LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR WOKING IN SURREY

March 1998
This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Woking in Surrey.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)
Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)
Tetter Brokenshire
Professor Michael Clarke
Robin Gray
Bob Scrutton
David Thomas OBE

Mike Bailey (Acting Chief Executive)

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WHY YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY IS UNDER REVIEW

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 the structure of local government, the boundaries of individual local authority areas, and to their electoral arrangements, such as the number of councillors which residents in each area should have to represent them.

As a result of changes in the electorate, we are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England.

In broad terms, the objective of this 'periodic electoral review' of Woking is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor on the Borough Council 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 propose the creation of new wards.

As part of this review we may also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of the parish council in the borough.

This report sets out our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Woking area in Surrey, and invites your comments. We have not yet decided on our final recommendations and wish to use this period to seek further evidence. We will be prepared to modify or change our draft recommendations in the light of views expressed if, in our judgement, the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would be better served. Details of the draft recommendations and how to comment are set out in Chapters 4 and 5.
The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Woking on 2 September 1997.

- 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 Woking:

- in eight of the 16 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and six wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;

- by 2002 the forecast figures show little improvement to electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in seven wards, and by more than 20 per cent in six wards.

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraphs 92-93) are that:

- Woking Borough Council should be served by 36 councillors, one more than at present;
- there should be 17 wards, compared to 16 at present;
- the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified, while Byfleet ward should retain its existing boundaries;
- elections should continue to be held by thirds.

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

- The number of electors per councillor would vary by less than 10 per cent from the borough average in all but one of the 17 proposed wards; Brookwood ward would have 15 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average.

- This improved electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all 17 wards expected to vary by no more than 7 per cent from the average for the borough by 2002.

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

- We will consult on our draft recommendations for 11 weeks from 17 March 1998.
- After considering local views, we will 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.
- The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 1 June 1998:

Director of Reviews
Woking Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphins Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU
1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Woking in Surrey.

2 We are reviewing the districts in Surrey as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England. This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Woking. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in November 1978 (Report No. 94). The electoral arrangements of Surrey County Council were last reviewed in August 1980 (Report No. 394). We intend to review the County Council's electoral arrangements in due course.

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

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

4 We also have regard to our Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties (published in March 1996 and supplemented in September 1996). This sets out our approach to the reviews.

5 The review is in four stages (Figure 2).

6 Stage One began on 2 September 1997, when we wrote to Woking Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Surrey County Council, Surrey Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Surrey Association of Parish and Town Councils, Byfleet Parish Council, the Member of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 25 November 1997.

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

8 Stage Three began on 17 March 1998 and will end on 1 June 1998. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them.
2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 The borough of Woking is located 30 miles south-west of London and is a compact borough, comprising 6,359 hectares. It includes Woking town centre and 14 village centres with a total population of 90,700 (mid-1996). To the east, Woking extends to the M25, and to the north the M3 and A3 are just beyond the borough boundary. The railway line runs through the centre of the borough, with the main station located in the town centre providing direct services to London and linking with locations across the south and south-west of the country. The Basingstoke Canal runs the length of the borough and the River Wey Navigation passes through the east of the borough. Woking is predominantly urban, with only one parish, Byfleet, in the east of the borough.

11 The borough consists of a mix of large residential areas, comprising detached houses set in spacious surroundings, substantial communities of mainly semi-detached and terraced housing, and some more modern blocks of low rise flats. There are also smaller pockets of much older housing, especially in areas close to the town centre.

12 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 borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

13 The electorate of the borough (February 1997) is 67,468. The Council currently has 35 councillors who are elected from 16 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Six of the 16 wards are each represented by three councillors, seven wards elect two councillors each, while the remaining three are single-member wards. The Council is elected by thirds.

14 Since the last electoral review, there has been an increase in population in Woking, with over 20 per cent more electors than two decades ago. Over the past 20 years, Woking has been one of the fastest growing boroughs in Surrey, with most of the electorate growth occurring in the west of the borough through the development of Goldsworth Park (some 6,900 electors) and the continuing development in Knaphill (3,000). There has been a reduction in the electorate in the more established parts of the borough, namely Sheerwater, Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking.

15 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,928 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts would increase to 1,960 by the year 2002, 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 eight of the 16 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in six wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Goldsworth Park ward where each councillor represents an average of 60 per cent more electors than the borough average.
Map 1: Existing Wards in Woking

Figure 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1997)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2002)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>68,586</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
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</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Woking Borough Council's submission.

Note: The "variance from average" column shows how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1997, electors in Sheerwater ward were relatively over-represented by 36 per cent, while electors in Goldsworth Park ward were relatively under-represented by 60 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

16 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 Woking Borough Council and its constituent parish council.

17 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers and members from Woking Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 39 representations during Stage One, copies of which may be inspected at the office of the Borough Council and of the Commission.

Woking Borough Council

18 The Borough Council proposed an increase in council size by one to 36 members, representing 16 wards, as at present. It stated that there had been a significant increase in the electorate in the west of the borough as a result of new housing development, and a decline in the east “for a variety of social reasons”. The Council suggested that “this radical shift in the distribution of the borough’s electorate be addressed by the creation of new wards, with additional councillors in the west, and by the mergers of wards, returning fewer councillors, in the east”.

19 It proposed three new wards in the west of the borough: Hermitage & Knaphill South, formed from parts of the existing St John’s and Knaphill wards, with a net increase of one councillor; Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West (returning five councillors between them) formed from the polling districts of the existing Goldsworth Park ward, giving an increase of two councillors. Two mergers were proposed in the east, resulting in the loss of two councillors: the existing two-member wards of Sheerwater and Central & Maybury would be combined to form a new three-member Central & Maybury ward; and the existing three-member Kingfield & Westfield ward would be combined with the single-member Old Woking ward to form a new three-member Old Woking & Hoe Valley ward.

20 To achieve better electoral equality, the Council proposed boundary adjustments to all but one ward. It proposed no change to Byfleet ward, in the far east of the borough, which it noted already has good electoral equality. It proposed no change to the current practice of elections by thirds nor to the electoral arrangements for Byfleet parish.

21 As part of its consultation process, the Council held a Public Forum and received a number of representations on its two draft proposals (A and B), which were appended to its submission. Taking into account these representations, the Council adopted as the basis for its submission Proposal C, which was a modified version of Proposal A.

Other Representations

22 We received directly a further 38 representations. Mr Goldenberg, the recent Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate for Woking, submitted a borough-wide scheme which he stated was “based on the physical boundary of the railway where at all possible, and [would] have regard to natural communities insofar as compatible with numerical balance”. He proposed a total of 18 wards represented by 37 councillors. He proposed a new Sheerwater & Woodham ward, formed from the existing Sheerwater ward and part of Horneil East & Woodham ward; a new Hook Heath ward in the south-west of the borough, bounded by the two railway lines and the borough boundary; and a new Walton Road ward in the centre of the borough. He proposed the retention of the existing Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking wards, but with a minor adjustment to their common boundary; and the merger of Brookwood village with part of the existing Knaphill ward (BA polling district) to form a new two-member Brookwood & Knaphill West ward. Overall, he proposed changes to all the existing ward boundaries. He supported the Borough Council’s proposed Goldsworth West ward, but named it Goldsworth Park West ward.

23 Councillor Mrs Compton, member for Woking South West county division, stated that the identity of Goldsworth Park ward should be preserved and
supported the Council's proposed Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West wards. She further stated that the present ward boundary between St John's and Mayford & Sutton wards should be retained, and that there was a case for a two-member ward comprising Hermitage and south Knaphill. She did not support the Council's proposal B, which would expand Brookwood ward even further to include part of Knaphill ward.

A number of respondents opposed the Council's proposal that the three-member Kingfield & Westfield ward be combined with the single-member Old Woking ward to form a new three-member ward. Representations were received from the Has Valley & Kingfield Residents' Association, Old Woking Village Association (which also enclosed a petition signed by 519 Old Woking residents), and 28 residents, all arguing against the proposal. Many argued that Old Woking should be retained as a single-member ward for community and historical reasons; some proposed that Kingfield & Westfield ward be represented by two, rather than three councillors.

The Old Woking Village Association suggested that consideration be given to redrawing the boundary around Millmoor Common and the Unwin Woods area, which would not affect any electors. Councillor Mrs Johnson, member for Old Woking borough ward, proposed that part of Kingfield & Westfield ward (Shackleford Road and some houses in Rydens Way) should be added to Old Woking ward to "keep a community with a strong identity and common interest together". Another resident also suggested that the Council's alternative proposal to modify the boundary between the two wards, rather than merge them, would be supported by local residents.

Woking Constituency Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposal C, but with some amendments to the proposed Goldsworth Park East and Hornsey East & Woodham wards. Mayford Village Society endorsed the Borough Council's proposals for Mayford & Sutton ward, while a resident of Kettlewell Close suggested that the whole of Kettlewell Close (currently split between two wards) should be in either Hornsey East & Woodham ward or Hornsey West ward, as the electors share common interests. A resident of Kingfield Road disagreed with the Council's proposals for Old Woking and considered that the Hermitage Estate area of St John's ward may need either its own councillor, or separation from the affluent Hook Heath area.

A resident of Mayford supported the Council's proposed Mayford & Sutton Green ward, particularly as the revised name would reflect the identity of Sutton Green village. He also supported the Council's proposed merger of Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking wards, noting that although the wards were distinct communities, "there is a great deal of commonality between them".

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

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

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 is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum, consistent with the statutory criteria.

In our March 1996 Guidelines, we expressed the view that "proposals for changes in electoral arrangements should be based on variations in each ward of no more than plus or minus 10 per cent from the average councillor-elector ratio for the authority, having regard to five-year forecasts of changes in electors. Imbalances in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent may be acceptable, but only in highly exceptional circumstances ... and will have to be justified in full". However, as emphasised in our September 1996 supplement to the Guidelines, while we accept that absolute equality of representation is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such equality should be the starting point in any electoral review.

Electorate Forecasts

The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2002, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 2 per cent from 67,468 to 68,586 over the five-year period from 1997 to 2002. It expected most of the growth to be in Knaphill ward, with some growth also expected in Central & Maybury ward and other parts of the borough. The Borough Council has 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 has assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorate of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained. We accept that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the Council's forecast electorates, are content that they represent the best estimates that can be made at this time.

Council Size

We indicated in our March 1996 Guidelines that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district or borough council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

Woking Borough Council presently has 35 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 36 members, with the additional member in the Goldsworth Park area to accommodate the substantial increase in the electorate since the last review and the need to achieve equality of representation across the whole borough. Mr Goldenberg proposed an increase in council size from 35 to 37, with the two additional councillors in the Goldsworth Park area.

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 36 members.
Electoral Arrangements

We have carefully considered all the representations received, including the two borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and Mr Goldenberg. The schemes were based on different council sizes: the Borough Council proposed a council of 86 members, one more than at present, while Mr Goldenberg proposed a council of 37 members. Both schemes would retain a mix of single- and multi-member wards and secure improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by more than 10 per cent from the average in only two wards. By 2002, all wards would be within 10 per cent of the borough average under the Council's scheme, while one ward would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average under Mr Goldenberg's scheme.

The Borough Council's proposals would make only minor boundary changes in many areas to "protect the identities of whole communities". Mr Goldenberg stated that his proposals were based on the "physical boundary of the railway ... and have regard to natural communities". However, some of Mr Goldenberg's proposed boundaries were to appear to split existing communities. There were two areas of agreement between the schemes: a new Goldsworth West ward was proposed, although Mr Goldenberg proposed the name Goldsworth Park West; and the Borough Council proposed no change to Byfleet ward, while Mr Goldenberg proposed only a minor ward boundary modification to follow the M25, which would not affect any electors.

The Commission is generally cautious about any increase in council size. However, we considered that one additional councillor, as proposed by the Borough Council, would facilitate a good electoral scheme, providing a better balance of representation throughout the borough. Having adopted a council of 36 members, the boundaries submitted by the Borough Council would provide better electoral equality than those proposed by Mr Goldenberg. Also, in view of the support that the Borough Council's proposals would have following its local consultation with interested parties, we have concluded that we should base our recommendations on the Council's scheme. However, to improve electoral equality further, while having regard to local community identities and interests, we propose to move away from the Borough Council's scheme in the wards of Horsham East & Woodham, Horsham West and Old Woking & Hoe Valley. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- Brookwood, Knaphill, Goldsworth Park and St John's wards;
- Kingfield & Westfield, Mayford & Sutton and Old Woking wards;
- Central & Maybury, Sheerwater, Mount Hermon East and Mount Hermon West wards;
- Horsham East & Woodham and Horsham West wards;
- Byfleet, Pyrford and West Byfleet wards.

Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inset at the back of this report.

Brookwood, Knaphill, Goldsworth Park and St John's wards

Brookwood ward currently elects a single councillor and has the representation of 21.8 per cent of electors than the borough average, and no growth is projected for the area. The Borough Council proposed to extend the ward's northern boundary to Percheron Drive, to include an identifiable part of the new development on the former Brookwood hospital development site, currently in Knaphill ward. The Council stated that no established ties exist in the area of the new development, but that since the affected area forms part of the former Brookwood hospital site, it can "readily be identified as Brookwood". The Council added that it had considered combining the communities of Knaphill and Brookwood, but recognised the strong individual identities of both villages. Under the Council's proposal the number of electors per councillor in the modified Brookwood ward would be 15 per cent below the borough average (4 per cent in 2002).

Knaphill ward is represented by three councillors, and the number of electors per councillor is 32 per cent above the borough average. To address the relative under-representation in the area, which is expected to worsen by 2002, the Council proposed a new Hermitage & Knaphill South ward to reflect the interests of the local communities. The ward would comprise the Hermitage Woods estate area, currently in St John's ward, and the south-eastern part of the existing Knaphill ward, including the Woodlands estate. A modified Knaphill ward would therefore comprise the whole of Knaphill and the majority of the development on the former Brookwood hospital site. The ward's northern boundary would run along the south of the properties in Caribou Lane from Hermitage Drive. Depending on the number of electors per councillor in Hermitage & Knaphill South and Knaphill wards would be 8 per cent above and 1 per cent above the borough average respectively (6 per cent and 3 per cent in 2002).

Mr Goldenberg proposed a new two-member Brookwood & Knaphill West ward, comprising Brookwood village and polling district BA (Knaphill West); and a new three-member Knaphill East ward, consisting of polling districts BB and BC (Knaphill Central and Knaphill East). He considered that there were no real links between the village of Brookwood, which lies north of the railway, and the east of Brookwood ward, south of the railway. Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the wards of Brookwood & Knaphill West and Knaphill East would be 18 per cent below and 4 per cent above the borough average respectively (7 per cent and 2 per cent in 2002).

Councillor Mrs Compton, member for Woking South West country division, supported the Borough Council's proposed extension of Brookwood ward to include part of the former Brookwood hospital site, but rejected the Council's draft proposal B, which would expand Brookwood ward even further northwards to include part of Knaphill, as there was "little community interrelationship between the two areas". In response to the Council's local consultation, both Brookwood Village Association and the Knaphill Residents' Association stated that it would be preferable to include all the houses west of Bagshot Road (the £322) in Brookwood ward, as they have common interests. Brookwood Village Association added that the houses on the former hospital site, currently in Knaphill ward, would need different services, and should therefore not be included in Brookwood ward.

Considering all the evidence received, we are endorsing the Borough Council's proposed Brookwood, Hermitage & Knaphill South and Knaphill wards as part of our draft recommendations. The majority of respondents supported the retention of a single-member Brookwood ward, and the railway line was not generally perceived as dividing the north and south areas of the ward. The former hospital development site in Brookwood ward would receive some local support as the area has yet to establish any strong community ties and can be identified as Brookwood. The proposed Hermitage & Knaphill South ward would unite similar communities and recognise that the Hermitage area, which is separated from the rest of the existing St John's ward, has different interests from St John's. The rest of Knaphill would be based on Knaphill village and "retains the village centre together with the nucleus of the established residential area".

We recognise the electoral imbalance that would exist in Brookwood ward in the short term (15 per cent), but also that the development on the former hospital site would result in an increased electorate and therefore provide better electoral equality in 2002 (4 per cent).

Goldsworth Park ward currently elects three councillors and has the representation of 15 per cent below the borough average. The number of electors represented by each councillor is 60 per cent above the borough average. Over the past 20 years there has been rapid growth in housing development in the area, and the Borough Council stated that "to obtain electoral equality it would be necessary to create a five-member ward and this not being within the Commission's criteria has resulted in the twinned wards of Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West". The proposed boundary between the two wards would reflect the current polling district boundary.

The Council proposed that the new three-member Goldsworth East ward should comprise the eastern part of the existing Goldsworth Park ward extended to Woking town centre, which is currently in Central & Maybury ward. The ward's northern boundary would be revised, running from Lockfield Drive to Goldsworth Park trading estate, and then would follow the boundary of the recreation ground, returning south to Bampton Way until it rejoined Lockfield Drive. This would result in Goldsworth Park, Clavendon Road and crest Walk being transferred to a modified Horsham West ward (detailed later). The south-eastern boundary of Goldsworth East ward would be modified to follow Janeway Hill Lane,
then go along the back of houses in The Dell and Birch Close, thereby including those properties and the ones in The Triangle Lane, currently in St John’s ward, since they would only have access to the new ward.

48. The two member Goldsworth West ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Goldsworth Park ward. Under the Borough Council’s proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West wards would be 4 per cent below and 2 per cent above the borough average respectively (4.5 per cent below and equal to the average in 2002).

49. Mr Goldenberg proposed a similar wording arrangement for this area. However, he proposed that the wards would be called Goldsworth Park East & King’sway and Goldsworth Park West, and that the boundary between the new Goldsworth Park East & King’sway ward and the existing Horrell West ward should follow Lockfield Drive, to include the properties in the Holme Lane area in the new ward. Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Goldsworth Park East & King’sway and Goldsworth Park West wards would be 1 per cent and 5 per cent above the borough average respectively (3 per cent above in both wards in 2002).

50. Councillor Mrs Compton supported the Council’s proposals for both Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West wards. Woking Constituency Conservative Association stated that “Goldsworth Park East should include Foxhalls, Merrivale Gardens and Hedgerly Court as these were built as part of the Goldsworth Park development”. However, this proposal would involve transferring 270 electors from the existing Horrell West ward (polling district EA) to the new Goldsworth East ward and would provide worse electoral equality in both wards.

51. Having given careful consideration to the representations received, we propose to adopt the Council’s proposals for Goldsworth East and Goldsworth West wards as part of our draft recommendations. Although the Borough Council’s and Mr Goldenberg’s proposals would both provide good electoral equality in this area, we think that the level of equity, from other representations for all or part of the Council’s proposals. Its proposals would also retain much of the existing boundary along Lockfield Drive and Sythwood.

52. The number of electors per councillor in the three-member St John’s ward is 11 per cent above the borough average (9 per cent in 2002). The ward covers the two areas of St John’s (north of the railway line) and Hook Heath (south of the railway line).

53. The Borough Council proposed a new St John’s & Hook Heath ward. The railway line would form the western boundary of the ward; part of the northern boundary would be modified to transfer the Triangle Lane area to the new Goldsworth East ward (detailed earlier); and the remainder of the northern boundary would follow the Basingstoke Canal, transferring those electors north of the canal, in the Hermitage Woods Estate area, to the new Hermitage & Knaphill South ward. The southern boundary would be realigned to that Saunders Lane and the adjoining green belt land would form part of the new Mayford & Sutton Green ward (detailed later). The Council considered that the new ward name would more accurately reflect the nature of the revised ward. Under the Council’s proposals, the number of electors represented by each of the two councillors in St John’s & Hook Heath ward would be 6 per cent below the borough average (7 per cent in 2002).

54. Mr Goldenberg proposed a new two-member Hook Heath ward in the south-west of the borough, bounded by the two railway lines and the borough boundary. Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the new ward would be 15 per cent below the borough average (16 per cent in 2002).

55. Councillor Mrs Compton stated that there was “no cohesive argument for altering the southern boundary of St John’s to put some or all of the Saunders Lane properties into Mayford and Sutton ward ... and it can be argued that Saunders Lane relates as much to Hook Heath in St John’s ward as to Mayford and Sutton”. A local resident proposed that the Hermitage area needs either its own councillor or separation from the affluent Hook Heath area for community reasons.

56. After due consideration of the evidence received, we are adopting the Borough Council’s proposed St John’s & Hook Heath ward. These proposals would recognise the Hermitage area as a separate community from the rest of the existing ward, while keeping the rest of the built-up area together. They would provide the best electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We are concerned that the boundaries proposed by Mr Goldenberg would place too much of the community in the Friars Heath area, and a significant degree of over-representation would remain.

Kingfield & Westfield, Mayford & Sutton and Old Woking wards

57. Kingfield & Westfield ward currently elects three councillors representing the borough average; 17 per cent fewer electors than the borough average, both now and in 2002, while the councillor for Old Woking ward represents 7 per cent fewer electors than the average (8 per cent in 2003).

58. The Borough Council stated that it had “given careful consideration to the proposal of retaining ‘Old Woking’ as a single member ward”. However, to improve the current over-representation in the area, it proposed merging the two wards of Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking as it believed that “the local residents already share the facilities within these two wards and the combining of them for electoral purposes will not damage the interests of the local community”. The Council also proposed that the new ward be called Old Woking & Hoe Valley (taken from Old Woking village, the Hoe Stream and the surrounding area known as Hoe Valley), which would elect three councillors, with a minor adjustment to the boundary between Kingfield & Westfield and Mayford & Sutton wards to reflect community identity. The number of electors per councillor in the proposed three-member ward would be 4 per cent above the borough average both now and in 2002.

59. Mr Goldenberg proposed to retain the existing Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking wards, while addressing the current over-representation in the former ward by reducing its representation from three councillors to two, and transferring an area near its western boundary to his proposed Mayford & Sutton Green ward. He noted that “the Council’s proposals have encountered fierce local opposition” and argued that Old Woking has a long history. Under his proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Kingfield & Westfield and Old Woking wards would be 1 per cent and 7 per cent above the borough average respectively (1 per cent and 5 per cent in 2002).

60. As indicated in Chapter Three, we received a number of representations supporting the retention of Old Woking ward, and of Kingfield & Westfield ward, the latter particularly reduced from three councillors to two.

61. Having carefully considered the representations received, we have decided to move away from the Council’s scheme in this area. While either proposal – retaining the two existing wards with slight modifications to their ward boundaries, or merging the two – would provide a better electoral equality than the current arrangements, we have been persuaded by the arguments in favour of the current ward structure. We therefore propose that Old Woking should retain its single-member representation and that Shackleford Road should be transferred to Old Woking ward from Kingfield & Westfield ward, with the latter ward served by two councillors. This proposal is similar to that proposed by Councillor Mrs Johnson and Mr Goldenberg, and would appear to be supported locally. It would retain the distinct community of Old Woking and still achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality.

62. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in the modified ward would be 6 per cent above the average in Kingfield & Westfield both now and in 2002, and 1 per cent above in Old Woking (equal to the average in 2002).

63. Mayford & Sutton ward is located in the south of the borough, and its eastern, southern and western boundaries are also the borough boundary. The ward currently elects a single councillor who represents 11 per cent fewer electors than the borough average (13 per cent in 2002).

64. The Borough Council proposed several modifications to the ward. Its northern boundary would be adjusted to a number of areas: Moor Lane and The Orchard would be transferred to the new Old Woking & Hoe Valley ward; the green belt land west of Egley Road would be transferred from the existing St John’s ward; and the north-western boundary would be extended as far as Saunders Lane to include the Mayford Village Hall, currently in St John’s ward, and the Smarts Heath area (north of the Hoe Stream). The Council also proposed that the ward name be changed to Mayford & Sutton Green to reflect the
village name of Sutton Green. Under the Council’s proposals the number of electors per councillor in the ward would be £1.5 per cent above the borough average (4 per cent in 2002). This proposal was supported by the Mayford Village Society and a resident of Mayford.

Mr Goldemberg also proposed that the ward be renamed Mayford & Sutton Green, but he submitted slightly different boundaries. The western boundary would follow the railway line, while the northern boundary would be extended to Old Hill, thereby including some 140 electors in Old Hill, Hillside and Egley Road (part of polling district CB) from St John’s ward. The ward would also include the area bounded by Acacia Avenue and Lilac Avenue on the eastern side of Egley Road (the A320), currently in Kingsfield & Westfield ward. However, he agreed with the Council’s proposal to exclude Moor Lane and The Orchard in the Westfield Common area from the ward. Under his proposal for a 37-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Mayford & Sutton Green ward would be equal to the borough average (1 per cent below in 2002).

Councillor Mrs Compton argued that the Woking to Guildford main railway line and the Hoe Stream provide a clear boundary between the existing St John’s and Mayford & Sutton wards, and should therefore be retained.

Having considered all the above evidence and taking into consideration our proposals for the neighbouring wards, we endorse the Borough Council’s proposed Mayford & Sutton Green ward, which would appear to unite areas of similar interests and communities, and would fundamentally retain the existing ward, but modified to reflect community identity.

Central & Maybury, Sheerwater, Mount Hermon East and Mount Hermon West wards

The average number of electors represented by each of the two councillors for Central & Maybury ward is 8 per cent below the borough average (6 per cent in 2002). At present, Sheerwater ward elects two councillors, with each representing 36 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

To improve electoral equality in the area, the Borough Council proposed that part of the existing Central & Maybury ward should be merged with the existing Sheerwater ward to form a new three-member Maybury & Sheerwater ward. The Council also proposed minor boundary adjustments to include parts of the existing Mount Hermon East and Pyford wards in the new ward to reflect community identity. In support of its proposal, the Council stated: “The Sheerwater/Maybury Partnership Single Boundary Project pays special attention to the area, attracting a grant of £6.4 million to revitalise housing, employment, education ... Neither the characteristics nor experiences of this area are shared by any of the surrounding wards.” The remainder of Central & Maybury ward (the town centre) would be transferred to the new Goldsworth East ward. Under the Council’s proposals the number of electors per councillor in the new Maybury & Sheerwater ward would be 7 per cent above the average (5 per cent in 2002).

Mr Goldemberg proposed a new single-member Woking Road ward based on the Central area of Central & Maybury ward, and the combination of Sheerwater ward with part of the existing Mount Hermon East and Woodham ward (polling district FB) to form a new two-member Sheerwater & Woodham ward. He stated that “the Central area (polling district GA) is multi-ethnic to an extent unparalleled in the rest of the borough [and] has very little, if anything, in common with the Sheerwater and Woodham estates”. He added that “although parts of Sheerwater are deprived, this is not universally true” and “it should also be noted that historically Sheerwater and Woodham constituted a single ward”. The Maybury area of the existing Central & Maybury ward would be merged with the existing Mount Hermon East ward and part of the existing Pyford ward to form a new Mount Hermon East & Maybury ward (detailed later). Under his proposals for a 37-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Central & Maybury and Woodham wards would be 1 per cent below and 7 per cent above the borough average respectively (3 per cent below and 5 per cent above in 2002).

We have given careful consideration to the representations received. During the Borough Council’s consultation, members generally concluded that the area represented in the wards of Mount Hermon East & Maybury should be kept together. We are therefore adopting the Council’s proposal as part of our draft recommendations, which would create a ward incorporating the two areas which were identified as the most deprived areas in the whole of Surrey, and had attracted substantial funding from central Government to help with the deprivation, health and unemployment problems.

Mount Hermon East and Mount Hermon West wards are each served by two councillors, and the number of electors represented by each councillor is 3 per cent below and 8 per cent below the borough average respectively, both now and in 2002.

The Borough Council proposed minor adjustments to both wards to better reflect community identities. The common boundary between the wards would be modified by transferring 10 properties in White Rose Lane from Mount Hermon West to Mount Hermon East. In addition, the northern boundary of Mount Hermon East ward would be modified by aligning it with Maybury Hill and College Road, thereby transferring electors to the new Maybury & Sheerwater ward, and to include those properties in the Mayhurst area and East Hill, currently in Central & Maybury ward, in Mount Hermon East ward, since they “belong to the area and only have access to Mount Hermon East”. Mount Hermon West ward boundary would be modified further by including part of Old Hill estate, currently in St John’s ward, for community reasons. Under the Council’s proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent below the borough average in Mount Hermon East ward both now and in 2002, and 2 per cent below the average in Mount Hermon West ward (1 per cent in 2002).

Mr Goldemberg also proposed the transfer of 10 properties in White Rose Lane from Mount Hermon West ward to Mount Hermon East ward, but proposed modifying the south-western boundary of Mount Hermon West ward by including part of the Blackbridge Road from the existing St John’s ward. He also proposed that Mount Hermon East ward should be merged with that part of Central & Maybury ward south-east of the railway (the Maybury Estate area) and with part of the existing Pyford ward, to form a new three-member Mount Hermon East & Maybury ward. Under his proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the wards of Mount Hermon East & Maybury and Mount Hermon West would be 4 per cent above and 2 per cent below the borough average respectively, both now and in 2002.

Having considered all the evidence received, we recognise the improved electoral equality which would be achieved by both proposals. However, in light of our proposals for neighbouring areas we have decided to adopt the Council’s proposals for Mount Hermon East and Mount Hermon West wards, which would retain the integrity of both wards, but with some boundary modifications to improve further the balance of representation.

Horsell East & Woodham and Horsell West wards

Horsell East & Woodham and Horsell West wards are currently represented by two and three councillors respectively. Both wards are relatively over-represented, the number of electors per councillor being 21 per cent and 6 per cent respectively below the borough average, with minimal growth projected over the five-year period.

To improve electoral equality, the Borough Council proposed modifications to both wards to take account of more recent housing development and to achieve electoral equality. Their common boundary would be realigned by transferring the whole of Horsell Rise from Horsell West to Horsell East & Woodham ward. This proposal would also include the whole of the Mount Hermon Close development (which is split between two wards by the existing ward boundary) in Horsell East & Woodham. Those properties (comprising 18 electors) on the western side of South Road would be transferred from Horsell East & Woodham ward to Horsell West ward, as they appear to relate more, and are physically closer, to the other residential properties in the ward. In addition, the southern boundary of Horsell East & Woodham ward would be modified to include the proposed development on the former Victoria hospital site which is expected to include some 180 electors by 2002. Horsell West ward boundary would be modified in the north-east to include the Goldsworth Park ward to include the whole of Carthouse Lane, as well as the Goldsworth Park trading estate and Clayton Road residential area, both of which only have vehicular access from Horsell West ward.

Under the Council’s proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the wards of Horsell East & Woodham and Horsell West wards would be 12 per cent below and 3 per cent below the borough average respectively (9 per cent and 5 per cent in 2002).
Mr Goldenberg proposed that part of the existing Hornsall East ward (polling district FA) should be merged with the existing Sheerwater ward to form a new Sheerwater & Woodham ward (as detailed above). A new Hornsall East ward would comprise polling district FA, with a minor adjustment to its western boundary to take in the six houses in Kettewell Close, currently in Hornsall West ward. The remainder of Hornsall West ward would be retained, with the addition of the Claydon Road area, currently in Goldsworth Park ward. Under his proposals for a 37-member council, the number of councillors per ward is as follows:

- **Hornsall East, Sheerwater**, and **Hornsall West and Sheerwater & Woodham** would be 4 per cent or less from the borough average both now and in 2002.

A resident of Kettewell Close suggested that the whole of Kettewell Close should be in either Hornsall East & Woodham ward or Hornsall West ward in the interest of community identity, instead of split between the wards as at present. Both borough-wide schemes would address this concern.

We propose largely to endorse the Borough Council’s proposals, but to modify the boundary between the Council’s proposed Hornsall East & Woodham and Hornsall West wards to achieve a better balance of representation. Our proposed boundary would transfer an additional 100 electors from Hornsall West to Hornsall East & Woodham: this includes 16 electors in Hornsall Rise; the whole of Laleham Court (62 electors); and Thurlton Court (22 electors). Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hornsall East & Woodham and Hornsall West wards would be 9 per cent below and 5 per cent below the borough average respectively (6 per cent below in both wards in 2002).

We recognise that the electoral equality in our proposed wards in this area would not be quite as good as under Mr Goldenberg’s proposal. However, based on a 36-member council, our draft recommendations would achieve better electoral equality across the whole borough, utilising identifiable boundaries.

**Byfleet, Pyrford and West Byfleet wards**

Byfleet ward (and parish) currently elects three councillors and is the only parish area in the borough. The number of electors represented by each of the councillors is 4 per cent below the borough average (5 per cent in 2002). The ward is surrounded by green belt and is separated from the rest of the borough by the M25 motorway.

The Borough Council proposed no change to the ward as "it has a strong community identity and the existing boundaries are well established, being coincident with those of the Parish Council".

Mr Goldenberg proposed that the western boundary of Byfleet ward should follow the M25. This proposal would require warding Byfleet parish, with one ward covering the small area west of the M25. However, we are unable to put it forward, as there would be no electors in the proposed parish. The Council can, however, decide to modify the boundary as part of a parish review.

In the light of the reasonable electoral equality in the ward, and its well-defined boundaries, we endorse the Council’s proposal for no change to Byfleet ward. Under our draft recommendations for a 36-member council the number of electors per councillor in Byfleet ward would be 1 per cent below the average (2 per cent in 2002).

In order to improve the respective under- and over-representation in these two wards, the Borough Council proposed a minor adjustment to their common boundary which would "not affect community identity". The Council proposed to transfer properties in and around Thorley Close and Dane Court from Pyrford to West Byfleet ward. In addition, a minor change was also proposed to the western boundary of Pyrford ward to transfer the Maybury School caretaker’s house to the new Maybury & Sheerwater ward (so that it would be in the same ward as the school). The Council’s electorate figures also included the transfer of three houses (which only have access to Old Avenue) from the existing Sheerwater ward to the modified West Byfleet ward. Under these proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the borough average in both Pyrford and West Byfleet wards (6 per cent and 7 per cent above respectively in 2002).

Although Mr Goldenberg’s proposals for this particular area would result in better electoral equality, we have to consider them in the context of our proposals for the borough as a whole. Overall we have concluded that the Borough Council’s proposals would provide a better balance of the need for electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We are therefore consulting on the Council’s proposals for both wards. The changes proposed are minimal and would continue to reflect well-established communities.

**Electoral Cycle**

We did not receive any proposals for change to the Borough Council’s electoral cycle, and therefore make no recommendation for change to the present system of elections by thirds.

**Conclusions**

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

- there should be an increase in council size from 35 to 36;
- there should be 17 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified;
- elections should continue to be held by thirds.

As indicated earlier, we have based our draft recommendations on the Borough Council’s proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- instead of the Council’s proposed three-member Old Woking & Hoe Valley ward, we propose to retain two separate wards, as currently exists, but with some modifications: the single-member Old Woking ward should include Shackleford Road from Kingfield & Westfield ward, which should elect two councillors, instead of the present three;

![Figure 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements](chart.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1997 electorate</th>
<th>2002 proposed electorate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current arrangements</td>
<td>Draft recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>1,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the boundary between the Council's proposed Horsham East & Woodham and Horsham West wards should be modified, with the transfer of an additional 100 electors (in Horsham Rise Close, Laleham Court and Thalton Court) from Horsham West ward to Horsham East & Woodham ward.

Figure 4 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 electorate figures and with forecast electorate for the year 2002.

As shown in Figure 4, our draft recommendations for Woking Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from eight to one. By 2002 all wards are forecast to vary by less than 10 per cent from the average. Our draft recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

**Draft Recommendation**

Woking Borough Council should comprise 36 councillors serving 17 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

We are not proposing any change to the electoral arrangements of Byfleet Parish Council.

**Draft Recommendation**

Elections for the parish council should continue to be held at the same time as elections for the principal authorities.

We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Woking and would welcome comments from the Borough Council and others relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.
## 5. NEXT STEPS

The Commission is putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Woking. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 1 June 1998. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment and a list of respondents will be available on request after the end of the consultation period.

Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Director of Reviews  
Woking Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphins Court  
10/11 Great Titchfield  
London WC1V 7JU

In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered, before reporting, finally 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.

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### Figure 5: The Commission’s Draft Recommendations for Woking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1997)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (1997)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2002)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (2002)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1,823</td>
<td>1,823</td>
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<td>-1</td>
<td>5,601</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>2,022</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3,574</td>
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<td>2,012</td>
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<td>15 Pyrford</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>16 St John’s &amp; Hook Heath</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>68,586</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1,874</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,905</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Woking Borough Council's submission.

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

Draft Recommendations for Woking: Detailed Mapping

The large map inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed waste boundaries within the borough of Woking.
APPENDIX B

Woking Borough Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 5, differ from those put forward by the Borough Council in two discrete areas: the boundary between Horsell East & Woodham ward and Horsell West ward, and Old Woking & Hoc Valley ward. The Council's proposals were as follows:

Figure B1: Woking Borough Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Constituent areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsell East &amp; Woodham</td>
<td>Horsell East &amp; Woodham ward (part); Horsell West ward (part)*; Central &amp; Maybury ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsell West</td>
<td>Horsell West ward (part)*; Central &amp; Maybury ward (part); Goldsworth Park ward (part); Knaphill ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Woking &amp; Hoc Valley</td>
<td>Old Woking ward; Kingfield &amp; Westfield ward; Mayford &amp; Sutton ward (part)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Although the constituent area appears the same as under our draft recommendations, we propose that an additional part of Horsell West ward should be transferred to Horsell East & Woodham ward (see Chapter 4).

Figure B2: Woking Borough Council's Proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1997)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (1997)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2002)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (2002)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsell East &amp; Woodham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,110</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>3,474</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsell West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,429</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>5,447</td>
<td>1,816</td>
<td>-.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Woking &amp; Hoc Valley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,865</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5,931</td>
<td>1,977</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Woking Borough Council's submission.
APPENDIX C


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 Wear. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; 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 area of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

- reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- 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.

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. These are set out in Appendix D.

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

Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

1 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.

2 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.

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

(a) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and

(b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

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

(a) the number or distribution of electors for the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and

(b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

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

(a) 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;

(b) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and

(c) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

6 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.