per cent and 3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005), under a 48-member council.

60 Under its 41-member scheme the District Council proposed a reduction in the number of councillors representing Lewes from nine to seven. It proposed that a modified two-member Lewes Castle ward should be expanded to include all those properties to the west of the River Ouse and north of Phoenix Causeway, Little East Street and Market Street (currently in Lewes Bridge ward). It proposed that Lewes Castle ward should be further modified by transferring those properties to the south of Prince Edwards Road and west of The Avenue and Bradford Road, to a revised three-member Lewes Priory ward. The remainder of Lewes Bridge ward would form a revised two-member ward. The Council stated that it had attempted to improve electoral equality while maintaining existing ward boundaries wherever possible. In addition to its own

proposals, the Council requested that consideration should be given to proposals from Lewes Town Council, which would divide Lewes into seven single-member wards.

61 Under the Council's proposals Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards would have 5 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (2 per cent fewer, 1 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

62 The Labour Party also proposed seven single-member wards for Lewes, arguing that each ward should "incorporate elements of the core of Lewes old town as well as a segment of the newer dwellings in the outer area", as therefore each would be representing "a reasonable cross-section of the Lewes electorate". Under the Labour Party's proposals no ward would vary by more than 7 per cent from the district average by 2005.

63 A local resident opposed a reduction in councillors for Lewes, particularly as the population in Lewes is set to rise, and argued that the status quo, namely three three-member wards, is the best option. The local resident also outlined a second preference whereby if a reduction in representation in Lewes was necessary then Lewes town should be split into four two-member wards.

64 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received in this area. While we recognise that the Labour Party's proposals provide for good electoral equality we are not persuaded that they would provide an accurate reflection of community identities and interests in the area concerned. We note that Lewes Town Council also favours seven single-member wards in this area, but in the absence of further detailed proposals we are unable to give further consideration to the Town Council's views. Furthermore, we do not consider that the proposal of a local resident to either maintain the status quo or create four two-member wards is acceptable, as under a council size of 41 the number of electors in Lewes only merits seven councillors. We consider that the District Council's proposals for this area represent the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria as they build upon existing ward arrangements, utilise strong boundaries and achieve better levels of electoral equality than under alternative proposals, and are therefore adopting them as part of our draft recommendations.

65 Under our draft recommendations Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards would have 5 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (2 per cent fewer, 1 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

Barcombe, Chailey, Ditchling, Hamsey, Plumpton, Newick and Wivelsfield wards

66 Under the current 48-member council, the number of electors represented by the councillor for the single-member wards of Barcombe (comprising the parish of Barcombe), Chailey (comprising the parish of Chailey), Ditchling (comprising the parish of Ditchling), Hamsey (comprising the parishes of East Chiltington, Hamsey and St John (without), Plumpton (comprising the parishes of Plumpton, Streat and Westmeston), Newick (comprising the parish of Newick) and Wivelsfield (comprising the parish of Wivelsfield) is 28 per cent fewer, 42 per cent more, 2 per cent more, 45 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more, 25 per cent more and 1 per cent more than the district average respectively (30 per cent fewer, 46 per cent more, equal to, 44 per cent fewer, equal to, 21 per cent more and equal to the average by 2005).

67 The District Council proposed no change to the existing Newick ward as this ward would have good electoral equality under a council size of 41. Elsewhere in this area it proposed a number of modifications in order to achieve improvements to electoral equality. It proposed combining the existing Chailey and Wivelsfield wards in a new two-member Chailey & Wivelsfield ward, arguing that the two parishes have good road links and this arrangement would provide good electoral equality. The existing Ditchling ward would be combined with Westmeston parish in a new single-member Ditchling & Westmeston ward, while the remainder of Plumpton ward would be combined with East Chiltington parish in a single-member Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington ward. The Council argued that Ditchling and Westmeston parishes are geographically and historically linked, and that combining them would provide for good electoral equality. The remainder of Hamsey ward would be combined with the existing Barcombe ward in a single-member Barcombe & Hamsey ward as, the Council argued, Barcombe and Hamsey parishes have similar interests and identities as well as good road links.

68 Under the Council's proposals Barcombe & Hamsey, Chailey & Wivelsfield, Ditchling & Westmeston and Newick wards would have 9 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more, 1 per cent more and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (11 per cent fewer, 5 per cent more, 2 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more than the average by 2005).

69 Barcombe Parish Council proposed that Barcombe and Hamsey should form a single-member ward, while Hamsey Parish Council supported the District Council's proposals for this area, but stated that the Council's proposed Barcombe & Hamsey ward should be named Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (without) ward.

70 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One we are content that the Council's proposals provide for the best available balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and are therefore putting them forward as part of our draft recommendations, subject to the amended ward name as proposed by Hamsey Parish Council. We would welcome further views on the proposed ward name. Under our draft recommendations Barcombe, Hamsey

& St John (Without), Chailey & Wivelsfield, Ditchling & Westmeston and Newick wards would have 9 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more, 1 per cent more and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (11 per cent fewer, 5 per cent more, 2 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more than the average by 2005). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 in Appendix A.

Electoral Cycle

71 We received one representation regarding the District Council's electoral cycle. The District Council stated that there should be no change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years. Accordingly, having received no other proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the district during Stage One, we make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

Conclusions

72 Having considered all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 48 to 41;
- there should be 21 wards;
- the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of four wards;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council.

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

- there should be no change to Kingston ward;
- we propose combining the existing Ouse Valley ward with Ringmer parish in a new three-member Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward;
- in Seaford we propose making a number of minor amendments to the council's proposed boundaries.

74 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2000 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2005.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2000 electorate		2005 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	48	41	48	41
Number of wards	25	21	25	21
Average number of electors per councillor	1,496	1,751	1,546	1,809
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	13	1	13	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	9	0	11	0

75 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Lewes District Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the district average from 13 to one. By 2005 only one ward is forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district.

Draft Recommendation
 Lewes District Council should comprise 41 councillors serving 21 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 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

76 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible 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. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parishes of Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven

and Seaford to reflect the proposed district wards and we are also proposing new parish warding arrangements in the parish of Chailey.

77 The parish of Lewes is currently served by 18 councillors representing the three parish wards of Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory. In our draft recommendations we propose modifying the boundaries of Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards. In order to reflect revised district warding arrangements we propose that the boundaries of Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory parish wards are amended accordingly. Each parish ward would be represented by six councillors.

Draft Recommendation

Lewes Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Lewes Bridge (returning six councillors), Lewes Castle (six) and Lewes Priory (six). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

78 The parish of Newhaven is currently served by 18 councillors representing the three parish wards of Newhaven Denton & Riverside, Newhaven Meeching and Newhaven Valley. In our draft recommendations we propose that the town should in future be divided between two district wards, Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley. In order to reflect revised district warding arrangements we propose that Newhaven parish should also be divided into two parish wards, Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley, which would be represented 11 and seven councillors respectively.

Draft Recommendation

Newhaven Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Newhaven Denton & Meeching (returning 11 councillors) and Newhaven Valley (seven). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map in Appendix A.

79 The town of Peacehaven is currently served by 17 councillors representing three parish wards, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West. In our draft recommendations we propose modifying the boundaries of Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West district wards. In order to reflect revised warding arrangements we therefore propose that the boundaries of Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West are amended accordingly. Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West parish wards would be represented by six, six and seven councillors respectively.

Draft Recommendation

Peacehaven Town Council should comprise 17 councillors as at present, representing three wards: Peacehaven East (returning six councillors), Peacehaven North (six) and Peacehaven West (seven). The boundaries between the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map in Appendix A.

80 The town of Seaford is currently served by 20 councillors representing four parish wards, Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North and Seaford West. In our draft recommendations we propose that the town should in future be divided between five district wards, Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North, Seaford South and Seaford West. In order to reflect our district warding arrangements we propose that Seaford parish should also be divided into five parish wards, Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North, Seaford South and Seaford West, which would each be represented by four councillors.

Draft Recommendation

Seaford Town Council should comprise 20 parish councillors as at present, representing five wards: Seaford Central (returning four councillors), Seaford East (four), Seaford North (four), Seaford South (four) and Seaford West (four). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map in Appendix A.

81 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-council elections should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that of the District Council.

82 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Lewes and welcome comments from the District Council and others 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.

Map 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Lewes

5 NEXT STEPS

83 We are putting forward draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for consultation. We will take fully into account all representations received by 23 April 2001. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Commission and the District Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

84 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

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

Fax: 020 7404 6142

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85 In the light of representations 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 Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for Lewes: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Lewes area.

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

Map A2 illustrates the proposed warding of the east of Lewes town.

Map A3 illustrates the proposed warding of the west of Lewes town.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Lewes: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed Warding in the east of Lewes town

Map A3: Proposed Warding in the west of Lewes town

APPENDIX B

Lewes District Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations detailed in Figures 1 and 2 differ from those put forward by the District Council only in two wards, where the Council's proposals were as follows:

Figure B1: Lewes District Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Ouse Valley	Kingston ward (the parishes of Falmer, Iford, Kingston Near Lewes, Rodmell, Saint Ann Without and Southease); Ouse Valley ward (the parishes of Beddingham, Firle, Glynde, South Heighton and Tarring Neville)
Ringmer	<i>unchanged</i> - parish of Ringmer

Figure B2: Lewes District Council's Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Ringmer	2	3,615	1,808	3	3,583	1,924	-1
Ouse Valley	2	2,945	1,473	-16	2,974	1,487	-18

Source: Electorate figures are based on figures provided by Lewes 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.

APPENDIX C

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: the Commission's Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear¹. Nor does the timetable apply to London Districts; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas will be included in the Commission's review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

2 Under section 13(5) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

- (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- (b) secure effective and convenient local government.

3 In reporting to the Secretary of State, the Commission may make recommendations for such changes to electoral arrangements as are specified in section 14(4) of the 1992 Act. In relation to principal authorities, these are:

- the total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions);
- the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral area, and the years in which they are to be elected; and
- the name of any electoral area.

¹ The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.

4 Unlike the LGBC, the Commission may also make recommendations for changes in respect of electoral arrangements within parish and town council areas. Accordingly, in relation to parish or town councils within a principal authority's area, the Commission may make recommendations relating to:

- the number of councillors;
- the need for parish wards;
- the number and boundaries of any such wards;
- the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward or, in the case of a common parish, for each parish; and
- the name of any such ward.

5 In conducting the review, section 27 of the 1992 Act requires the Commission to comply, so far as is practicable, with the rules given in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 for the conduct of electoral reviews.

Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

6 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

7 In relation to shire districts:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the district likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

- (a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the district;
- (b) in a district every ward of a parish council shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district;
- (c) in a district every parish which is not divided into parish wards shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district.

8 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a)–(c) above, regard should be had to:

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

9 The Schedule provides that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards, regard shall be had to whether:

- (f) the number or distribution of electors in the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- (g) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

10 Where it is decided to divide any such parish into parish wards, in considering the size and boundaries of the wards and fixing the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward, regard shall be had to:

- (h) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;
- (i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (j) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

11 Where it is decided not to divide the parish into parish wards, in fixing the number of councillors to be elected for each parish regard shall be had to the number and distribution of electors of the parish and any change which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the fixing of the number of parish councillors.

APPENDIX D

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, 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, 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.

Commission compliance with Code criteria

Criteria	Compliance/departure
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	The Commission complies with this requirement
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose	The Commission complies 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	The Commission complies 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	The Commission complies 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	The Commission consults 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 analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken	The Commission complies with this requirement
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated	The Commission complies with this requirement