

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
CORBY IN  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

*Report to the Secretary of State for  
the Environment*

*March 1997*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Corby in Northamptonshire.

Members of the Commission are:

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Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

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## Local Government Commission for England

25 March 1997

Dear Secretary of State

On 19 March 1996 the Commission commenced a periodic electoral review of the borough of Corby under the Local Government Act 1992. It published its draft recommendations in October 1996 and undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

The Commission has now formulated its final recommendations in the light of the consultation. It has, in some areas, confirmed its draft recommendations, although it has modified some of its initial warding proposals in the light of further evidence. This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in the area.

The Commission is therefore recommending to you that Corby should be served by 29 councillors representing 13 wards, and that some changes should be made to existing ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the Commission's statutory criteria. It is recommended that the whole Council should continue to be elected every four years.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Malcolm Grant'.

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Corby on 19 March 1996. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 31 October 1996, after which it undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the submissions received by the Commission during consultation on its draft recommendations, and offers its final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

The Commission found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Corby because:

- **in seven of the 12 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and in four of these it varies by more than 20 per cent;**
- **this electoral inequality is not expected to improve by 2001.**

The Commission's final recommendations for electoral arrangements (Figure 1) are that:

- **Corby should be served by 29 councillors, compared with 27 at present;**
- **there should be 13 wards, rather than 12 as at present;**
- **the ward boundaries of all nine of the existing wards in Corby town should be modified, while the three rural wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years, with the next elections taking place in 1999.**

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

- **In eight of the 13 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **By 2001, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in 10 wards.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, who will not make an Order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 5 May 1997.

*Figure 1:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1	Central	3	Central ward (part); Hazelwood ward (part)	Large map
2	Danesholme	3	Danesholme ward (part); Kingswood ward (part)	Large map
3	East	2	East ward; Central ward (part)	Large map
4	Hazelwood	3	Hazelwood ward (part); West ward (part)	Large map
5	Hillside	1	Kingswood ward (part); Danesholme ward (part)	Large map
6	Kingswood	3	Kingswood ward (part)	Large map
7	Lloyds	3	Lloyds ward; Lodge Park ward (part); Shire Lodge ward (part)	Large map
8	Lodge Park	3	Lodge Park ward (part); Hazelwood ward (part)	Large map
9	Rural East	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Weldon and Stanion)	Map 2
10	Rural North	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Gretton and Rockingham)	Map 2
11	Rural West	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Cottingham, Middleton and East Carlton)	Map 2
12	Shire Lodge	2	Shire Lodge ward (part)	Large map
13	West	2	West ward (part)	Large map

*Notes: 1 Constituent areas are unparished except where indicated.*

*2 The large map inserted at the back of the report details the proposed ward boundaries in the town of Corby.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Corby in Northamptonshire.

2 The Commission has now reviewed the districts in Northamptonshire as part of its programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England. This is the Commission's first review of the electoral arrangements for Corby. The last such review was undertaken by the Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1975 (Report No. 33). The electoral arrangements of Northamptonshire County Council were last reviewed in November 1980 (Report No. 403). It is intended that a review of the County Council's electoral arrangements will follow in due course.

3 In undertaking these reviews, the Commission is required to have regard to:

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

4 The Commission has also had regard to its own *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996 and supplemented in September 1996). This sets out its approach to the reviews.

5 The review of Corby was in four stages (Figure 2).

6 Stage One commenced on 19 March 1996. The Commission wrote to Corby Borough Council inviting it to make proposals for its future electoral arrangements. Copies of that letter were sent to Northamptonshire County Council, other district councils in Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, parish councils in the area, Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in Corby and the headquarters of the main political parties. The Commission also placed a public notice in local newspapers, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council itself to publicise the review.

7 At Stage Two the Commission considered all the representations received during Stage One and formulated its draft recommendations.

8 Stage Three began on 31 October 1996 with the publication of the Commission's report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Corby in Northamptonshire*. Copies were sent to all those to whom the Commission wrote at the start of the review as well as to those who had written to the Commission during Stage One, inviting comments on the Commission's preliminary conclusions. Again the Commission placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the report more widely.

9 Finally, during Stage Four the Commission reconsidered its draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation.

*Figure 2:  
Stages of the Review*

Stage	Description
One	Submission of proposals to the Commission
Two	The Commission's analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
Four	Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State for the Environment



## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

<sup>10</sup> Corby grew rapidly from a small industrial village to an iron and steel town. The population of the town reached a high point of 56,500 in 1977. The closure of the steel works in the early 1980s led to a decline in the population. However, this has now stabilised at about 53,000 and some growth is expected. Corby is bounded by the Welland valley to the north and the Rockingham Forest to the east. The eastern side of the borough has been heavily affected by quarrying and the industrial areas located there. The town has clear boundaries designated by main roads and the railway line.

<sup>11</sup> The Borough Council has 27 members elected from 12 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Three wards are represented by a single councillor, three by two councillors and six by three councillors. The whole Council is elected every four years, with the next elections due to take place in May 1999. The current electorate of the borough is 39,101 and each of the councillors represents on average 1,448 electors. The Borough Council forecasts that the electorate will increase to almost 41,500 by the year 2001, which would increase the average number of electors per councillor to 1,535 (Figure 3).

<sup>12</sup> In order to compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, the Commission calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the average for the borough in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

<sup>13</sup> Since the last electoral review by the LGBC in August 1975, changes in population and electorate have not been evenly spread across the borough. As a result, the number of electors per councillor varies significantly from the average in many wards. In seven of the 12 wards the variation is more than 10 per cent, and in four wards more than 20 per cent. Currently, Rural East ward has 34 per cent more electors per councillor than the average so that the councillor for this ward represents 1,946 electors compared to the average of 1,448.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Corby



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

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Key To Wards

- |              |              |                |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 Central    | 5 Kingswood  | 9 Rural North  |
| 2 Danesholme | 6 Lloyds     | 10 Rural West  |
| 3 East       | 7 Lodge Park | 11 Shire Lodge |
| 4 Hazelwood  | 8 Rural East | 12 West        |

Figure 3:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Central	3	4,030	1,343	-7	4,255	1,418	-8
2 Danesholme	3	4,278	1,426	-2	4,578	1,526	-1
3 East	2	2,344	1,172	-19	2,557	1,279	-17
4 Hazelwood	3	3,875	1,292	-11	3,987	1,329	-13
5 Kingswood	3	5,391	1,797	24	6,263	2,088	36
6 Lloyds	3	4,157	1,386	-4	4,324	1,441	-6
7 Lodge Park	3	4,344	1,448	0	4,483	1,494	-3
8 Rural East	1	1,946	1,946	34	2,026	2,026	32
9 Rural North	1	1,054	1,054	-27	1,076	1,076	-30
10 Rural West	1	1,181	1,181	-18	1,214	1,214	-21
11 Shire Lodge	2	2,903	1,452	0	2,999	1,500	-2
12 West	2	3,598	1,799	24	3,694	1,847	20
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>39,101</b>	—	—	<b>41,456</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,448</b>	—	—	<b>1,535</b>	—

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1996, electors in Rural East ward are relatively under-represented by 34 per cent, while electors in Rural North ward are relatively over-represented by 27 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

<sup>14</sup> During Stage One the Commission received a submission from Corby Borough Council on electoral arrangements in the borough. It also received representations from six parish councils and local groups. In the light of these representations, the Commission formulated its preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Corby in Northamptonshire*. The Commission proposed that Corby should be served by 29 councillors representing 13 wards. It proposed:

- (a) boundary changes to each of the existing nine town wards, in order to improve electoral equality, but on a somewhat different basis to those proposed by the Borough Council;
- (b) the ward boundaries of Rural North, Rural West and Rural East should remain unchanged but Rural East should have an additional (second) councillor;
- (c) a new Hillside ward should be established covering the proposed development in the Snatchill area (at present in Kingswood ward), to be represented by one councillor.

#### Draft Recommendation

Corby Borough Council should comprise 29 councillors, serving 13 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

<sup>15</sup> The Commission's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in nine of the 13 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. By 2001, the number of electors per councillor was projected to vary by no more than 10 per cent in 10 wards.

<sup>16</sup> The Commission's draft recommendations are summarised at Appendix B.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

17 During the consultation on the Commission's draft recommendations report, nine submissions were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission.

### **Corby Borough Council**

18 The Borough Council reiterated its original submission to the Commission for some boundary changes in Corby town. It argued that the further boundary modifications proposed by the Commission would create confusion for the electorate by breaking ties within the community. It supported the Commission's proposal for an additional (second) councillor in Rural East ward.

### **Parish Councils**

19 Weldon Parish Council supported the Commission's draft recommendation for two councillors to represent Rural East ward, but stated that both it and Stanion Parish Council would prefer a single borough councillor to represent each parish. East Carlton Parish Council supported the Commission's draft recommendation for the rural wards.

### **Other Representations**

20 The Hazelwood, Lloyds and Lodge Park branches of the Corby Labour Party each supported the Borough Council's response to the draft recommendations. In addition, the Lodge Park Branch specifically commented that the Commission's recommendations did not take into account the community interest in Lodge Park ward. The Hazelwood Branch supported the draft recommendation for the additional councillor proposed for Rural East ward.

21 County Councillor Allsop suggested an alternative boundary between Danesholme ward and the proposed Hillside ward which, he said, could either run along the field edges, as proposed by the Borough Council, or further south along Lewin Road. Northamptonshire County Council

also considered that the Commission's proposed boundary between Danesholme and Hillside wards should be refined. It considered that there should be a greater allowance for larger variances in the number of electors per councillor if the alternative was to create wards with confusing boundaries, or which did not reflect the community identity of the area.

### **Members of Parliament**

22 William Powell, MP for Corby, proposed a new ward which combined the Commission's proposed Hillside ward with the Great Oakley area in Danesholme ward. This would, in his view, reflect the community interests of the more recent development to the east of Oakley Road. He suggested that it be represented by two councillors.



## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

23 As indicated previously, the Commission's prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Corby was to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria and to 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".

24 However, the Commission's function is not merely arithmetical, for three reasons. First, its 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, it must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, the Commission has had to consider the desirability of servicing effective and convenient local government, and reflecting the interests and identities of local communities.

25 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. In conducting its electoral reviews, the Commission's predecessor, the LGBC, considered that variations from the average number of electors per councillor for an authority as a whole should be kept to the absolute minimum: a variation of up to plus or minus 10 per cent in a particular ward may be regarded as being "acceptable", but variations in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent were generally accepted only in very exceptional circumstances.

26 The Commission's view is that the LGBC's approach to this issue had merit insofar as it combined a clearly defined tolerance threshold with the degree of flexibility necessary to achieve reasonable levels of electoral equality across a local authority's area. Accordingly, the Commission has decided to adopt this approach for the purposes of its reviews.

27 In its March 1996 *Guidance*, the Commission expressed the view that "proposals for changes in electoral arrangements should therefore 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 electorates. 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 the Commission emphasised in its September 1996 supplement to the *Guidance*: "While the Commission accepts that absolute equality of representation is likely to be unattainable, it considers that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such equality should be the starting point in any electoral review".

### Electorate Projections

28 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2001, projecting an increase in the electorate over a five-year period from around 39,100 to 41,500. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and the expected rate of building in the period. Reasonable estimates have been made of the changes in electorate that will arise. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of ward boundary changes has been obtained. The Commission accepts that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to projected electorates, is content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

### Council Size

29 The Commission indicated in its March 1996 *Guidance* that it would normally expect the number of councillors serving a borough or district council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

30 Corby Borough Council is at present served by 27 councillors. At Stage One of the review the Borough Council proposed an increase of one councillor to 28 councillors. In its draft recommendations report the Commission considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. The Commission concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be served by a council of 29 members. Although this figure falls just below the Commission's indicative range, the Commission is satisfied that the council size proposed would provide for proper representation of the electorate. The Commission received no further evidence during Stage Three to persuade it to move away from this view.

## Electoral Arrangements

31 Having considered all representations received during both Stages One and Three of the review, the Commission has further considered its draft recommendations. The final recommendations are illustrated in the maps at Appendix A, including the large map inserted at the back of the report. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) the rural wards (three wards);
- (b) Corby town (10 proposed wards).

## The Rural Wards

32 During Stage One the Borough Council proposed no change to the three single-member rural wards - Rural East, Rural North and Rural West - although the number of electors per councillor varies considerably from the borough average. Rural North and Rural West have 27 per cent and 18 per cent fewer than the average number of electors per councillor respectively (30 per cent and 21 per cent in 2001), while Rural East has 34 per cent above the average number of electors per councillor (32 per cent in 2001).

33 Initially, the Commission considered the possibility of modifying the present boundary between Rural West and Rural North. However, both wards are currently over-represented and a boundary change would not result in an overall improvement in electoral equality.

34 Second, linking the rural wards with the adjacent areas of Corby town was considered. However, in its Stage One submission the Borough Council, having consulted with parish councils, found strong opposition to any links with the well-defined urban area of Corby town because of the distinct rural identity of the parished areas. It is understood that there has been a longstanding opposition to such a proposal and that, when undertaking its electoral review in the mid-1970s, the LGBC also received evidence to this effect.

35 Third, the three rural wards could be totally reconfigured. The electorate of the three wards totals 4,181 and with three councillors would provide for an average variance of 1,394, which is within 10 per cent of the borough average. However, the present configuration of the three wards makes such an 'ideal' adjustment very difficult to achieve. It would involve, *inter alia*, part of Rural East ward being joined to part of Rural North ward (Gretton parish). The resulting ward would therefore be 'detached', comprising two distinct geographical areas, separated by a spur of land in East Northamptonshire district.

36 A 'detached' ward would not be desirable under the Commission's criteria of community identity and interests, and convenient and effective local government. Gretton parish, currently in Rural North ward, appears to the Commission to have more identity with those settlements to the north of the town than with Stanion parish to the east, with which it would be joined. Gretton Parish Council wrote to the Commission during Stage One objecting to such a proposition, contending that its residents have closer identity with Rockingham, the other parish in Rural North ward.

37 A fourth option, which was not put to the Commission at either Stage One or Stage Three, would be for the creation of a new ward with three councillors combining all three of the existing wards. This would facilitate achievement of electoral equality, as the resulting number of electors per councillor would be very close to the borough average. However, this option would again involve part of the ward being 'detached'.

38 The Commission considered, however, that there was a case for an increase in the number of councillors representing Rural East ward from one to two councillors, thereby increasing the overall council size to 29 (which takes account of the

additional councillor to represent the new Hillside ward discussed later in this report). The additional councillor in Rural East ward would provide a higher level of representation, consistent with the other two rural wards, although it would not totally overcome the inequality of representation in the ward.

39 On balance, the Commission concluded that it was unable to propose an alternative configuration for the three rural wards. Accordingly, its draft recommendation was for no change to the boundaries of the rural wards but that Rural East ward should return two councillors.

40 During Stage Three the Borough Council supported the Commission's draft recommendations for the rural wards, as did one of the constituent parish councils in Rural East ward, Weldon Parish Council. No other representations were received. The Commission has therefore decided to confirm its draft recommendations as final. Under the Commission's final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Rural North ward would be 22 per cent below the borough average (25 per cent in 2001), in Rural West ward 12 per cent below the borough average (15 per cent in 2001) and in Rural East ward 28 per cent below the average (29 per cent in 2001).

## **Corby Town**

41 In its Stage One submission, the Borough Council proposed that an additional one-member ward be established for the new housing development in the Snatchill area of the town, to be called Hillside ward. The Council also proposed boundary modifications to a number of the wards in the town, to reduce electoral imbalances while maintaining or improving community identity. However, a number of the town wards would still suffer some electoral imbalances and the Commission therefore proposed further boundary changes to improve electoral inequality. These are discussed below and the Commission's final recommendations are illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of the report.

## **Shire Lodge, Lodge Park and Lloyds**

42 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission adopted the Borough Council's proposal that the boundary of Lloyds ward be

extended to include the Rockingham Park development site which is currently in Shire Lodge ward. At Stage Three, the Borough Council supported the Commission's draft recommendation in this area. No other comments were received and the Commission has therefore decided to confirm its draft recommendation for this ward boundary change as final.

43 The Commission also proposed the transfer of an area of Lodge Park ward into Lloyds ward. This would affect 497 electors from Coleridge Way, Kingsley Drive, Masefield Way, Milton Road, Dryden Road, Keats Way, Auden Way, Norton Road, Naseby Road, part of Rowlett Road, part of Willowbrook Road and part of Bounds Road.

44 During Stage Three the Borough Council opposed the Commission's draft recommendation for Lodge Park and Lloyds wards, as did the Lodge Park Members' Branch of the Labour Party. The latter stated that the Commission's proposals did not take into account the identities and interests of the local area, and that well-established community facilities would no longer be situated within the ward. The Commission has sought to address the community identity arguments submitted by the Borough Council and the ward Branch of the Labour Party, and has considered whether the transfer of a smaller area to Lloyds ward would resolve most of the claimed difficulties associated with its draft recommendations. Having regard to the representations received during Stage Three, the Commission has decided to modify its recommendations by proposing the transfer of only part of Dryden Way, Coleridge Way, Masefield Way, Milton Road, Kingsley Drive, part of Willowbrook Road, part of Rowlett Road and part of Burns Drive in the east of Lodge Park ward, with a combined electorate of 353 (see large insert map). Under the final recommendation, the number of electors per councillor in Lodge Park ward would be 8 per cent above the borough average (6 per cent in 2001), 11 per cent above the average in Lloyds ward (10 per cent in 2001) and 8 per cent above the average in Shire Lodge ward (3 per cent in 2001).

## **Central and East**

45 The Commission's draft recommendation included a transfer of Dovedale Road, Annandale Road, Teesdale Road, Nithsdale Road and part of Studfall Avenue, from Lloyds ward to Central ward, as a consequence of its draft recommendations for Lodge Park ward. However,

in the light of the Commission's modified recommendation for Lodge Park ward, discussed above, no change need now be made between Lloyds ward and Central ward. Accordingly, the Commission has decided to recommend no change to the boundary between these two wards.

46 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that Kelvin Grove, Sykes Court and Bridge Court should be transferred from Central ward to East ward. In order to improve electoral equality, the Commission also considered that a further transfer from Central ward to East ward - West Glebe Road, Highfields Grove, Springfield Grove and part of Occupation Road - would be desirable in the interests of improving electoral equality.

47 At Stage Three the Borough Council reiterated its original proposal, and indicated that consideration should be given to the community interest of the additional area to be included in East ward. The additional streets which the Commission proposed to include in East ward are geographically linked to the area covered by Central ward and use the amenities which lie immediately to the south and west. In the light of the Borough Council's Stage Three submission, and as a consequence of the changes now proposed for Lloyds ward, the Commission has decided to modify its draft recommendation for East ward, and adopt as its final recommendation the scheme originally proposed by the Borough Council. The number of electors per councillor in East ward would be 8 per cent below the borough average (5 per cent in 2001) and 4 per cent below the average in Central ward (remaining the same in 2001).

48 As part of its draft recommendations for Central and Hazelwood wards, the Commission proposed a boundary to run along Cottingham Road and to include the Boating Lake area currently in Hazelwood ward in Central ward. This would not affect any electors. At Stage Three the Borough Council supported this boundary change and no other comments were received. The Commission is confirming this change as a final recommendation.

### **Hazelwood and West**

49 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that the boundary between Hazelwood and West wards should be modified by including the area of Ashurst Crescent, Hove Street, Arundel Walk and Horsham Walk in Hazelwood ward. The number

of electors per councillor in West ward would be 12 per cent above the borough average, and equal to the average in Hazelwood ward. The Commission, however, considered that this under-representation in West ward could be improved by the inclusion of Seaford Walk, Plumpton Court, Petworth Court, Polegate Gardens and part of Eastbourne Avenue currently in Hazelwood ward.

50 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported its initial proposal for the boundary between the two wards and opposed the modification put forward by the Commission on the grounds that it is not easily recognisable. However, the Commission remains concerned to achieve a better electoral equality than would be provided by the Borough Council's proposals. It has therefore decided to modify its draft recommendation and to recommend that the ward boundary runs east from the current boundary along Selsey Way, south down Worthing Road, then east along Eastbourne Avenue to Farmstead Road (see large insert map). As a result, part of Selsey Road, part of Worthing Road (numbers 2 to 26 evens and 11 to 21 odds), part of Eastbourne Avenue (numbers 48 to 72 evens and 33 to 61 odds) and Pevensey Walk, with a combined electorate of 155, would be transferred from West ward to Hazelwood ward (see large insert map). Under the Commission's final recommendation, the number of electors per councillor in West ward would be equal to the borough average (3 per cent above in 2001) and in Hazelwood ward would be 8 per cent above the average (1 per cent in 2001). The Commission has concluded that this improved electoral equality can be achieved without an adverse impact on the statutory criteria.

### **Kingswood and Danesholme**

51 During Stage One the Borough Council proposed that the area covered by the Snatchill development site, currently in Kingswood ward, should become a separate single-member ward (to be called Hillside), with the boundary between the two wards following the A6014 Oakley Road. Although the electorate in the proposed Hillside ward is at present only 812 (February 1996), the area is expected to experience considerable growth by 2001. The Commission adopted the Council's proposal as its draft recommendation.

52 During Stage Three the Borough Council supported the Commission's draft recommendations, although William Powell, MP

for Corby, proposed that Hillside ward should be combined with part of Danesholme ward. On balance, the Commission considers that the community interest of the new development would be better served by a separate ward and has therefore decided to confirm its draft recommendation as final. The number of electors per councillor in Hillside ward would be 40 per cent below the borough average in 1996, improving to 1 per cent below the average in 2001.

53 In the remaining part of Kingswood ward, the Commission concluded in its draft recommendations report that electoral equality could be improved by modifying the boundary in the north-east of the ward so that an area comprising Capell Gardens, Sandby Road, Sargent Road, Oakley Road and part of Blake Road be transferred from Kingswood ward to Central ward.

54 At Stage Three the Borough Council expressed the view that there should be no change from its original proposal that the current ward boundary for the area - the main A6014 road - be retained. It submitted that the housing on either side of the road was identifiably different, and that the road inhibited movement between the two areas. Having regard to the further information on community identity provided by the Borough Council, the Commission proposes to modify its draft recommendation for this boundary, in line with the Borough Council's submission. Under the Commission's final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Kingswood ward would be 9 per cent above the borough average, both now and in 2001.

55 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that the boundary between the proposed Hillside ward and Danesholme ward should run along field edges to the Great Oakley Cricket Club and then along the road to join Oakley Road at the roundabout. This, it argued, would correct the current boundary which bisects an area of development. In its draft recommendations, the Commission proposed a different boundary by including three roads - Long Close, Pound Close and Mill Close - in Hillside ward, in order to improve electoral equality in Danesholme ward.

56 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported its original proposal for this boundary. In addition, County Councillor Allsop proposed that the boundary should be made clearer and more understandable to local residents. Having considered the evidence, the Commission has

concluded that the Borough Council's original proposed boundary between Danesholme ward and Hillside ward may better reflect local communities with satisfactory (although not ideal) electoral equality, and it has decided to put this forward as its final recommendation. The number of electors per councillor in Danesholme ward would be 9 per cent above the borough average (10 per cent in 2001).

## Electoral Cycle

57 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission proposed that the present system of whole-council elections be retained. No representations were received on this issue at Stage Three and the Commission has therefore decided to confirm its draft recommendation as final.

## Conclusions

58 Having considered all the evidence and representations it has received on its draft recommendations, the Commission has concluded that there should be an increase in council size from 27 to 29 members; that there should be 13 wards rather than 12 as at present; that elections should remain on a whole-council basis; and that the boundaries of nine of the existing wards should be modified. Figure 4 shows the impact of the Commission's final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, as based on 1996 electorate figures, and with projected electorates for the year 2001.

59 As Figure 4 shows, the Commission's recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with electoral variances of more than 10 per cent from the borough average from seven to five, and to three in 2001, when two wards are projected to vary by more than 20 per cent. The Commission concludes that its recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

### Final Recommendation

Corby Borough Council should comprise 29 councillors serving 13 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 5, Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report. The whole Council should continue to be elected every four years.

	1996 electorate		2001 projected electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	27	29	29	26

60 The Commission also proposes that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of town and parish councils in the borough.

**Final Recommendation**

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

Map 2:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Corby*



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

Key To Wards

- |              |              |                |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 Central    | 6 Kingswood  | 10 Rural North |
| 2 Danesholme | 7 Lloyds     | 11 Rural West  |
| 3 East       | 8 Lodge Park | 12 Shire Lodge |
| 4 Hazelwood  | 9 Rural East | 13 West        |
| 5 Hillside   |              |                |

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Figure 5:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Corby

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Central	3	3,880	1,293	-4	4,105	1,368	-4
2 Danesholme	3	4,428	1,476	9	4,732	1,577	10
3 East	2	2,494	1,247	-8	2,707	1,354	-5
4 Hazelwood	3	4,378	1,459	8	4,322	1,441	1
5 Hillside	1	812	812	-40	1,421	1,421	-1
6 Kingswood	3	4,429	1,476	9	4,688	1,563	9
7 Lloyds	3	4,510	1,503	11	4,737	1,579	10
8 Lodge Park	3	4,385	1,462	8	4,533	1,511	6
9 Rural East	2	1,946	973	-28	2,026	1,013	-29
10 Rural North	1	1,054	1,054	-22	1,076	1,076	-25
11 Rural West	1	1,181	1,181	-12	1,214	1,214	-15
12 Shire Lodge	2	2,903	1,452	8	2,939	1,470	3
13 West	2	2,701	1,351	0	2,956	1,478	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>39,101</b>	—	—	<b>41,456</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,348</b>	—	—	<b>1,430</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Corby Borough Council's submissions.

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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

61 Having completed its review of electoral arrangements in Corby and submitted its final recommendations to the Secretary of State, the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role under the Local Government Act 1992.

62 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to the Commission's recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made earlier than six weeks after the date that the Commission's recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

63 All further correspondence concerning the Commission's recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State at the following address:

The Secretary of State for the Environment  
Local Government Review  
Department of the Environment  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

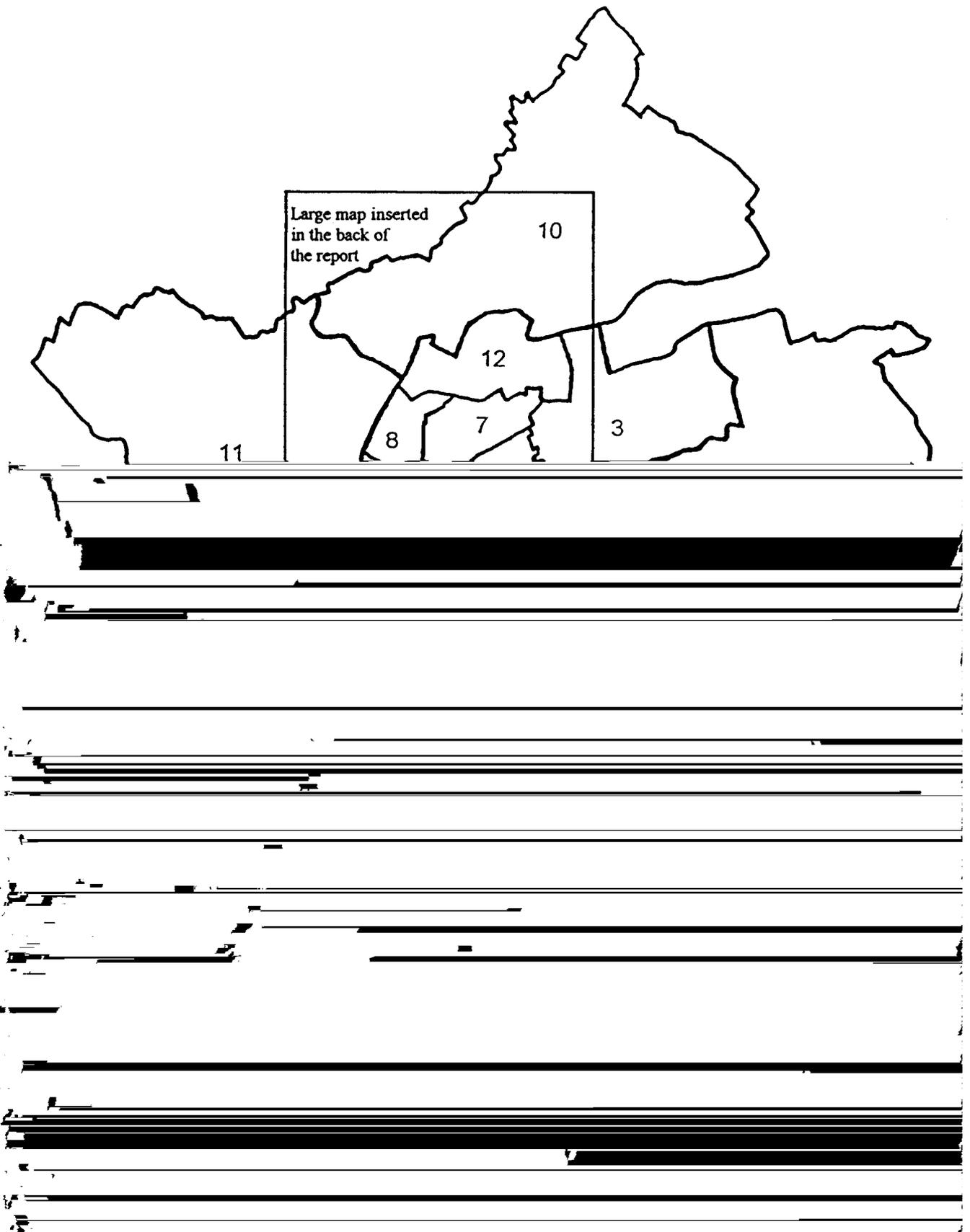


# APPENDIX A

## Final Recommendations for Corby: Detailed Mapping

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the area which is shown on the **large map** inserted at the back of the report, which shows the Commission's proposed warding scheme in Corby town.

Map A1:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Corby Town: Key Map*



# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Corby

*Figure B1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Central	Central ward (part); Hazelwood ward (part); Lloyds ward (part); Kingswood ward (part)
2 Danesholme	Danesholme ward (part)
3 East	East ward; Central ward (part)
4 Hazelwood	Hazelwood ward (part); West ward (part)
5 Hillside	Kingswood ward (part); Danesholme ward (part)
6 Kingswood	Kingswood ward (part)
7 Lloyds	Lloyds ward (part); Lodge Park ward (part); Shire Lodge ward (part)
8 Lodge Park	Lodge Park ward (part); Hazelwood ward (part)
9 Rural East	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Weldon and Stanion)
10 Rural North	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Gretton and Rockingham)
11 Rural West	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Cottingham, Middleton and East Carlton)
12 Shire Lodge	Shire Lodge ward (part)
13 West	West ward (part)

*Note: Constituent areas are unparished except where indicated.*

Figure B2:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Corby

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Central	3	4,037	1,346	0	4,240	1,413	-1
2 Danesholme	3	4,335	1,445	7	4,639	1,546	8
3 East	2	2,820	1,410	5	3,033	1,517	6
4 Hazelwood	3	4,223	1,408	4	4,252	1,417	-1
5 Hillside	1	905	905	-33	1,514	1,514	6
6 Kingswood	3	4,208	1,403	4	4,467	1,489	4
7 Lloyds	3	4,374	1,458	8	4,586	1,529	7
8 Lodge Park	3	4,259	1,420	5	4,444	1,481	4
9 Rural East	2	1,946	973	-28	2,026	1,013	-29
10 Rural North	1	1,054	1,054	-22	1,076	1,076	-25
11 Rural West	1	1,181	1,181	-12	1,214	1,214	-15
12 Shire Lodge	2	2,903	1,452	8	2,939	1,470	3
13 West	2	2,856	1,428	6	3,026	1,513	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>39,101</b>	—	—	<b>41,456</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,348</b>	—	—	<b>1,430</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Corby Borough Council's Stage One submission.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows 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.

2 Where the proposal involves splitting polling districts, electorates provided by Corby Borough Council, by polling district, have been used as a base, although some estimates have been made.