

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

Report to the Secretary of State for
Transport, Local Government and the Regions

August 2001

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford 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 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
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.

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Lewes in East Sussex.

SUMMARY

We began a review of Lewes's electoral arrangements on 25 July 2000. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 20 February 2001, after which we undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

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

We found that the existing 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;**
- **by 2005 this situation is expected to continue, 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 final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 86–87) 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 reduction of two, and two 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 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.**
- **This 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.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, who will not make an Order implementing them before 18 September 2001:

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

Table 1: Final Recommendations: Summary

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

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
20	Seaford South	2	part of Seaford parish (the proposed Seaford South parish ward)
21	Seaford West	2	part of Seaford parish (the proposed Seaford West parish ward)

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.

Table 2: Final 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	1,537	1,537	-14	1,554	1,554	-14
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 Chilmington & St John (Without)	1	1,640	1,640	-6	1,716	1,716	-5
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
19 Seaford North	2	3,760	1,880	7	3,845	1,923	6

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 %
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 final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Lewes in East Sussex. We have now reviewed the five two-tier districts in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove unitary authority 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 finish in 2004.

2 This was 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 intend reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we have had 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.

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 to the Secretary of State 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 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 also reflecting the identities and interests of local communities.

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the district as a whole. Schemes which 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 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 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 areas 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, 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 Orders 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 the two-tier district areas, and our current *Guidance*.

10 This review was in four stages. 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 constituencies 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. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

11 Stage Three began on 20 February 2001 with the publication of our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lewes in East Sussex*, and ended on 23 April 2001. During this period we sought comments from the public and any other interested parties on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

12 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.

13 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 which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

14 The electorate of the district is 71,808 (February 2000). The Council currently 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 whole council is elected every four years.

15 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.

16 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

Table 3: 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
23	Seaford West	3	4,926	1,642	10	5,008	1,669	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 (%)
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 under-represented by 83 per cent, while electors in Hamsey ward were relatively over-represented by 45 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

17 During Stage One we received eight representations, including a district-wide scheme from Lewes District Council, and representations from the Lewes Constituency Labour Party, three parish councils, a local residents' association and two local residents. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lewes in East Sussex*.

18 Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's proposals, which achieved substantial improvement in electoral equality, and provided for predominantly two and three-member wards in the more urban areas of Lewes district, and a more mixed pattern of single and multi-member wards in the rural area. However, we moved away from the District Council's scheme in two areas, where we judged that further improvements to electoral equality could be secured, having regard to the statutory criteria. We proposed that:

- Lewes District Council should be served by 41 councillors, compared with the current 48, representing 21 wards, four fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified, while two wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be revised warding arrangements for the parishes of Chailey, Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford.

Draft Recommendation

Lewes District Council should comprise 41 councillors, serving 21 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

19 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 19 of the 21 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district. This level of electoral equality was forecast to continue, with 19 of the 21 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the average in 2005.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

20 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, we received nine representations. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Lewes District Council.

Lewes District Council

21 The District Council supported the draft recommendations, but reiterated its Stage One proposals for Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards, contending that these would result in a high electoral imbalance in only one ward by 2005 (its proposed Kingston ward which would vary by 18 per cent), as opposed to our draft recommendations which would result in two wards having relatively high imbalances (Kingston ward varying by 12 per cent and Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward varying by 9 per cent). It further contended that our proposed Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward would not reflect the identities and interests of local communities. The Council also put forward an amendment to the proposed Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (Without) ward, proposing that St John (Without) parish should be transferred into the proposed Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington ward. It contended that following a recent St John Without Parish Meeting “there was general support for the feeling that St John Without [parish] has more of an identity and interest with East Chiltington than with Hamsey”.

East Sussex County Council

22 East Sussex County Council objected to the draft recommendations for Seaford, contending that “it would not be possible to retain two County electoral divisions with an equal electorate in Seaford (as at present) if district ward boundaries were to be followed”.

Parish Councils

23 Seaford Town Council supported our draft recommendations for Seaford. Peacehaven Town Council “had no comments to make” about the draft recommendations.

24 Ringmer Parish Council objected to the amalgamation of Ringmer and Ouse Valley wards, contending that the two areas have “relatively little in common”. Wivelsfield Parish Council objected to the proposed Chailey & Wivelsfield ward, stating that it shares no community identity with Chailey.

Other Representations

25 A further three representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from a local organisation and two residents.

26 Ditchling Preservation Society supported the draft recommendations affecting the parishes of Ditchling and Westmeston. A local resident expressed concern at the proposal to combine the current East Saltdean and Telscombe Cliffs wards with the consequent loss of one councillor overall. He contended that the identity of Saltdean may become lost under such a proposal, suggesting that Saltdean remain as a separate ward as it is “a community in its own right”. He also commented on the district boundary with Brighton & Hove Council. Another local resident objected to the retention of whole council elections, instead proposing annual elections. He also expressed support for a uniform pattern of single-member wards for Lewes district to facilitate the current system of whole-council elections.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

27 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”.

28 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 also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

29 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.

30 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 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

31 The District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, initially 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.

32 However, 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, which resulted in an overall change to the initial forecasts. Under the revised forecasts, the total electorate was projected to increase by some 3 per cent to 74,189. We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the District Council’s revised figures, were content that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time. Advice from the District Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

33 We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

Council Size

34 As already explained, 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.

35 Lewes District Council at present has 48 members. At Stage One, 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, meant 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.

36 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 noted that there was 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 concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 41 members.

37 At Stage Three the District Council and Ditchling Preservation Society supported the reduction in the number of councillors, and no other representations relating to council size were received. Therefore, we remain of the view that, having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 41 members.

Electoral Arrangements

38 In arriving at our draft recommendations, we considered that the Council’s proposals for the district generally provided a satisfactory reflection of the statutory criteria whilst achieving substantial improvements to electoral equality. We adopted the District Council’s scheme as the basis for our draft recommendations, subject to amendments in two areas, Ouse Valley and Seaford, where we judged that further improvements to electoral equality could be secured having regard to the statutory criteria.

39 At Stage Three the District Council reiterated its Stage One proposals for Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards, contending that they would provide a better reflection of local communities, a view also put forward by Ringmer Parish Council. It further argued that its proposals would result in a higher electoral imbalance in only one ward, rather than two wards as under our draft recommendations.

40 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and all the representations received during Stage Three. For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Seaford (four wards);
- (b) Newhaven (three wards);
- (c) East Saltdean, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North, Peacehaven West wards and Telscombe Cliffs wards;

- (d) Kingston, Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards;
- (e) Lewes (three wards);
- (f) Barcombe, Chailey, Ditchling, Hamsey, Plumpton, Newick, and Wivelsfield wards.

41 Details of our final 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.

Seaford (four wards)

42 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 than the average by 2005).

43 At Stage One, 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.

44 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”. 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).

45 We carefully considered the District Council’s proposals in this area. While we noted that they provided for a good reflection of the statutory criteria, we considered that electoral equality could be improved further, particularly in the light of the over-representation in the Council’s proposed Seaford South ward compared with the under-representation in the other proposed Seaford wards. Accordingly, we adopted the Council’s proposals subject to a number of minor boundary amendments.

46 We proposed 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 proposed amending the northern boundary of Seaford South ward to follow the northern edge of the allotment gardens, rather than bisecting them,

which provided for a more easily recognisable boundary and transferred a number of properties on Sutton Drove and all the properties on the Byeways into the Council's proposed Seaford South ward. Finally, we proposed 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 considered that these proposals provided a good reflection of local community identities whilst providing for improved levels of electoral equality.

47 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).

48 At Stage Three, the District Council and Seaford Town Council supported our draft recommendations. East Sussex County Council opposed our draft recommendations for Seaford, contending that "it would not be possible to retain two County electoral divisions with an equal electorate in Seaford (as at present) if district ward boundaries were to be followed".

49 Having considered the representations received and in the light of the local support, we remain content that our draft recommendations for Seaford provide for the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We have noted East Sussex County Council's comments; however, as outlined in our *Guidance*, we acknowledge that in devising electoral schemes it may be necessary to recommend ward boundaries which do not coincide with existing county division boundaries, and we are of the view that this is not a sufficient reason to justify modifying our proposals in this area. The new district wards created by the periodic electoral review will form the "building blocks" for future reviews of county divisions. Therefore, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Seaford as final.

50 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Seaford Central, Seaford East, Seaford North, Seaford South and Seaford West wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations for Seaford are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Newhaven (three wards)

51 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).

52 At Stage One, the District Council proposed substantial modifications to electoral arrangements in this area. It proposed a new three-member Newhaven Denton & Meeching ward, comprising the existing Newhaven Denton and Newhaven Meeching wards (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.

53 We adopted the District Council's proposals for Newhaven as part of our draft recommendations as we considered that they provided a good balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our draft recommendations 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).

54 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our draft recommendations and no other representations were received. In the light of this support, and in the absence of any opposition, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

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

55 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).

56 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. We considered that the Council's proposals provided for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests and we therefore adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

57 Under our draft recommendations 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).

58 At Stage Three the District Council supported our draft recommendations. Peacehaven Town Council stated that it "had no comments to make" on the draft recommendations but pointed out two inaccuracies in our proposals for its parish electoral arrangements. A local resident expressed concern at the proposal to combine the current East Saltdean and Telscombe Cliffs wards with the consequent loss of one councillor overall. He contended that the identity of Saltdean may become lost under such

a proposal, suggesting that Saltdean remain as a separate ward as it is “a community in its own right”. He also commented on the district boundary with Brighton & Hove Council.

59 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage Three. We acknowledge the comments made by a local resident; however, modifications to a district’s external administrative boundary do not fall within the remit of a Periodic Electoral Review. In addition we have noted his concerns regarding the East Saltdean area; however, we remain of the view that our proposed ward secures the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria currently available, in addition to uniting all of Telscombe parish within one ward.

60 We therefore propose confirming our draft recommendations as final in this area. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in our proposed East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven East, Peacehaven North and Peacehaven West wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Kingston, Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards

61 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, Piddinghoe, 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).

62 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 would have good electoral equality under a 41-member council. 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”.

63 Having carefully considered the representations received, we noted that the proposed Ouse Valley ward provided for poor electoral equality, would be geographically large and was divided by the River Ouse, over which there are no vehicle crossing points within the ward. We were not convinced, therefore, that the Council’s proposed Ouse Valley ward provided for an appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We recognised that the Labour Party’s proposal provided for stronger boundaries, but considered that the level of electoral inequality under these proposals would be unacceptable, particularly to the east of the River Ouse. We therefore amended 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 proposed retaining the existing Kingston ward unchanged. We considered that this represented the best available balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, whilst facilitating a good scheme for the district as a whole.

64 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).

65 At Stage Three the District Council reiterated its Stage One proposals for Ouse Valley and Ringmer wards, contending that these would result in a high electoral imbalance in only one ward by 2005 (its proposed Kingston ward, which would vary by 18 per cent), as opposed to our draft recommendations which would result in two wards having relatively high imbalances (Kingston ward varying by 12 per cent and Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward varying by 9 per cent). It further contended that our proposed Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward would not reflect the identities and interests of local communities. Ringmer Parish Council also objected to the amalgamation of Ringmer and Ouse Valley wards, contending that the two areas have “relatively little in common”.

66 We have considered all the representations received during Stage Three. We have noted the District Council’s representation which reiterates its support for its own Stage One proposals in this area. However, we have not been persuaded to move away from our draft recommendations. We remain of the view that the Council’s proposed Ouse Valley ward, with an electoral variance of 18 per cent by 2005, would not secure an acceptable level of electoral equality. Furthermore, we remain of the view that such a ward would not provide for effective and convenient local government, as it would be divided by the River Ouse over which there are no vehicle crossing points. We therefore propose confirming our Kingston and Ouse Valley & Ringmer wards as final.

67 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Kingston and Ouse Valley & Ringmer wards, as illustrated on Map 2, would be the same as under our draft recommendations.

Lewes (three wards)

68 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.

69 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.

70 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. However, we considered that the District Council's proposals for this area represented the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria as they built upon existing ward arrangements, utilised strong boundaries and achieved better levels of electoral equality than under alternative proposals, and we therefore adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

71 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).

72 At Stage Three the District Council supported our draft recommendations and no other representations were received. In the light of the Council's support, and in the absence of any opposition, we propose confirming our draft recommendations as final. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

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

73 Under the current 48-member council, the number of electors represented by each 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).

74 At Stage One, the District Council proposed no change to the existing Newick ward as this ward would secure 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.

75 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One we were content that the Council's proposals provided for the best available balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and we therefore put them forward as part of our draft recommendations. However, we proposed that the Council's proposed Barcombe & Hamsey ward be renamed Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (Without) ward, following a proposal from Hamsey Parish Council which we considered reasonable.

76 Under our draft recommendations Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (Without), Chailey & Wivelsfield, Ditchling & Westmeston, Newick and Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington wards would have 9 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more, 1 per cent more, 6 per cent more and 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (11 per cent fewer, 5 per cent more, 2 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more and 8 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

77 At Stage Three the District Council supported our draft recommendations in this area but put forward one minor modification. It proposed that St John (Without) parish should be transferred into the proposed Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington ward. It contended that following a recent St John (Without) Parish Meeting “there was general support for the feeling that St John Without [parish] has more of an identity and interest with East Chiltington than with Hamsey”.

78 Wivelsfield Parish Council objected to the proposed Chailey & Wivelsfield ward, stating that it shares no community identity with Chailey. Ditchling Preservation Society supported the draft recommendations affecting the parishes of Ditchling and Westmeston.

79 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage Three. We have considered the District Council’s proposal to transfer St John (Without) parish from Barcombe, Hamsey & St John (Without) ward into Plumpton, Streat & East Chiltington ward. We have noted that there is local support for such a proposal, as it would better reflect local community identity, and that it would only result in a slight deterioration in electoral equality. We therefore propose adopting the Council’s revised wards as part of our draft recommendations and propose that they should be renamed Barcombe & Hamsey and Plumpton, Streat, East Chiltington & St John (Without) wards to reflect their component areas.

80 We have also noted Wivelsfield Parish Council’s opposition to our proposed two-member Chailey & Wivelsfield ward. We have considered its proposal that each of the parishes contained within the ward should form a single-member ward. However, this would result in an unacceptable level of electoral imbalance, with Chailey ward being under-represented by 21 per cent initially (25 per cent by 2005) and Wivelsfield ward being over-represented by 14 per cent initially (15 per cent by 2005). We are therefore confirming our proposed Chailey & Wivelsfield ward as final.

81 Given the support that the remainder of draft recommendations in this area have received from the District Council and other Stage Three respondents, we propose confirming them as final.

82 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Barcombe & Hamsey and Plumpton, Streat, East Chiltington & St John (Without) wards would be 14 per cent fewer and 6 per cent fewer than the district average initially (14 per cent fewer and 5 per cent fewer by 2005). The number of electors per councillor in our proposed Chailey & Wivelsfield, Ditchling & Westmeston and Newick wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2.

Electoral Cycle

83 At Stage One 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 made no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

84 At Stage Three the District Council supported our proposal to retain whole-council elections. A local resident proposed that annual elections should be introduced, arguing that whole-council elections do not allow “the electorate to challenge the council for another four years”.

85 We have considered the representations received; however, we are of the view that there is insufficient local support for a change to annual elections and therefore propose confirming our draft recommendation for the retention of whole-council elections as final.

Conclusions

86 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- we propose that St John (Without) parish be transferred into a new Plumpton, Streat, East Chiltington & St John (Without) ward, with the parishes of Barcombe and Hamsey forming a new Barcombe & Hamsey ward.

87 We conclude that, in Lewes:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 48 to 41;
- there should be 21 wards, four fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified;
- the Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

88 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2000 and 2005 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2000 electorate		2005 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final 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	2	13	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	9	0	10	0

89 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 13 to two, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality would continue in 2005, with only two wards, Barcombe & Hamsey and Kingston, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average, at 14 and 12 per cent fewer respectively. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Lewes District Council should comprise 41 councillors serving 21 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

90 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable 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, in our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for the parishes of Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford to reflect the proposed district wards and we also proposed new parish warding arrangements in the parish of Chailey.

91 The parish of Chailey is currently served by 11 councillors representing the two parish wards of Chailey North and Chailey South. As part of its Stage One submission the Council proposed that the warding arrangements in the parish of Chailey should be removed, enabling the parish to elect 11 parish councillors who would represent the parish as a whole. This proposal was supported by Chailey Parish Council which had stated that, in response to the Council's own Stage One consultation, "the removal of the warding of the Parish ... has long been argued for by the Chailey Parish Council".

92 In the light of this local support, we put forward the District Council's proposal to remove the warding of Chailey parish as part of draft recommendations.

93 At Stage Three no further comments were received from the District Council or the Parish Council. However, having considered all the evidence received, we are confirming our draft recommendation to remove the warding of Chailey parish as final.

Final Recommendation

Chailey Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing the parish as a whole.

94 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 proposed modifying the boundaries of all three wards. In order to reflect the revised district warding arrangements we proposed that the boundaries of Lewes Bridge, Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory parish wards be amended accordingly. Each parish ward would be represented by six councillors.

95 At Stage Three the District Council supported our draft recommendations and no other representations were received.

96 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we are confirming our draft recommendation for warding Lewes parish as final.

Final 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.

97 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 proposed that the town should in future be divided between two district wards, Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley. In order to reflect the revised district warding arrangements we proposed that Newhaven parish should also be divided into two parish wards, Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley, which would be represented by 11 and seven councillors respectively.

98 At Stage Three the District Council supported our draft recommendations and no other representations were received.

99 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we are confirming our draft recommendation for warding Newhaven parish as final.

Final 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 inside the back cover.

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

101 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our proposed parish ward boundaries. Both the District Council and Peacehaven Town Council pointed out an inaccuracy in our allocation of parish councillors, stating that Peacehaven West parish ward should be represented by five councillors, retaining 17 councillors for the parish overall.

102 Having considered the representations received, we agree with the District Council's and Peacehaven Parish Council's proposal that Peacehaven West parish ward be represented by five councillors. Given the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we are confirming our draft recommendation for warding Peacehaven parish as final, albeit with the modification to the number of parish councillors representing Peacehaven West ward, as detailed above.

Final 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 (five). The boundaries between the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map inside the back cover.

103 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 proposed 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 proposed 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.

104 At Stage Three the District Council and Seaford Town Council supported our draft recommendations.

105 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the confirmation of our proposed district wards in the area, we are confirming our draft recommendation for warding Seaford parish as final.

Final 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 inside the back cover.

106 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district. At Stage Three we received no comments relating to this issue and we are therefore confirming our draft recommendation as final.

Final 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.

Map 2: Final Recommendations for Lewes

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

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

108 It is now up to the Secretary of State to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 18 September 2001.

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

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

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Lewes: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate our 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: Final 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