

Final recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Cambridge City

Report to the Electoral Commission

April 2002

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Cambridge City is inserted inside the back cover of this report.

WHAT IS THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to the Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clarke CBE
Kru Desai
Robin Gray
Joan Jones
Ann M Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

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

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the city of Cambridge.

SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Cambridge City's electoral arrangements on 17 April 2001. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 27 November 2001, after which it undertook a nine-week period of consultation. As a consequence of the transfer of functions referred to earlier, it falls to us, the Boundary Committee for England, to complete the work of the LGCE and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations received by the LGCE during consultation on its draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Cambridge City:

- **in eight of the 14 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the city and four wards vary by more than 20 per cent;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in nine wards and by more than 20 per cent in six wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 121 – 122) are that:

- **Cambridge City Council should have 42 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 14 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.**

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

- **In 12 of the proposed 14 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the city average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 5 per cent from the average for the city by 2006.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 4 June 2002:

**The Secretary
Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Final Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
1	Abbey	3	part of Abbey ward; part of Petersfield ward
2	Arbury	3	part of Arbury ward; part of Castle ward
3	Castle	3	part of Castle ward; part of Newnham ward
4	Cherry Hinton	3	part of Cherry Hinton ward; part of Coleridge ward; part of Queen Edith's ward
5	Coleridge	3	part of Cherry Hinton ward; part of Coleridge ward; part of Queen Edith's ward; part of Trumpington ward
6	East Chesterton	3	part of East Chesterton ward
7	King's Hedges	3	part of Arbury ward; part of East Chesterton ward; King's Hedges ward
8	Market	3	part of Market ward
9	Newnham	3	part of Newnham ward
10	Petersfield	3	part of Petersfield ward
11	Queen Edith's	3	part of Queen Edith's ward; part of Trumpington ward
12	Romsey	3	part of Abbey ward; part of Coleridge ward; Romsey ward
13	Trumpington	3	part of Market ward; part of Petersfield ward; part of Trumpington ward
14	West Chesterton	3	part of Arbury ward; part of Castle ward; part of East Chesterton ward; West Chesterton ward

Notes: 1 The whole city is unparished.

2 The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

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

Table 2: Final Recommendations for Cambridge City

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abbey	3	6,168	2,056	-1	6,441	2,147	-2
2	Arbury	3	6,916	2,305	11	6,917	2,306	5
3	Castle	3	6,550	2,183	5	6,766	2,255	2
4	Cherry Hinton	3	6,305	2,102	2	6,332	2,111	-4
5	Coleridge	3	5,793	1,931	-7	6,857	2,286	4
6	East Chesterton	3	5,622	1,874	-9	6,593	2,198	0
7	King's Hedges	3	6,141	2,047	-1	6,411	2,137	-3
8	Market	3	6,692	2,231	8	6,807	2,269	3
9	Newnham	3	6,324	2,108	2	6,910	2,303	5
10	Petersfield	3	5,906	1,969	-5	6,570	2,190	-1
11	Queen Edith's	3	6,363	2,121	2	6,587	2,196	0
12	Romsey	3	6,387	2,129	3	6,425	2,142	-3
13	Trumpington	3	5,466	1,822	-12	6,521	2,174	-1
14	West Chesterton	3	6,288	2,096	1	6,331	2,110	-4
	Totals	42	86,921	-	-	92,468	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,070	-	-	2,202	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Cambridge City Council.

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the city of Cambridge in Cambridgeshire. The five districts in Cambridgeshire have now been reviewed as part of the programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England started by the LGCE in 1996. We have inherited that programme, which we currently expect to complete in 2004.

2 Cambridge City's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in September 1975 (Report no. 64). The electoral arrangements of Cambridgeshire County Council were last reviewed in December 1983 (Report no. 460). We expect to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of the year.

3 In making final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
 - a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - b) secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - c) achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Cambridge City was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (LGCE, fourth edition, published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

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

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

7 The LGCE was not prescriptive on council size. Insofar as Cambridge City is concerned, it started from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but was willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, the LGCE found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and that any proposal for an increase in council size would need to be fully justified. In particular, it did not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 17 April 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Cambridge City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the local authority associations, the County of Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils, Members of Parliament with constituencies in the city, the Members of the European Parliament for the Eastern region and the headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council to publicise the review further. The LGCE's Stage One consultation period was put into abeyance from 10 May 2001 until 7 June 2001 as a consequence of the General Election; the closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 13 August 2001. At Stage Two it considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared its draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 27 November 2001 with the publication of the LGCE's report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Cambridge City*, and ended on 28 January 2002. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 The city of Cambridge is situated in the south of Cambridgeshire and is surrounded by the district of South Cambridgeshire. It is roughly bisected by the River Cam, which flows south-west to north-east through the area. The city centre, which lies at the heart of the city, is dominated by the historic colleges of the University of Cambridge. Covering some 4,071 hectares, and with a population of some 120,650, Cambridge has a population density of almost 30 persons per hectare. The city is unparished.

11 The electorate of the city is 86,921 (February 2001). The City Council presently has 42 members who are elected from 14 wards, most of which are relatively urban. Each of the wards is represented by three councillors. The City Council is elected by thirds.

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

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,070 electors, which the City Council forecasts will increase to 2,202 by the year 2006 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 14 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the city average and in four wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalances are in Newnham and Petersfield wards where each of the three councillors in each of the wards represents 25 per cent more electors than the city average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Cambridge City

Table 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abbey	3	4,767	1,589	-23	4,770	1,590	-28
2	Arbury	3	5,095	1,698	-18	5,090	1,697	-23
3	Castle	3	7,127	2,376	15	7,350	2,450	11
4	Cherry Hinton	3	5,449	1,816	-12	5,479	1,826	-17
5	Coleridge	3	5,990	1,997	-4	6,511	2,170	-1
6	East Chesterton	3	7,033	2,344	13	8,249	2,750	25
7	King's Hedges	3	4,763	1,588	-23	4,790	1,597	-27
8	Market	3	6,854	2,285	10	6,970	2,323	6
9	Newnham	3	7,775	2,592	25	8,360	2,787	27
10	Petersfield	3	7,744	2,581	25	8,860	2,953	34
11	Queen Edith's	3	6,160	2,053	-1	6,210	2,070	-6
12	Romsey	3	6,081	2,027	-2	6,120	2,040	-7
13	Trumpington	3	6,035	2,012	-3	7,620	2,540	15
14	West Chesterton	3	6,048	2,016	-3	6,090	2,030	-8
	Totals	42	86,921	–	–	92,469	–	–
	Averages	–	–	2,070	–	–	2,202	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Cambridge City Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Abbey and King's Hedges wards were relatively over-represented by 23 per cent, while electors in Newnham and Petersfield wards were relatively under-represented by 25 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One the LGCE received five representations, including city-wide schemes from the City Council and the Conservative Group on the City Council, and representations from Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge Labour Party and Cambridge Liberal Democrats. In the light of these representations and evidence available to it, the LGCE reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Cambridge City*.

15 The LGCE's draft recommendations were based on the City Council's proposals, which achieved an improvement in electoral equality and continued to provide a uniform pattern of three-member wards in the city. However, it moved away from the City Council's scheme in five areas to provide more identifiable boundaries. It proposed that:

- Cambridge City Council should be served by 42 councillors representing 14 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

Draft Recommendation

Cambridge City Council should comprise 42 councillors, serving 14 wards. The City Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

16 The LGCE's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 12 of the 14 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the city average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 5 per cent from the average in 2006.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

17 During the consultation on its draft recommendations report, the LGCE received 20 representations. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Cambridge City Council.

Cambridge City Council

18 The City Council broadly supported the draft recommendations, although it proposed three amendments. It objected to the proposal to transfer the Castle Hill area from Castle ward to Arbury ward, arguing that its proposed boundary between Arbury and Castle wards be utilised. It also proposed alternative boundaries between Cherry Hinton and Coleridge wards and between Coleridge and Queen Edith's wards, having regard to the possibility of future development in these areas, although these developments are not as yet confirmed. It also stated that if there was local opposition to the proposal in the draft recommendations to transfer New Street from Petersfield to Abbey ward, it would not object to the street being transferred back to Petersfield ward. It supported the proposed transfer of the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area from Arbury ward to West Chesterton ward as, having consulted residents in this area, the majority of those who responded supported this transfer. It also identified two areas in Market ward where the map and text in the draft recommendations report did not fully reflect its original proposals.

The Conservative Group on the City Council

19 The Conservative Group broadly supported the draft recommendations, albeit regretting that its proposal for a council size of 36 members had not been adopted by the LGCE. It supported the City Council's proposed amendments to the draft recommendations but proposed alternative arrangements for Arbury and Castle wards, involving the transfer of the McManus estate from Castle to Arbury ward, and transferring properties on and around Histon Road and the roads surrounding Castle Hill from Arbury ward to Castle ward. It also expressed its objections to the Labour Party's proposed amendments, stating that they had been rejected by the Working Party on the City Council and stated that "we would strongly resist any attempt to rewrite the proposals at this stage, especially from a partisan standpoint".

Cambridge Labour Party

20 The Labour Party objected to the draft recommendations for a number of wards, and proposed alternative warding arrangements for Abbey, Arbury, Castle, Cherry Hinton, Coleridge, Petersfield, Queen Edith's and West Chesterton wards, arguing that its proposals would secure better electoral equality than the draft recommendations. It proposed that the Castle Hill area be transferred back to Castle ward from Arbury ward, and that the remaining area in the very south of the proposed Arbury ward (Chesterton Lane, East Hertford Street, Alpha Road, Carlyle Road and parts of Castle Street and Chesterton Road) be transferred to West Chesterton ward. It also proposed that the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area be transferred back to Arbury ward from West Chesterton ward. In the east of the city, it proposed that the area around the Tim Brinton garage site, which the City Council proposed transferring from Queen Edith's ward to Coleridge ward, be extended to include a number of surrounding roads in order to prevent a potential development becoming isolated from the remainder of Coleridge ward. It also proposed that Cherry Hinton ward be extended westwards by transferring St Thomas' Square and part of Birdwood Road from Coleridge ward. Further south, it proposed transferring the area south of Cherry Hinton Road and east of Mowbray Road from Coleridge and Cherry Hinton wards to Queen Edith's ward. Also in the

east of the city, it proposed that those even-numbered properties on New Street which had been transferred from Petersfield to Abbey ward should be transferred back to Petersfield ward. With reference to the City Council's Stage Three proposals, it stated that "the refusal of the majority group on the Council to support our proposals in their final form will almost inevitably contain an element of political partiality".

Cambridge Liberal Democrats

21 The Liberal Democrats broadly supported the draft recommendations, making similar comments and proposed amendments to those made by the City Council. They also expressed their objections to the Labour Party's proposed amendments, which had been rejected by the Working Party on the City Council.

Other Representations

22 A further 16 representations were received in response to the draft recommendations, from the County Council, two local political groups, a Member of the European Parliament for the Eastern region, two county councillors, two city councillors, three local organisations and five residents.

23 County Councillor Kidman (Arbury division) supported the draft recommendations for Arbury ward, stating that he considered the extension of the ward southwards (incorporating part of the existing Castle ward) was "the rational option". However, he objected to the transfer of the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area from Arbury ward to West Chesterton ward, and objected to the Castle Hill area being transferred from Castle ward. Castle Ward Labour Party, City Councillor Hipkin (Castle ward), Castle Community Action Group and three local residents objected to the draft recommendations to transfer Castle Hill and the surrounding roads from Castle ward to Arbury ward. Of these respondents, all but the City Councillor and one local resident proposed that this area remain in Castle ward for community identity reasons. Councillor Hipkin proposed that the area either remain in Castle ward, or alternatively, be transferred to West Chesterton ward. The remaining local resident who objected proposed that if the area could not remain in Castle ward, it should be transferred to Market ward.

24 City Councillor Durrant (Abbey ward) supported the draft recommendations for Abbey and Petersfield wards, although he proposed that Varsity House, on New Street, be transferred back to Petersfield ward to reunite the student accommodation with its college. Petersfield Area Community Trust (supported by Priory Residents' Association) objected to the draft recommendations for Abbey and Petersfield wards. It proposed that the whole of the Riverside area (as far as the odd-numbered properties on River Lane) be transferred back into Petersfield ward from Abbey ward for community reasons. It also proposed that a number of roads in the south of Petersfield ward be transferred to Trumpington ward in order to balance out the consequential increase in the number of electors in Petersfield ward.

25 Coleridge Ward Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for Coleridge ward for community reasons, stating that these were preferred to the Labour Party's alternative Stage Three proposals for the ward. Rustat Neighbourhood Association also supported the draft recommendations for Coleridge ward, as well as the retention of 14 wards in the city.

26 A local resident objected to the proposals to transfer Sedley Taylor Road from Trumpington ward to Queen Edith's ward as this would mean that she "would have to resign

... chairmanship of the Trumpington Conservative Committee” as residency in the ward is a requirement of the Committee. She also considered that electors would be confused by the draft recommendations.

27 A resident of East Chesterton ward requested an administrative boundary review between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire district, in order that the detached part of Milton parish in South Cambridgeshire be included within the City boundary.

28 Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations. Cambridgeshire County Council stated that it considered the district and county reviews should have been carried out at the same time, and reiterated its desire for coterminosity between district wards and county divisions. County Councillor Bowen (Market division) objected to the draft recommendations for Cambridge City, as he considered that the effect on the County Council electoral arrangements should have been considered, or that the two reviews should have been carried out simultaneously. He contended that, if there is not coterminosity between city wards and county divisions once Cambridgeshire County Council has been reviewed, it “will make life irritating for councillors”.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

29 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Cambridge City is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the other statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended) – the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

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

Electorate Forecasts

33 Since 1975 there has been an increase of approximately 13 per cent in the electorate of Cambridge City. At Stage One the City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 6 per cent from 86,921 to 92,469 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Trumpington ward, although a significant amount is also expected in East Chesterton and Petersfield wards. In order to prepare these forecasts, the City Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, the LGCE stated in its draft recommendations report that it was satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

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

Council Size

35 As already explained, the LGCE started its review by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although it was willing to carefully look at arguments why this might not be the case.

36 Cambridge City Council presently has 42 members. Having consulted locally on a scheme of 42 members and a scheme of 36 members, the City Council proposed retaining the current council size. It stated that “the decision to support the retention of 42 councillors was based on concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council if the size were reduced to 36”. In addition, given that new political structures are due to be implemented in May 2002, it stated that “any reduction in councillor numbers would result in an unacceptable increase in the workload of councillors sitting on the scrutiny committees”. It also contended that “having only 36 Councillors would limit the democratic choices available to future councils, especially if adopting an all-party executive was desired”. Following the local consultation on the two schemes, the City Council noted that “only a minority of respondents were in favour of a twelve ward scheme, with its concomitant reduction in council size, and ... surprisingly few specifically commented on the desirability of a reduction.” Eighty-eight of the 100 responses were in favour of the 14 ward scheme. However, there was a particular issue linked to the majority of the responses supporting the 14 ward scheme (that the alternative would split the current Romsey ward, a large number of responses being a result of local activity in this particular ward), but even when the City Council excluded these 71 responses, there was a majority of more than three to one in favour of the 14 ward scheme.

37 The Liberal Democrats also supported retaining a council size of 42, stating that “a smaller council membership would, in our judgement, impose serious constraints on the options for the Council”.

38 The Conservative Group proposed a council size of 36 members, a reduction of six. It stated that it “favours the 12-ward model because it believes that this is much more likely to achieve coterminous County and City electoral divisions.” It also gave further reasons for favouring a reduction in council size, stating that it thought it “unnecessary for a district council with relatively limited powers to have as many as 42 members”, that “more effective methods of communication make it easier for councillors to represent a larger area” and that it was becoming difficult to find “well-qualified” candidates to stand for election. The Conservative Group disputed the City Council’s claim that it would be difficult for the Council to operate with only 36 members and provided an example of how it thought this could be achieved.

39 The Labour Party stated that “for the better information of the Commission in its deliberations we will ... outline the benefits and disadvantages of three different electoral scenarios against a range of relevant principles, without indicating an absolute preference among the three”. However, in spite of this, the Labour Party, like the Conservative Group, favoured coterminosity with County Council Electoral Divisions, and consequently appeared to favour a reduction in council size to 36 members, either as 12 three-member wards or 36 single-member wards. It also stated that it believed there would be more transparency with a council of 36 single-member wards, although it did not provide a scheme for this option. It too gave an example of how it thought a council size of 36 could operate effectively and justified “the potential benefits of this arrangement over a 42-member council”. However, it also stated that “with a great deal of uncertainty still surrounding the impact of transition to executive decision-making arrangements in Cambridge, it is arguable what the future holds in

terms of elected members' workload", further stating that "this is not to say that a similar structure would be impossible to manage with 42 members".

40 Notwithstanding those comments, the Labour Party was also critical of the view that the current council size provides effective and convenient local government; "this indicates a level of complacency which we would not consider acceptable in the context of any other aspect of the council's functions". It acknowledged that there was additional uncertainty about the impact of an executive style of government, stating that it favoured holding a referendum on the option of a directly elected mayor. Additionally, it thought that the costs which could be saved by a reduced council size could be reinvested for members. However, no alternative scheme to that which was proposed by the City Council was put forward.

41 The County Council, while not providing a scheme or proposing a specific council size for Cambridge City Council, stressed "the importance it attaches to coterminosity between District Wards and County Electoral Divisions".

42 Having carefully considered all the representations received the LGCE was aware that significant work had been put into the argumentation and supporting evidence underpinning each of the council sizes proposed by the City Council, the Conservative Group and the Labour Party. It noted that the City Council had expressed concerns regarding the effectiveness of the operation of the council with only 36 members. Furthermore, it also noted that the City Council took account of the outcome of the public consultation on the two schemes which, notwithstanding those responses regarding the particular issue in Romsey, showed a general preference for the 42-member scheme.

43 The LGCE considered that the main focus of the argument from the Conservative Group and the Labour Party was that having 12 three-member wards would allow county divisions and district wards to be coterminous if the number of county divisions was reduced to 12 when the review of the county council's electoral arrangements is carried out in the future. However, it was acknowledged that, at the present time, it is not possible to accurately predict how many county councillors Cambridge City will merit when the county review is carried out, with the Labour Party stating that "the County Council has given an indication that they wish in their own review of electoral arrangements to retain the existing number of councillors for the whole county ... This would mean that a reduction to 12 or 13 in the number of County Councillors representing the City would be required in order to allow for increased representation in other areas of the county".

44 The LGCE noted the comments from the Conservative Group, the Labour Party and the County Council regarding the desire for coterminosity between county divisions and district wards. This is an issue which has arisen in a number of review areas. It is indicative of the tensions which can arise between the achievement of electoral equality within the individual districts of a county, each of whose electoral arrangements can vary significantly in terms of councillor:elector ratios and ward sizes, and across county council electoral divisions, while also seeking some measure of coterminosity between the two. These tensions are not readily reconciled.

45 In certain cases, it had been put to the LGCE that in reviewing district electoral arrangements it should prescribe ward patterns and sizes that would be compatible with county council divisions. It did not believe this to be a viable approach. Nor do we. Both the LGCE, when undertaking reviews, and the Boundary Committee for England rely heavily on local authorities and other interested parties to put forward proposals on how the electoral

arrangements within their individual areas might be improved. It is believed that the interests of local democracy are best served by basing recommendations on schemes which are generated locally, secure a high level of electoral equality and address the other statutory criteria.

46 The purpose of this review is to secure the best electoral arrangements for Cambridge City at the current time and by 2006, rather than anticipating what will be the best electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council in the future. Nevertheless, it is recognised that coterminosity between county divisions and district wards is capable of being conducive to effective and convenient local government, and a high value is placed on its achievement as part of the reviews of County Council electoral arrangements.

47 In reaching conclusions on its draft recommendations, the LGCE was not persuaded by the evidence provided by the Conservative Group and the Labour Party in support of a reduction in council size to 36. It did not consider that sufficient evidence was provided by the Conservative Group and the Labour Party to adopt this significant reduction in council size given the uncertainty surrounding the future executive structure of the council. It therefore concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by retaining a council of 42 members.

48 During Stage Three, four comments were received on the proposed council size. The City Council, Castle Ward Labour Party and Rustat Neighbourhood Association supported the retention of 14 three-member wards in the city, and therefore supported the council size of 42 members. However, Castle Ward Labour Party considered that the City Council's 14 three-member ward scheme was "not radical enough". The Conservative Group, with reference to its Stage One proposal, stated that "Our proposal for a 12-ward scheme was rejected by the Commission. Though we regret this, we accept ... a 14-ward solution", each comprising three councillors and its consequential council size of 42.

49 Having carefully considered the representations received, and in view of the support for the retention of 14 three-member wards in the city, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendation for a council size of 42 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

50 Having adopted a 42-member council size, the LGCE's capacity to endorse the Conservative Group's proposals was limited. It recognised that the Conservative Group's scheme did achieve reasonable electoral equality (as far as could be confirmed by the unofficial figures, as the Conservative Group was unable to obtain advice from the Council on its proposed warding arrangements) but it was not persuaded that the reasoning given for proposing a 36-member council size was acceptable. Furthermore, it considered that the Conservative Group's proposals did not utilise as strong boundaries as the City Council's scheme.

51 Having considered the consultation exercise which the City Council undertook with interested parties and in order to secure the best balance between reflecting the identities and interests of local communities, securing effective and convenient local government and electoral equality, the LGCE based its draft recommendations on the City Council's 42-member scheme. It considered that this scheme would better meet the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. However, to improve electoral equality further and bearing in mind local community identities and interests, it

proposed minor modifications to the City Council's proposals in five areas to provide more identifiable boundaries.

52 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. For city warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Arbury, East Chesterton, King's Hedges and West Chesterton wards;
- (b) Castle, Market and Newnham wards;
- (c) Abbey and Petersfield wards;
- (d) Cherry Hinton, Coleridge and Romsey wards;
- (e) Queen Edith's and Trumpington wards.

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

Arbury, East Chesterton, King's Hedges and West Chesterton wards

54 These four three-member wards are located in the north of the city, to the north of the River Cam. The number of electors per councillor is 18 per cent below the city average in Arbury ward (23 per cent below by 2006), 13 per cent above in East Chesterton ward (25 per cent above by 2006), 23 per cent below in King's Hedges ward (27 per cent below by 2006) and 3 per cent below in West Chesterton ward (8 per cent below by 2006).

55 At Stage One, the City Council proposed that the existing Arbury ward be extended to include two areas from the existing Castle ward, and that its north-eastern boundary be modified so that the boundary follows the rear of properties on Arbury Road, transferring properties on the western side of the road and those in the Mansel Way area into its proposed King's Hedges ward. The north-western area of the ward would gain the Brownlow Road estate, and the ward would be extended to include properties on the western side of Histon Road. Further south, it would take in the triangle of land and properties south of Histon Road Cemetery and bounded by Histon Road and Victoria Road, and the Carlyle Road/Magrath Avenue area between Victoria Road and Chesterton Road/Lane.

56 The City Council's proposed King's Hedges ward would therefore gain those properties on Arbury Road and the Mansel Way area from the existing Arbury ward. The ward would be extended further south-eastwards to include a significant area of the existing East Chesterton ward. Its south-eastern boundary would run along the rear of properties on the south side of Milton Road until number 282, before meeting the existing boundary. Its revised East Chesterton ward would comprise the remainder of the ward, less the remainder of the properties on the south side of Milton Road which would be transferred to an enlarged West Chesterton ward, which would also reflect the changes described above. These four wards would retain their existing ward names and would each continue to be represented by three councillors.

57 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent above the city average in Arbury ward (1 per cent above by 2006), 9 per cent below in East Chesterton ward (equal to the average by 2006), 1 per cent above in King's Hedges ward (1 per cent below by 2006) and 3 per cent above in West Chesterton ward (2 per cent below by 2006).

58 The Liberal Democrats made a proposal regarding a boundary in this area which would not affect any electors. They proposed that the boundary of the revised East Chesterton ward to the rear of properties on the south side of Milton Road should be located “about half way down the rear of gardens of the Milton Road properties. That would make it more proof against future backland development beyond what has already been agreed”. However, it was not possible to adopt this proposal as the boundary would not be tied to any firm ground detail, which the Liberal Democrats acknowledged.

59 The LGCE carefully considered the representations received regarding these four wards and, given the extent to which they provided good electoral equality and reflected local communities, broadly based its draft recommendations on the City Council’s proposals. However, it was considered that the boundaries of the City Council’s proposed Arbury ward could be improved by making minor amendments while still achieving good levels of electoral equality in Arbury and the surrounding wards. The centre of Castle Street was used as Arbury ward’s south-western boundary, while also retaining the existing boundary along Holland Street in the south-east. As a consequence, the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area would be transferred to the proposed West Chesterton ward to improve electoral equality. Finally, the LGCE proposed that the north-eastern boundary of Arbury ward follow the centre of Arbury Road until Mansel Way, instead of following the rear of properties on the western side of the road, in order to provide a more identifiable boundary. Its proposed King’s Hedges and West Chesterton wards consequently reflected these minor amendments.

60 The LGCE expressed some reservations about the boundary between the proposed King’s Hedges and West Chesterton wards, as it followed a line between semi-detached residential properties on the southern side of Milton Road. An alternative proposal which was considered would have placed the boundary along the centre of Arbury Road and Milton Road, which, in the view of the LGCE, would have secured a more identifiable boundary. However, this would have resulted in an electoral imbalance of more than 10 per cent from the city average, both initially and by 2006 and therefore it did not propose this amendment.

61 Under the draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 12 per cent above the city average in Arbury ward (5 per cent above by 2006), 9 per cent below in East Chesterton ward (equal to the average by 2006), 1 per cent below in King’s Hedges ward (3 per cent below by 2006) and 1 per cent above in West Chesterton ward (4 per cent below by 2006).

62 At Stage Three the City Council objected to the proposal to transfer the Castle Hill area from Castle ward to Arbury ward. It stated that “the Council recognises that this produces a neater boundary on the map, but does not consider it is appropriate on either historic or community identity grounds”. It proposed transferring this area back to Castle ward, using the boundary it had proposed in its Stage One submission. The City Council also stated that it had consulted residents in the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area about the proposal to transfer these roads from Arbury ward to West Chesterton ward. Five of the six respondents were in favour of the transfer, stating that they identified themselves more with West Chesterton ward than with Arbury ward, and in the light of this, the Council supported this transfer. It also stated that “the Council shares the Commission’s reservations” about the boundary between King’s Hedges and West Chesterton wards, but was unable to identify a suitable alternative which achieved acceptable levels of electoral equality.

63 The Conservative Group objected to the draft recommendations for Arbury, stating that “it was generally felt that the boundaries were still not quite right”. It proposed an alternative

Arbury ward which involved extending Arbury ward to incorporate the McManus estate, off Histon Road, from Castle ward. Further south, Castle ward would then gain those properties either side of Histon Road together with the neighbouring developments, and Castle Hill and the roads immediately surrounding it.

64 The Labour Party objected to the draft recommendations for Arbury, Castle and West Chesterton wards, stating that “the ... draft proposals appear to propose or perpetuate division of, rather than sustaining, existing or prospective communities” in the ‘triangle’ area formed by Victoria Road, Chesterton Road and Castle Street, Castle Hill and the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area. It proposed transferring the Castle Hill area back into Castle ward from Arbury ward. It then proposed transferring Chesterton Lane, East Hertford Street, Alpha Road, Carlyle Road, part of Castle Street and part of Chesterton Road from the proposed Arbury ward to a revised West Chesterton ward. It also proposed transferring the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area back to Arbury ward from West Chesterton ward. It considered that these proposals would improve electoral equality in these wards while better reflecting community identities.

65 The Liberal Democrats objected to the proposal to transfer the Castle Hill area from Castle ward to Arbury ward, and supported the City Council’s proposal to return the area to Castle ward. They supported the draft recommendation to transfer the Bateson Road/Garden Walk area from Arbury ward to West Chesterton ward in the light of the City Council’s local consultation on the issue. In the absence of a viable alternative, they also endorsed the boundary between King’s Hedges and West Chesterton wards on Milton Road.

66 Councillor Kidman supported the draft recommendations to extend Arbury ward southwards to include the roads from Castle ward between Victoria Road and Chesterton Road. He stated that he considered this “brings Arbury’s electorate to the required figure, preserves the community identity of the ward and creates readily identifiable ward boundaries”. However, he objected to the transfer of Bateson Road from Arbury ward to West Chesterton ward, stating that “as far as geography, character of the housing ... and ethnicity, Bateson Road is much more an identifiable part of Arbury than of West Chesterton”. He also objected to the transfer of the Castle Hill area from Castle ward to Arbury ward.

67 Castle Ward Labour Party, Councillor Hipkin, Castle Community Action Group and three local residents objected to the transfer of Castle Hill and properties in the Victoria Road/Chesterton Road area from Castle ward to Arbury ward. The local Labour Party, Castle Community Action Group and two local residents proposed that the area be transferred back to Castle ward. Councillor Hipkin proposed that the area be transferred back to Castle ward or alternatively transferred to West Chesterton ward. Another local resident proposed that “union with Market ward would be more rational if change has to be made”.

68 A resident of East Chesterton ward requested an external boundary review between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire district in order that the detached part of Milton parish in South Cambridgeshire district be included within the City boundary. However, we are not able to review, as part of the PER process, the administrative boundaries between local authorities; we could do this only if directed to do so by the Electoral Commission following a request from the Secretary of State.

69 Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations for this area.

70 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage Three. In the light of the objections to the Castle Hill area being transferred from Castle ward to Arbury ward,

we propose utilising the City Council's original boundary between these two wards in the Castle Hill area. Although this transfer produces a less identifiable boundary, we consider that it would be a better reflection of community identity if Castle Hill remains in Castle ward. Such a change to the draft recommendations would have only a minimal effect on electoral equality. However, in the remainder of the north of the city, we propose confirming the draft recommendations as final. We have noted the objections to the transfer of the Victoria Road/Holland Street/Chesterton Road area from Castle ward to the revised Arbury ward. However, we have also noted that there is little consensus regarding alternative warding arrangements for this area, and we have not been persuaded by the evidence submitted as to why it should not be transferred to the revised Arbury ward. In the east of Arbury ward, the City Council's consultation with residents in the Bateman Road/Garden Walk area indicated that there was general support for the proposed boundary in this area. Therefore in the light of broad support for the draft recommendations for this area, we propose confirming them as final, other than transferring the Castle Hill area back to Castle ward.

71 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent above the city average in Arbury ward (5 per cent above by 2006), 9 per cent below in East Chesterton ward (equal to the average by 2006), 1 per cent below in King's Hedges ward (3 per cent below by 2006) and 1 per cent above in West Chesterton ward (4 per cent below by 2006). Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Castle, Market and Newnham wards

72 Castle and Newnham wards are located in the west of the city, while Market ward is located in the centre of the city. Each ward is represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 15 per cent above the city average in Castle ward (11 per cent above by 2006), 10 per cent above in Market ward (6 per cent above by 2006) and 25 per cent above in Newnham ward (27 per cent above by 2006).

73 At Stage One, the City Council proposed transferring two areas from the existing Castle ward to its proposed Arbury ward, as described above. It also proposed extending the existing Castle ward southwards to include properties to the east of Grange Road and to the north of Burrells Walk and Garret Hostel Lane from the existing Newnham ward. Its revised Newnham ward would comprise the remainder of the ward. Finally, its proposed Market ward would comprise the majority of the existing ward, although the properties on the north side of Lensfield Road, in the south of the ward, would be transferred to its revised Trumpington ward, to be discussed later. The existing ward names in this area would be retained and each ward would continue to be represented by three councillors.

74 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors would be 5 per cent above the city average in Castle ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 8 per cent above in Market ward (3 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent above in Newnham ward (5 per cent above by 2006).

75 The Liberal Democrats proposed an alternative boundary between the revised Castle and Newnham wards which would not affect any electors. They proposed that the boundary between the revised Castle and Newnham wards "follow the centre of the river from Clare Bridge Southwards rather than following one bank". However, the LGCE did not adopt this amendment, as it did not consider it to be as strong a boundary as that utilised by the City Council in this area.

76 The LGCE carefully considered the City Council's proposals for these three wards. As discussed earlier, it amended the City Council's revised Castle ward to reflect its proposed boundary amendments in relation to Arbury ward. In the remainder of this area, it adopted the City Council's proposed Market and Newnham wards in full. It noted that these wards retain most of their existing boundaries, which it considered to be identifiable, while achieving good levels of electoral equality and reflecting local communities.

77 Under the draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the city average in Castle ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 8 per cent above in Market ward (3 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent above in Newnham ward (5 per cent above by 2006).

78 At Stage Three, the City Council objected to the proposal to transfer the Castle Hill area from Castle ward to Arbury ward, as detailed earlier, proposing that its original boundary proposal be utilised. It also identified a misinterpretation in the draft recommendations report of its original submission regarding the boundary between its intended Castle and Market wards in the area of Magdalene College. However, the City Council confirmed that the figures in the report were a correct reflection of the its intended wards.

79 The Conservative Group, the Labour Party, Castle Ward Labour Party, Councillor Hipkin, Castle Community Action Group and three local residents commented on this area, as detailed earlier.

80 The Liberal Democrats, as detailed earlier, objected to the transfer of the Castle Hill area from Castle ward and supported the use of the Council's original boundary in this area which would transfer the area back to Castle ward. They also identified the misinterpretation of the City Council's original submission regarding the boundary between Castle and Market wards in the area around Magdalene College. They also reiterated their proposed Stage One amendment to the boundary between Castle and Newnham wards along the River Cam near Clare College.

81 Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations for this area, notwithstanding the misinterpretation of the Council's original submission around Magdalene College.

82 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received. As stated earlier, we propose transferring the Castle Hill area from the proposed Arbury ward to our revised Castle ward. We have decided to confirm the draft recommendations for Newnham ward as final. In addition, we propose an amendment to the proposed boundary between Castle and Market wards, in order to reflect the city council's intended boundary under its Stage One submission. The large map at the back of the report has also been amended to ensure that all the properties on Lensfield Road intended to be transferred from Market ward to Trumpington ward are correctly shown. Neither of these amendments affect any electors.

83 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the city average in Castle ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 8 per cent above in Market ward (3 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent above in Newnham ward (5 per cent above by 2006). Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Abbey and Petersfield wards

84 The three-member Abbey ward is located to the east of the city, while Petersfield, also represented by three councillors, is located towards the centre of the city, to the west of the railway. The number of electors per councillor is 23 per cent below the city average in Abbey ward (28 per cent below by 2006) and 25 per cent above in Petersfield ward (34 per cent above by 2006).

85 At Stage One, the City Council proposed extending the existing Abbey ward westwards to include the northern part of the current Petersfield ward. The south-western boundary of its revised Abbey ward would run along the rear of properties on New Street and Silverwood Close and the centre of Coldham's Lane. This would form the northern boundary of its revised Petersfield ward, with the ward's existing eastern and western boundaries being retained. However, in the south of the ward, the area around the YMCA and properties on Harvey Road, St Paul's Road and the majority of Gresham Road would be transferred to its proposed Trumpington ward, as would the triangle of land between Hills Road, Station Road and the railway line. The existing ward names in this area would be retained and each ward would continue to be represented by three councillors.

86 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the city average in Abbey ward (equal to the average by 2006) and 8 per cent below in Petersfield ward (3 per cent below by 2006).

87 The LGCE carefully considered the City Council's proposals for these two wards. It considered that the proposals for Abbey ward addressed the issue of high electoral inequality in the ward while reflecting the statutory criteria. Having visited the area, it also considered that the consequent modifications to the existing Petersfield ward reflected communities within the area and facilitated a good electoral scheme in the eastern part of the city. It therefore adopted the Council's proposals for these two wards without modification.

88 Under the draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Abbey and Petersfield wards would be the same as under the City Council's proposals.

89 At Stage Three, the City Council stated that while it would not be proposing alternative arrangements for these two wards, "if local residents lobby the Commission in favour of the New Street properties reverting to Petersfield ward the Council would not have any objection to this change".

90 The Labour Party objected to the draft recommendations for Abbey and Petersfield wards, expressing the view that electoral equality in the wards could be improved further. It proposed transferring the even-numbered properties on New Street back into Petersfield ward, as it considered that there exists an "identification of residents of the old houses on the south side of New Street with Petersfield". Attached to the Labour Party submission was a petition signed by 20 residents of New Street, objecting to the transfer of those properties from Petersfield ward to Abbey ward.

91 The Liberal Democrats stated that "given evidence of concern by local residents" regarding the transfer of the even-numbered properties on New Street from Petersfield ward to Abbey ward, they would support an amendment to the draft recommendation to place the boundary along the centre of New Street.

92 Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations for this area. Councillor Durrant supported the draft recommendations for Abbey and Petersfield wards, although he proposed an amendment to the boundary between the two wards. He proposed that Varsity House, student accommodation housing approximately 155 electors, should be transferred from Abbey ward to Petersfield ward in order to unite the accommodation with its college. This would mean that, from New Street, the boundary would run northwards along Occupation Road until rejoining the existing boundary at the roundabout on East Road.

93 Petersfield Area Community Trust, supported by Priory Residents' Association, objected to the draft recommendations for Abbey and Petersfield wards. Both organisations considered that "the St Matthews and Riverside areas form a distinct community within Petersfield Ward as it presently exists" and proposed that this area be transferred back into Petersfield ward. Their proposed northern boundary of Petersfield ward would be Coldham's Lane (north of the railway bridge) and River Lane. In order to off-set the increase in the number of electors in Petersfield ward as a result of this proposal and achieve electoral equality, they proposed that properties in the south of Petersfield ward, in Devonshire Road, St Barnabas Road, Lyndewode Road and Tenison Road, be transferred to Trumpington ward. However, they acknowledged that "our suggestions do not resolve the low number of electors in Abbey Ward and some other solution to this may need to be devised".

94 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received. While we note the objections by Petersfield Area Community Trust regarding the transfer of the Riverside area from Petersfield ward to Abbey ward, we consider the transfer to be logical and one which facilitates a good scheme overall. We note in the City Council's original submission that it considered there was a link between the area in the north of the existing Petersfield and Abbey wards, and also that the railway line was not a barrier in this particular area. Furthermore, by transferring those properties in the Riverside area back to Petersfield ward, Abbey ward would be left significantly under-represented (by an estimated 14 per cent) by 2006. We have not been able to identify any other logical way of increasing the number of electors in the ward, as it is situated in the outskirts of the city. Equally, we do not propose transferring properties on New Street from Abbey ward to Petersfield ward, as this would result in Silverwood Close being cut off from the rest of Abbey ward, due to the surrounding industrial buildings. Similarly, if we were to transfer New Street and Silverwood Close, those properties would also then be cut off from the rest of Petersfield ward. However, we do consider that Councillor Durrant's proposal, to amend the boundary between Abbey and Petersfield wards so that it follows the centre of Occupation Road instead of the whole of New Street, is a sensible one. Varsity House and its college buildings share a community of interest, and such a modification to the draft recommendations would still result in good electoral equality in the wards.

95 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the city average in Abbey ward (2 per cent below by 2006) and 5 per cent below in Petersfield ward (1 per cent below by 2006). Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Cherry Hinton, Coleridge and Romsey wards

96 These three-member wards are situated in the eastern part of Cambridge City. The number of electors per councillor is 12 per cent below the city average in Cherry Hinton ward (17 per cent below by 2006), 4 per cent below in Coleridge ward (1 per cent below by 2006) and 2 per cent below in Romsey ward (7 per cent below by 2006).

97 At Stage One, the City Council proposed extending the existing Cherry Hinton ward westwards, to include parts of Coleridge and Queen Edith's wards, so that the boundary followed the rear of properties on the western side of Walpole Road, then along the centre of Cherry Hinton Road westwards as far as Wulfstan Way, and then along the rear of properties on the north side of Gunhild Way, before rejoining the existing boundary. The southern boundary of its revised Coleridge ward would be modified to follow the rear of properties on the south side of Cherry Hinton Road, west of Wulfstan Way, incorporating the culs-de-sac of Lilac Court and St Margaret's Square. Additionally, the revised Coleridge ward would take in the triangle of land bounded by Hills Road, Purbeck Road and the railway line, currently in Trumpington ward. Its revised Romsey ward would comprise the existing Romsey ward, with the addition of some further properties on Coleridge Road and all of Greville Road, with the boundary meeting up with the railway line to the west. The existing ward names in this area would be retained and each ward would continue to be represented by three councillors.

98 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the city average in Cherry Hinton ward (equal to the average by 2006), 11 per cent below in Coleridge ward (equal to the average by 2006) and 3 per cent above in Romsey ward (3 per cent below by 2006).

99 The Liberal Democrats proposed that "if the garage on the corner of Cherry Hinton and Hills Roads were to be redeveloped for housing it might be better if it was in Coleridge ward". However, the LGCE did not propose amending the City Council's boundary to reflect this as it had to take a view on the likelihood of that change taking place within five years, and recommend accordingly.

100 The LGCE noted that the City Council's proposals kept the existing Romsey ward united, which was the focus of some concern during the Council's own consultation exercise. It considered that the proposed ward utilised strong boundaries, and that the addition of properties in the Greville Road area had a beneficial effect on electoral equality. It therefore adopted the City Council's proposed Romsey ward in full. It did, however, make amendments to the City Council's proposed Cherry Hinton and Coleridge wards to provide for better boundaries and a better reflection of community identity. The LGCE proposed that the four properties on Birdwood Road, which the City Council had proposed transferring to its proposed Cherry Hinton ward, remain in the proposed Coleridge ward, to avoid unnecessarily dividing the road between two district wards. It proposed that this boundary should then continue to follow the City Council's proposed boundary, but that the properties around the Cherry Hinton Road/Misselton Court/Bullen Close area to the west of the petrol station be transferred to the proposed Coleridge ward. It considered that not only would this give the properties in the two culs-de-sac vehicular access to the rest of the ward, but that the petrol station on Cherry Hinton Road provided a natural break in this residential area and that its eastern curtilage provided an identifiable boundary.

101 Under the draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the city average in Cherry Hinton ward (4 per cent below by 2006), 7 per cent below in Coleridge ward (4 per cent above by 2006) and 3 per cent above in Romsey ward (3 per cent below by 2006). While the LGCE acknowledged that this would result in a slight deterioration in electoral equality compared with the City Council's scheme, it was of the view that this was justified given the better reflection of communities and more identifiable boundaries that would be secured.

102 At Stage Three, the City Council proposed a minor boundary amendment between Cherry Hinton and Coleridge wards, with a view to considering possible future development near the lakes in this area. It stated that “it was felt that the land involved in any development was likely to extend closer to the shore of the lake than the suggested boundary, resulting in development straddling the boundary”. It therefore proposed that the boundary should run between the two lakes so that the southern lake is transferred to Cherry Hinton ward. It stated that if this was not considered a suitable boundary, “the Council contends that the boundary would be better placed closer to the lake, where there appears to be a fence which could be followed”. It also proposed an amendment to the boundary between Coleridge and Queen Edith’s wards, also with a view to future development at the Cherry Hinton Road/Hills Road junction, currently the site of the Tim Brinton garage. It stated that “having considered the potential for future development on this site the Council now asks the Commission to place this site in Coleridge ward on the grounds of community identity” as it would “place any electors on the site in the same ward as their neighbours in Cherry Hinton Road”. Neither of these proposed amendments would affect any electors, either now, or by 2006.

103 The Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats both supported the City Council’s proposed amendments for this area, while expressing opposition to the Labour Party’s Stage Three proposals for these wards.

104 The Labour Party considered that electoral equality and community identity could be improved in the LGCE’s proposed Cherry Hinton, Coleridge and Queen Edith’s wards and proposed alternative warding arrangements. It proposed extending the City Council’s proposed amendment to the boundary between Coleridge and Queen Edith’s wards by also transferring to Coleridge ward Homerton College, the northern part of Hills Road, Elsworth Place and Rathmore Road. It considered that this proposal would provide a stronger link between the Homerton triangle and the remainder of Coleridge ward. It also proposed extending Cherry Hinton ward westwards by transferring St Thomas’s Square and part of Birdwood Road from Coleridge ward. It considered that, under the draft recommendations, Walpole Road “is largely isolated from the rest of its new ward on the north side of Cherry Hinton Road by Cherry Hinton Hall grounds”. Furthermore, it proposed an amendment to the proposed boundary between Cherry Hinton ward and Queen Edith’s ward, which would result in the transfer of “all of the area south of Cherry Hinton Rd and east of Mowbray Rd into Queen Edith’s ward”. It considered that this area “has no particular natural affinity with Cherry Hinton village, and relates much more clearly to the Queen Edith’s area”.

105 Coleridge ward Labour Party and Rustat Neighbourhood Association supported the draft recommendations for Coleridge ward, with Coleridge ward Labour Party expressing its preference for the draft recommendations over the Labour Party’s Stage Three submission for Coleridge ward. It considered that the Labour Party’s proposed transfer from Queen Edith’s ward to Coleridge ward would create “a most artificial shape” and would add “a community of quite a different character”. Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations for this area.

106 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received. The City Council’s proposed boundary amendment between Cherry Hinton and Coleridge wards in the lakeside area would not affect any electors either now or by 2006, but would attempt to ensure that any future properties which may be built in the area do not straddle the ward boundary. We have carefully considered this proposal. However, in placing the boundary between the two lakes, the proposed boundary does not follow any firm ground detail. We have considered the likelihood of any development taking place in this area, and have also

sought the advice of Ordnance Survey. In view of the fact that the boundary proposed as part of the draft recommendations is tied to firm ground detail and in the absence of an alternative good boundary, we have not been persuaded to modify the draft recommendations in this area.

107 The City Council's proposed boundary amendment between Coleridge and Queen Edith's wards, regarding the garage site, described above, would also not involve any electors during the period with which the review is concerned. However, as the City Council's revised boundary is tied to firm ground detail, we are content to put this forward as an amendment to the draft recommendations. As the wards in this area have received general support at draft recommendations stage, we have not been persuaded that to add several roads, as well as the garage site from Queen Edith's ward to Coleridge ward, as proposed by the Labour Party, would receive local support. Indeed, the Liberal Democrats, the Conservative Group and the local Coleridge ward Labour Party all expressed satisfaction with the draft recommendations for Coleridge ward, and stated that they preferred these to the Labour Party's Stage Three proposals. For this reason, we are not minded to adopt the Labour Party's other proposals to transfer the southern parts of Coleridge and Cherry Hinton wards to Queen Edith's ward.

108 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Cherry Hinton, Coleridge and Romsey wards would be the same as under the draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Queen Edith's and Trumpington wards

109 These two three-member wards are located in the south of the city. The number of electors per councillor is 1 per cent below the city average in Queen Edith's ward (6 per cent below by 2006) and 3 per cent below in Trumpington ward (15 per cent above by 2006).

110 At Stage One, the City Council proposed transferring properties on the south side of Cherry Hinton Road in the existing Queen Edith's ward to its proposed Cherry Hinton and Coleridge wards, as detailed earlier. It also proposed extending Queen Edith's ward westwards to incorporate the eastern part of the existing Trumpington ward, so that the railway line would form its new western boundary. Its revised Trumpington ward would reflect this change, in addition to the transfers from the existing Market and Petersfield wards, as described earlier. The existing ward names in this area would be retained and each ward would continue to be represented by three councillors.

111 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the city average in Queen Edith's ward (equal to the average by 2006) and 12 per cent below in Trumpington ward (1 per cent below by 2006).

112 As detailed earlier, the Liberal Democrats proposed that the garage on the corner of Cherry Hinton Road and Hills Road be transferred to Coleridge ward.

113 The LGCE considered that the City Council's proposed enlargement of the existing Queen Edith's ward was logical and that the railway line provided an identifiable boundary. In relation to the City Council's proposed Trumpington ward, it considered that the transfer of areas from the existing Market and Petersfield wards, as detailed above, facilitated the provision of better electoral equality. It therefore adopted the City Council's proposed Queen Edith's and Trumpington wards in full.

114 Under the draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Queen Edith's and Trumpington wards would be the same as under the City Council's proposals.

115 At Stage Three, the City Council and the Liberal Democrats proposed transferring the Tim Brinton garage site at the Cherry Hinton Road/Hills Road junction from Queen Edith's ward to Coleridge ward, as the site has now been acquired and may be subject to residential development, as detailed earlier. The Conservative Group supported this proposed amendment.

116 As detailed earlier, the Labour Party suggested amendments to the proposed Queen Edith's ward which would extend the ward to include part of Cherry Hinton ward and part of Coleridge ward. It also proposed the transfer of the Tim Brinton garage site and additional surrounding roads from Queen Edith's ward to Coleridge ward, as detailed earlier.

117 Andrew Duff MEP supported the draft recommendations for this area. A resident of Trumpington ward objected to the draft recommendations for Trumpington ward as they would result in Sedley Taylor Road being transferred from Trumpington ward to Queen Edith's ward. She stated that "if this proposal goes ahead I would have to resign my Chairmanship of the Trumpington Conservative Committee since it is one of our rules that we are resident in Trumpington ward".

118 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received. As stated earlier, we have decided to adopt the City Council's and the Liberal Democrats' proposed amendment to Queen Edith's ward, transferring the Tim Brinton garage site to the proposed Coleridge ward, as there is now more certainty regarding future development in this area. There has also been notable local support for such an amendment. However, we do not propose adopting the Labour Party's further amendments. We have considered the objections to the proposed Trumpington ward from the local resident. However, we do not consider that her argument is a valid reason to move away from the draft recommendations, and as such we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations for Trumpington ward as final, making the amendment to the large map at the back of the report in order to correctly reflect the boundary between Market and Trumpington wards, as detailed earlier.

119 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Queen Edith's and Trumpington wards would be the same as under the draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Electoral Cycle

120 By virtue of the amendments made to the Local Government Act 1992 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001, we have no powers to make recommendations concerning electoral cycles.

Conclusions

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

- in the north of the city, we propose transferring the Castle Hill area into Castle ward from Arbury ward;

- in the west of the city, we have decided to amend the boundary between Abbey and Petersfield wards to transfer Varsity House and the surrounding properties into Petersfield ward;
- in the centre of the city, we have decided to transfer the Tim Brinton garage site from Queen Edith's ward to Coleridge ward.

122 We conclude that, in Cambridge City:

- a council of 42 members should be retained;
- there should continue to be 14 wards;
- the boundaries of all of the existing 14 wards should be modified.

123 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	42	42	42	42
Number of wards	14	14	14	14
Average number of electors per councillor	2,070	2,070	2,202	2,202
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	2	9	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	4	0	6	0

124 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from eight to two. By 2006, no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 5 per cent. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Cambridge City Council should comprise 42 councillors serving 14 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inside the back cover.

Map 2: Final Recommendations for Cambridge City

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

125 Having completed the review of electoral arrangements in Cambridge City and submitted our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

126 It is now up to the Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 4 June 2002.

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

The Secretary
Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
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London SW1P 2HW