

Final recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Horsham in West Sussex

Report to The Electoral Commission

July 2002

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Horsham town 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 councils.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Horsham in West Sussex.

SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Horsham's electoral arrangements on 10 July 2001. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 26 February 2002, after which it undertook an eight-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 Horsham:

- **in 14 of the 25 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the district and eight wards vary by more than 20%;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 13 wards and by more than 20% in ten wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs (91-92) are that:

- **Horsham District Council should have 44 councillors, one more than at present;**
- **there should be 22 wards, instead of 25 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and six wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 19 of the proposed 22 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the district average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the district in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Henfield and North Horsham.**

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 20 August 2002:

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

Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Billingshurst & Shipley	3	the parishes of Billingshurst and Shipley	Large map
2	Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	2	the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote and the proposed Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish	Maps 2 and A2
3	Broadbridge Heath	1	<i>unchanged</i> ; Broadbridge Heath parish	Large map
4	Chanctonbury	3	the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, West Chilington and Wiston; the Heath Common parish ward of Washington parish	Large map
5	Chantry	3	the parishes of Amberley, Parham, Storrington & Sullington, and the Washington parish ward of Washington parish	Large map
6	Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead	2	the parishes of Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead	Maps 2
7	Denne (Horsham Town)	2	part of Denne ward; part of Trafalgar ward	Large map
8	Forest (Horsham Town)	1	part of Forest ward; part of Riverside ward	Map 2
9	Henfield	2	the proposed Henfield parish ward of Henfield parish	Large map and A2
10	Holbrook East (Horsham Town)	2	the proposed Holbrook East parish ward of North Horsham parish	Map 2
11	Holbrook West (Horsham Town)	2	the proposed Holbrook West parish ward of North Horsham parish	Large map
12	Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham	2	the parishes of Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham	Map 2
13	Nuthurst	1	<i>unchanged</i> ; Lower Beeding parish; Nuthurst parish	Large map
14	Pulborough & Coldwatham	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of Coldwatham and Pulbrough	Large map
15	Riverside (Horsham Town)	3	part of Denne ward; part of Riverside ward; part of Trafalgar ward	Map 2
16	Roffey North (Horsham Town)	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; Roffey North parish ward of North Horsham parish	Map 2
17	Roffey South (Horsham Town)	2	part of Riverside ward; the proposed Roffey South parish ward of North Horsham parish	Large map
18	Rudgwick	1	<i>unchanged</i> ; Rudgwick parish	Large map
19	Rusper & Colgate	1	the parishes of Colgate and Rusper	Map 2
20	Southwater	3	the parish of Southwater	Map 2
21	Steyning	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of Ashurst and Steyning	Map 2
22	Trafalgar (Horsham Town)	2	part of Trafalgar ward	Map 2

Notes: 1 Horsham Town is mainly unparished and comprises the seven wards indicated above.

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

Table 2: The Committee's final recommendations for Horsham

	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	Billingshurst & Shipley	3	6,055	2,018	-7	6,552	2,184	-3
2	Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	2	4,198	2,099	-3	4,199	2,100	-7
3	Broadbridge Heath	1	2,270	2,270	5	2,253	2,253	0
4	Chanctonbury	3	6,798	2,266	5	6,373	2,124	-5
5	Chantry	3	6,552	2,184	1	7,382	2,461	10
6	Cowfold, Shemanbury & West Grinstead	2	4,075	2,038	-6	4,154	2,077	-8
7	Denne (Horsham Town)	2	4,162	2,081	-4	4,688	2,344	4
8	Forest (Horsham Town)	1	2,073	2,073	-4	2,073	2,073	-8
9	Henfield	2	3,981	1,991	-8	4,193	2,097	-7
10	Holbrook East (Horsham Town)	2	4,253	2,127	-2	4,253	2,127	-5
11	Holbrook West (Horsham Town)	2	4,327	2,164	0	4,417	2,209	-2
12	Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham	2	3,987	1,994	-8	4,145	2,073	-8
13	Nuthurst	1	2,184	2,184	1	2,307	2,307	3
14	Pulborough & Coldwaltham	2	4,433	2,217	2	4,779	2,390	6
15	Riverside (Horsham Town)	3	6,395	2,132	-2	6,449	2,150	-4
16	Roffey North (Horsham Town)	2	4,896	2,448	13	4,902	2,451	9
17	Roffey South (Horsham Town)	2	4,559	2,280	5	4,559	2,280	1
18	Rudgwick	1	2,102	2,102	-3	2,132	2,132	-5
19	Rusper & Colgate	1	1,886	1,886	-13	2,018	2,028	-10
20	Southwater	3	6,807	2,269	5	7,272	2,424	8

	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 %
21	Steyning	2	4,890	2,445	13	4,930	2,465	10
22	Trafalgar	2	4,527	2,264	4	4,829	2,415	7
	Totals	44	95,410	-	-	98,859	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,168	-	-	2,247	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Horsham District Council.

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Horsham in West Sussex. The seven districts in West Sussex 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 Horsham's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1978 (Report no. 305). The electoral arrangements of West Sussex County Council were last reviewed in June 1984 (Report no. 473). We expect to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of 2002.

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 Horsham 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 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% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% 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 Horsham is concerned, it started from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secured 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 stated 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 10 July 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Horsham District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified West Sussex County Council, West Sussex Police Authority, the Local Government Association, West Sussex Association of Local Councils, parish councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the South East region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage

One, was 15 October 2001. At Stage Two it considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared its draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 26 February 2002 with the publication of the LGCE's report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Horsham in West Sussex*, and ended on 23 April 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 district of Horsham is situated in the county of West Sussex to the north of Adur and Arun districts and extends to the county boundary with Surrey. The district is predominantly rural with the major urban area, Horsham, lying in the north of the district. It is linked by road and the M23 to London and the south coast. The district has a certain amount of light engineering and other industry.

11 The district contains 32 civil parishes, but Horsham town itself is unparished. Horsham town comprises 31% of the district's total electorate.

12 The electorate of the district is 95,410 (February 2001). The Council presently has 43 members who are elected from 25 wards, six of which are in the unparished part of Horsham town, the remainder being predominantly rural and parished. Four of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 10 are each represented by two councillors and 11 are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

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

14 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,219 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 2,299 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 14 of the 25 wards varies by more than 10% from the district average and in eight wards by more than 20%. The worst imbalance is in Holbrook ward, where the councillor represents 70% more electors than the district average.

Map 1: Existing wards in Horsham

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	Billingshurst	2	5,100	2,250	15	5,590	2,795	22
2	Bramber & Upper Beeding	2	3,626	1,813	-18	3,602	1,804	-22
3	Broadbridge Heath	1	2,270	2,270	2	2,253	2,253	-2
4	Chanctonbury	2	4,666	2,333	5	4,801	2,401	4
5	Cowfold	1	2,237	2,237	1	2,264	2,264	-2
6	Denne (Horsham Town)	3	5,809	1,936	-13	6,335	2,112	-8
7	Forest (Horsham Town)	3	5,708	1,903	-14	5,708	1,903	-17
8	Henfield	2	4,943	2,472	11	5,208	2,604	13
9	Holbrook (Horsham Town)	2	7,559	3,780	70	7,649	3,825	66
10	Itchingfield & Shipley	1	2,076	2,076	-6	2,129	2,129	-7
11	Nuthurst	1	1,392	1,392	-37	1,489	1,489	-35
12	Pulbrough (Horsham Town)	2	4,433	2,217	0	4,779	2,390	4
13	Riverside (Horsham Town)	3	6,620	2,207	-1	6,674	2,225	-3
14	Roffey North (Horsham Town)	2	4,896	2,448	10	4,896	2,448	6
15	Rudgwick	1	2,102	2,102	-5	2,132	2,132	-7
16	Rusper	1	1,886	1,886	-15	2,018	2,018	-12
17	Slinfold	1	1,368	1,368	-38	1,474	1,474	-36
18	Southwater	2	6,807	3,404	53	7,272	3,636	58
19	Steyning	2	4,890	2,445	10	4,930	2,465	7
20	Storrington	2	3,988	1,994	-10	4,281	2,141	-7
21	Sullington	1	1,731	1,731	-22	1,681	1,681	-27
22	Trafalger (Horsham Town)	3	4,600	1,533	-31	4,902	1,634	-29
23	Warnham	1	1,498	1,498	-32	1,504	1,504	-35

	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 %
24	West Chiltington	1	2,965	2,965	34	2,992	2,992	30
25	West Grinstead	1	2,240	2,240	1	2,290	2,290	0
	Totals	43	95,410	-	-	98,859	-	-
	Averages	-		2,219	-	-	2,299	-

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Horsham District Council.*

Note: *The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Slinfold ward were relatively over-represented by 38%, while electors in Southwater ward were significantly under-represented by 53%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

15 During Stage One the LGCE received 10 representations, including a district-wide scheme from Horsham District Council, and representations from West Sussex County Council, Horsham Liberal Democrats, three parish councils, a local district councillor, two local residents groups, and a local resident. 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 Horsham in West Sussex*.

16 The LGCE's draft recommendations were broadly based on the District Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, and provided a mix of single-, two-member and three-member wards in the rural parished areas of the district and a pattern of two-member wards in Horsham town, However, it moved away from the District Council's scheme in a number of areas, affecting two wards in the east and centre of Horsham town and two wards in the rural south of the district. Using options generated by Council officers during the early stages of the review process together with some of its own proposals, the LGCE proposed that:

- Horsham District Council should be served by 44 councillors, instead of the current 43, representing 22 wards, three fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified, while six wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements and a redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Henfield and North Horsham.

Draft recommendation

Horsham District Council should comprise 44 councillors, serving 22 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

17 The LGCE's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 20 of the 22 wards varying by no more than 10% from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve with no ward in the district varying by more than 10% from the average by 2006.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

18 During the consultation on its draft recommendations report, 22 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Horsham District Council.

Horsham District Council

19 The District Council broadly accepted the draft recommendations for Horsham. However, it recorded its unease over the LGCE's draft recommendations in the rural south-east of the district and the creation of a parish ward in Henfield parish. It also reluctantly accepted the draft recommendation in the south-west of the district. It proposed minor amendments to the boundaries between Horsham Park and Riverside wards and the boundary between Rusper and Roffey North wards. It proposed two ward name changes in Horsham town and three in the rural area of the district.

Parish and town councils

20 Seven town and parish councils commented on the LGCE's draft recommendations during Stage Three. North Horsham Parish Council proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Rusper and Roffey North wards and a consequential change of the parish ward boundaries between the proposed North Horsham and Roffey North parish wards of North Horsham parish. It also proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Holbrook East, Holbrook West wards and Rusper district wards. It objected to the proposed parish wards in North Horsham Parish Council, arguing that the area presently covered by North Horsham parish ward should become part of Roffey North and Roffey South parish wards and that the Holbrook area should either comprise a single Holbrook parish ward or Holbrook East and Holbrook West parish wards represented by five and four councillors respectively.

21 Shipley Parish Council argued that the proposed Billingham & Shipley district ward was a poor reflection of community links in the area and that the representation of Shipley parish would suffer at district level. Slinfold Parish Council objected to the proposed Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham district ward but failed to provide alternative warding arrangements in the area. Sullington Parish Council supported the proposed Storrington ward. West Chiltington Parish Council supported the proposal not to place the parishes of West Chiltington and Sullington in the same district ward. However, it objected to the proposal to place West Chiltington parish in a ward with the parishes of Ashington and Thakeham, arguing that there are no community links between the three parishes.

22 West Grinstead Parish Council objected to the proposed Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead ward, arguing that the quality of West Grinstead parish's representation at district level would be diminished and that West Grinstead should be represented by a single councillor in a district ward with the same boundaries as the parish. Woodmancote Parish Council objected to the proposed Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote and Henfield district wards. It argued that the community links between Woodmancote and Henfield parishes are far stronger and proposed a district ward containing Henfield and Woodmancote parishes.

Other representations

23 We received a further 14 representations from a County Councillor, a parish Councillor and 12 local residents. The county councillor objected to the proposed warding arrangements in Horsham town and proposed an alternative warding arrangement, arguing that his proposals respected the existing parish ward and Neighbourhood Council boundaries. A Henfield parish councillor objected to the proposed Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote wards, arguing

that the consequential placing of the proposed Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish in Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote district ward was a poor reflection of community identity in the area.

24 Representations were received from 12 local residents during Stage Three. Six of them objected to the proposed Billingshurst & Shipley ward, arguing that the ward does not reflect community identity in the area. Another six local residents objected to the proposed Henfield and Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote wards. All the local residents argued that placing the proposed Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish in a ward with the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote would not reflect community identity in the area and that the proposed parish ward to the west of Shoreham Road should be placed in the Henfield district ward.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

25 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Horsham is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (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’.

26 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.

27 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.

28 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

29 Since 1975 there has been a 44% increase in the electorate of Horsham district. At Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 4% from 95,410 to 98,859 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in the existing Billingshurst and Denne wards. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. 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.

30 No comments were received on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

Council size

31 As explained earlier, the LGCE started by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although it was area willing to look carefully at arguments why this may not be the case.

32 Horsham currently has 43 members. At Stage One the District Council proposed increasing the present council size by one to 44 members, arguing that the existing levels of electoral inequality could be addressed through a revision of the ward structure of the district rather than a significant change in the existing council size. No other representations regarding Council size were received.

33 In its draft recommendations report the LGCE stated that it had adopted the Council's proposal for a council of 44 members as it considered that the statutory criteria would be best met under a council size of 44 members. It was convinced by the District Council's argument that the existing levels of electoral inequality could be addressed through a revision of the ward structure of the district rather than a significant change in the existing council size.

34 During Stage Three we received no further comments regarding council size. Therefore, having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area we have decided to confirm a council size of 44 as final.

Electoral arrangements

35 After publishing a consultation document, which it submitted to the LGCE, the District Council put forward a revised district-wide scheme containing amendments made in the light of its consultation exercise. The Council asked that its amended scheme be regarded as its official scheme. In the light of its consultation, the Council proposed new arrangements the south-west, south-east and urban north of the district. This addressed concerns raised over the placement of Washington parish and the parish warding of Henfield parish, and the latter's links with surrounding areas in the south-east of the district.

36 The Council also proposed a uniform pattern of eight two-member wards in the Horsham town area. Horsham Liberal Democrats proposed a mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards in the same area with minimal change to the boundaries in Horsham town, with the exception of the boundaries between Denne and Trafalgar wards and Forest and Roffey North wards.

37 During Stage Three we received representations regarding the Henfield and Shipley rural areas and Horsham town. A number of local residents in the Henfield and Shipley area of the district argued that the LGCE's recommendations sacrificed strong community links in both rural areas in order to achieve good levels of electoral equality. However, we are of the opinion that the argumentation put forward to demonstrate the lack of community links between Billingshurst and Shipley parishes and the strength of community links between the Small Dole area and the rest of Henfield parish was not strong enough to move away from the draft recommendations. In addition, the proposed alternatives in the Shipley and Henfield areas had a negative effect on levels of electoral equality elsewhere in the district.

38 In the Horsham town area, Horsham District Council and North Horsham Parish Council proposed a number of minor boundary amendments in the north and southeast. The argumentation we have received from the District and parish councils has convinced us of the need for proposed boundary amendments. Councillor Clausen put forward an alternative warding scheme for the whole of the Horsham town area, proposing minimal change to the existing neighbourhood council boundaries. However, we cannot consider neighbourhood council boundaries when conducting PER's and we do not consider that his proposals reflect community identity in the town. We are also of the opinion that his proposals fail to make use of strong boundaries. Therefore, we proposed adopting the LGCE's draft recommendations in Horsham town as final with three boundary amendments as proposed by the District Council and North Horsham Parish Council.

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

- (a) Chanctonbury, Pulborough, Storrington, Sullington and West Chiltington wards;
- (b) Bramber & Upper Beeding, Henfield, Steyning and West Grinstead wards;
- (c) Cowfold, Nuthurst, Rusper, Southwater and Warnham wards;
- (d) Billingshurst, Itchingfield & Shipley, Rudgwick and Slinfold wards;
- (e) Broadbridge Heath, Denne, Forest, Holbrook, Riverside, Roffey North and Trafalgar wards.

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

Chanctonbury, Pulborough, Storrington, Sullington and West Chiltington wards

41 The existing wards of Chanctonbury (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, Washington and Wiston), Pulborough (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Coldwaltham and Pulborough), Storrington (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Amberley, Parham and Storrington), Sullington (a single-member ward comprising the parish of Sullington) and West Chiltington (a single-member ward comprising West Chiltington parish) cover the south-western area of the district. The wards of Chanctonbury and West Chiltington currently have councillor:elector ratios of 5% and 34% above the district average respectively (4% and 30% above by 2006). The wards of Storrington and Sullington currently have councillor:elector ratios 10% and 22% below the district average respectively (7% and 27% below by 2006). The ward of Pulborough currently has a councillor:elector ratio equal to the district average (4% above by 2006).

42 At Stage One the District Council proposed that this area should comprise four wards. It proposed retaining the existing Chanctonbury, Pulborough and Storrington wards and creating a new two-member Sullington & West Chiltington ward comprising the parishes of Sullington and West Chiltington. It argued that these wards would provide for good levels of electoral equality while reflecting the outcome of local consultations. The LGCE also received a representation from Heath Common Residents' Association and a local resident of the Thakeham area. The Heath Common Residents' Association argued that the parish of Washington should not be placed in a district ward with the parishes of Amberley, Parham, Storrington and Sullington, stating that the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, Washington and Wiston have been historically linked in the same ward since 1975. The local resident of Thakeham also argued against any proposals to place the parish of Washington in a ward with the more urban parishes of Storrington and Sullington and stated that Washington parish should be in a ward with Thakeham and West Chiltington due to the strong community links between them.

43 Having considered the representations received regarding this area the LGCE decided to draw upon the Council's consultation scheme as well as some of its own proposals. It noted that the District Council formulated warding arrangements which allowed for the parish of Washington to be warded with the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham and Wiston at district level, in order to respect the historical and community links between the parishes and as a consequence split the parishes of Storrington and Sullington between the two district wards of Storrington and West Chiltington & Thakeham. Having visited the area, it considered that the parishes of Sullington and Storrington merge into one another and that there is no clear break between them. It was of the opinion that the two parishes should be placed together in the same district ward in order to reflect the strong linkages between them and therefore decided to adopt the proposal put forward in the Council's consultation document, placing the parishes of Amberley, Parham, Storrington, Sullington and Washington in the same district ward. The LGCE was of the opinion that despite the large geographical size of the ward, there are good transport links from one end to the other and that the ward would reflect the close links between Storrington and Sullington. It also proposed adopting the Council's proposed Pulborough ward, comprising Coldwaltham and Pulborough parishes. It was of the opinion that this proposed ward placed two parishes with good transport links in the same district ward. It also proposed amending the Council's Chanctonbury ward in order to create a new two-member ward comprising the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, West Chiltington and Wiston. This would place a number of similarly rural parishes in the same ward at district level and reflect the prevailing transport links in the area.

44 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations its proposed three-member Chanctonbury ward (comprising the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, West Chiltington and Wiston) would have a councillor:elector ratio 5% above the district average (5% below by 2006). The proposed two-member Pulborough & Coldwaltham ward (comprising the parishes of Coldwaltham and Pulborough) would have a councillor:elector ratio 2% above the district average (6% by 2006)

and the proposed three-member Storrington ward (comprising the parishes of Amberley, Parham, Storrington, Sullington and Washington) would have a councillor:elector ratio 1% above the district average (10% by 2006).

45 At Stage Three the District Council supported the LGCE's draft recommendations in this area of the district. However, it proposed changing the name of the proposed Storrington ward to Chantry in order to reflect Chantry Hill, a distinct geographical feature in the ward. West Chiltington Parish Council objected to the proposed Chanctonbury ward, arguing that the parishes placed in the ward do not have strong community links and stating that the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham and West Chiltington 'are very distinct and different village communities, with little, if any, community of interest between them'. It did not go on to put forward any alternative warding arrangements in the area. We also received a representation from Sullington Parish Council supporting the proposed Storrington ward.

46 Having carefully considered the representations received, we have decided to endorse the draft recommendations in this area as final, subject to one ward name change. We have noted the objections of West Chiltington Parish Council to the proposed Chanctonbury ward. However we consider that it has failed to provide sufficient argumentation to justify its alternative warding arrangements in the area, which would have a knock-on effect across the southern area of the district and produce district wards, which we do not consider would reflect community identity elsewhere in the area. We are of the opinion that the proposed Chanctonbury ward would achieve reasonable electoral equality, reflects community identity and also provides for a warding arrangement, which results in good electoral equality elsewhere in the southern area. Given the level of local support, we have also decided to adopt the proposed Storrington ward as final. However, we have decided that Storrington ward be renamed Chantry as proposed by the District Council as we are of the opinion that this ward name would more adequately reflect the area covered by the proposed ward.

47 As a result of a parish review undertaken by the District Council the parish of Washington will have new boundaries which will come in to effect on the 1st April 2003 and results in Washington parish being split between the two district wards of Chanctonbury and Chantry. Therefore two new parish wards; Heath Common parish ward, covering the northwest of Washington parish and included in Chanctonbury district ward, and Washington parish ward, covering the remaining area of Washington parish and included in Chantry district ward, have been created.

48 Under our final recommendations the councillor:elector ratio in our proposed Chanctonbury ward (comprising the parishes of Ashington, Thakeham, West Chiltington and Wiston and the Heath Common parish ward of Washington parish) would be 5% above the district average (5% below by 2006). Our proposed Chantry ward (comprising Amberly, Parham, Storrington and Sullington and the Washington parish ward of Washington parish) would have a councillor:elector ratio 1% above the district average (10% above by 2006). Our proposed Pulbrough and Coldwaltham ward would have a councillor:elector ratio 2% above the district average (6% above by 2006). Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 and are illustrated on Map 2.

Bramber & Upper Beeding, Henfield, Steyning and West Grinstead wards

49 The existing wards of Bramber & Upper Beeding (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Bramber and Upper Beeding), Henfield (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote), Steyning (a two-member ward comprising the parishes of Ashurst and Steyning) and West Grinstead (a single-member ward comprising the parish of West Grinstead) cover the south-eastern area of the district. The wards of West Grinstead, Steyning and Henfield currently have councillor:elector ratios 1%, 10% and 11% above the district average respectively (equal to the district average, 7% above and 13% above by 2006) and the ward of Bramber & Upper Beeding currently has a councillor:elector ratio 18% below the district average (22% in 2006).

50 At Stage One the District Council proposed that this area should comprise four wards. It proposed a new two-member Bramber & Upper Beeding ward (comprising the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote), a new two-member Cowfold ward (comprising the parishes of Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead) and a new two-member Henfield ward (comprising the parish of Henfield). It proposed retaining the existing two-member Steyning ward. It argued in its submission that the proposed wards avoided the necessity to create a parish ward in Henfield parish for the Small Dole area. Small Dole is a settlement, which is currently divided by both a parish administrative boundary and a district ward boundary. Part of it currently lies with Henfield parish in Henfield district ward, with the remainder in Upper Beeding parish and Bramber district ward. The District Council stated that the creation of a Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish in order to unite the Small Dole area in Bramber ward as proposed in its consultation scheme would result in the new parish ward's isolation from the rest of Henfield parish and its marginalisation on Henfield Parish Council. The Council put forward the view that the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote should be warded together at district level and that Henfield parish should be kept intact as a district ward in its own right. It went on to state that this particular warding arrangement would go some way towards recognising the prevailing community links in the area. However, it also argued that in order to reflect community identity the parish of Henfield should be placed in a ward with the neighbouring parishes of Shermanbury and Woodmancote with which it has extensive community and transport links. It further argued that its proposal to keep the existing Steyning ward, comprising the parishes of Ashurst and Steyning, recognised the community links between the parishes of Ashurst and Steyning. It stated that 'the Council accepted that Ashurst has strong connections with Steyning and does not appear to have links with any of the other adjoining parishes.'

51 We also received a detailed representation from Councillor Marsh regarding the Henfield area. He objected to the proposal in the Council's consultation scheme for a new parish ward for the Small Dole area of Henfield parish and put forward four alternative warding arrangements for the area. The first warding arrangement suggested by Councillor Marsh, which had the particular support of Henfield Parish Council, placed the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote together in a district ward and Henfield parish on its own in a single-member ward, the same as the District Council's proposal. The second alternative warding arrangement put forward by Councillor Marsh had the particular support of Woodmancote Parish Council and involved placing the parishes of Bramber and Upper Beeding and the parishes of Henfield and Woodmancote together at district level. Councillor Marsh argued that there are strong community links between Henfield and Woodmancote parishes and stated 'the residents of the Parish of Woodmancote look to Henfield for all their day-to-day local shopping needs, doctors, dentists, local clubs and pubs, and local recreation.'

52 The third alternative proposed by Councillor Marsh had the particular support of Shermanbury Parish Council and involved placing Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote parishes in the same ward, Henfield and Shermanbury parishes together in a ward and Cowfold & West Grinstead parishes in the same district ward. Councillor Marsh's fourth alternative warding arrangement involved creating three three-member wards by placing the parishes of Bramber and Upper Beeding, the parishes of Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote, and the parishes of Cowfold and West Grinstead together in a district ward. Councillor Marsh argued that the parishes of Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote have strong community affiliations and should be warded together in a district ward. The fourth alternative involved creating three two-member wards by placing the parishes of Bramber and Upper Beeding, the parishes of Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote, and the parishes of Cowfold and West Grinstead together in a district ward. He also stressed that, despite the high levels of electoral inequality that result from the fourth alternative, it reflected community links in the area. All of these alternative warding patterns resulted in one or more wards showing high levels of electoral equality.

53 The LGCE also received a representation from Henfield Parish Council objecting to the District Council's consultation proposal to ward Henfield parish and create a new Small Dole

parish ward. The Parish Council argued that the Small Dole area should not be represented by a different district councillor from the rest of the parish.

54 Having considered the representations received at Stage One the LGCE proposed drawing largely upon the consultation scheme of the District Council and to adopt one of the wards proposed in its final submission. The LGCE was not persuaded, in general, by the proposals put forward by the District Council or Councillor Marsh at Stage One. It was of the opinion that the proposal put forward by Councillor Marsh and supported by the District Council did not provide for effective and convenient local government, creating an almost detached ward containing the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote. In order to travel from the parish of Woodmancote to the other two constituent parishes of the ward it is necessary to leave the district itself. This particular warding arrangement results in a councillor:elector ratio 11% below the district average. The other options proposed by Councillor Marsh also resulted in high levels of electoral inequality. The second alternative proposed a Henfield & Woodmancote ward with a councillor:elector ratio 29% above the district average, the third alternative resulted in a Cowfold & West Grinstead ward 16% above the district average and the fourth alternative proposed a Henfield ward with a councillor:elector ratio 11% above the district average.

55 Therefore, the LGCE decided to adopt the warding arrangements proposed by the District Council in its consultation scheme. This involved creating a new Small Dole parish ward in the south-western corner of Henfield parish and placing it in a two-member district ward with the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote. The remainder of Henfield parish would form a two-member district ward. It visited the area and was of the opinion that the creation of a Small Dole parish ward containing the area of Small Dole to the north-west of the A2037 and the Oreham area to the south of Horn Lane would serve to unite the hamlet of Small Dole within a single district ward. It was of the opinion that this would resolve the current anomalous situation whereby the north-western part of the Small Dole area is in a district ward with the remainder of Henfield parish while the rest of the area is included in a district ward with the parishes of Bramber and Upper Beeding. It was also of the opinion that there are good transportation links between the north and south of our proposed Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote ward and therefore it proposed creating a two-member Henfield ward and a two-member Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote ward.

56 It also noted the representations of the District Council and Ashurst Parish Council, which both proposed retaining the existing Steyning ward comprising the parishes in the same district ward. Having visited the area, the LGCE was persuaded by these arguments and proposed retaining the existing two-member Steyning ward.

57 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the proposed two-member Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote ward (comprising the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding, Woodmancote and the proposed Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish) ward would have a councillor:elector ratio 3% below the average (7% by 2006). Henfield ward (comprising the proposed Henfield parish ward of Henfield parish) and the two-member Steyning ward (comprising the parishes of Ashurst and Steyning) would have councillor:elector ratios 8% below and 13% above the district average respectively (7% below and 10% above by 2006 respectively).

58 At Stage Three the District Council accepted the LGCE's draft recommendations in this area of the district. However we received representations from Woodmancote Parish Council and six local residents objecting to the proposed Henfield and Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote wards. Woodmancote Parish Council argued that Woodmancote parish should be placed in a district ward with the parish of Henfield in order to reflect community links in the area stating, links and dependency are overwhelmingly strong between Woodmancote and Henfield and should therefore dictate representational arrangements.

59 A number of local residents argued that the proposed Small Dole parish ward of Henfield parish should be contained in a district ward with the rest of Henfield parish rather than placed in a ward with the parishes of Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote. They argued that

this area has historical links with the rest of Henfield parish rather than with the rest of the hamlet of Small Dole and that the division between Henfield and Upper Beeding parish is a historical one, stretching back to medieval times. They also went on to argue that placing the parish ward of Small Dole in a different district ward to the rest of Henfield parish would cause confusion among local residents at the time of simultaneous parish and district elections and that a potential district councillor for the proposed ward would not be able to attend meetings of two of the constituent parts of the district ward as they occur on the same night of the week. All the local residents proposed that the boundary of the proposed Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote ward be amended slightly to retain New Hall Lane and the western side of the Shoreham Road within Henfield ward.

60 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received and we have proposed adopting the LGCE's draft recommendations in this area as final. We have noted the representations of local residents and Woodmancote Parish Council. While we have some sympathy with the arguments of local residents regarding the parish warding of the Small Dole area, unfortunately as part of the PER process we cannot look at one area of a district in isolation. In order to ensure good electoral equality and strong boundaries in the whole of the south-eastern area of the district, it is necessary to place the parish of Woodmancote in a district ward with parishes geographically to the south of it. Placing the parish of Woodmancote in a ward with the neighbouring parish of Henfield, directly west of it, would lead to the creation of a Bramber & Upper Beeding district ward with a councillor:elector ratio 20% below the district average. In order to place the parish in a ward with parishes to the south and avoid the situation of Woodmancote parish being almost detached from the rest of the district it is necessary to create a parish ward from part of Henfield parish. Unfortunately, the area to the west of Shoreham Road does not contain sufficient electors to create a parish ward. We also noted the argument put forward by Woodmancote Parish Council, however, as outlined earlier, we cannot look at the warding arrangements of one area in isolation.

61 Our final recommendations will provide the same level of electoral equality as the draft recommendations detailed earlier. Our final recommendations set out in Tables 1 and 2 are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 and the large map at the back of this report.

Cowfold, Nuthurst, Rusper, Southwater and Warnham wards

62 The existing wards of Cowfold (a single-member ward comprising the parishes of Cowfold and Lower Beeding), Nuthurst (a single-member ward comprising the parish of Nuthurst), Rusper (a single-member ward comprising the parishes of Colgate and Rusper), Southwater (a two-member ward comprising the parish of Southwater) and Warnham (a single-member ward comprising Warnham parish) cover the north-eastern area of the district. The wards of Cowfold and Southwater currently have councillor:elector ratios 1% and 53% above the district average respectively (2% below and 58% above by 2006). The wards of Nuthurst, Rusper and Warnham currently have councillor:elector ratios 37%, 15% and 32% below the district average respectively (35%, 12% and 35% by 2006 respectively).

63 At Stage One the District Council proposed that this area should comprise five wards. It proposed creating two new single-member wards; Nuthurst ward comprising the parishes of Lower Beeding and Nuthurst, and Rusper ward comprising the parishes of Colgate and Rusper and the proposed North Horsham parish ward of North Horsham. It also proposed creating two two-member wards, a new two-member Cowfold ward comprising the parishes of Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead, and a new two-member Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham ward, comprising the parishes of Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham. and a new three-member Southwater ward comprising the parish of Southwater,

64 The LGCE also received representations from Slinfold Parish Council and the Southwater Residents' Action Group. Slinfold Parish Council objected to the parishes of Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham being warded together at district level, arguing that such a ward would cover too large a geographical area and would dilute the effectiveness of the elected member. Southwater

Residents' Action Group argued that the increased electorate in the Southwater area justifies an increase in representation at district level, as proposed by the District Council.

65 Having considered the representations received at Stage One the LGCE decided to fully adopt the District Council's proposals for this area. It was of the opinion that the Council's proposals serve to link parishes with good transportation links and provide for better electoral equality than the alternatives suggested in response to the Council's consultation scheme. It was not persuaded by the representation received from Slinfold Parish Council, nor the evidence in support of its objection to the Council's proposed Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham district ward. Furthermore, there was no provision alternative warding arrangements.

66 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations its proposed two-member Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham ward (comprising the parishes of Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham) and single-member Rusper ward (comprising the parishes of Colgate and Rusper and the proposed North Horsham parish ward of North Horsham parish) would have councillor:elector ratios 8% and 7 per below the district average (8% and 4% below by 2006). Its proposed single-member Nuthurst ward (comprising the parishes of Lower Beeding and Nuthurst) and its proposed three-member Southwater ward (comprising the parish of Southwater) would have councillor:elector ratios 1% and 5% above the district average (3% and 8 per above by 2006).

67 At Stage Three the District Council supported the LGCE's draft recommendations for this area of the district. Slinfold Parish Council objected to the proposed Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham district ward but failed to provide any supporting argumentation for this or an alternative warding arrangement.

68 North Horsham District Council proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Holbrook East and Holbrook West wards and the proposed Rusper ward, and suggested that Rusper ward be renamed Rusper & Colgate ward. It argued the proposed North Horsham parish ward of North Horsham parish, which it proposed placing in its renamed Rusper & Colgate district ward, has stronger community links with the Holbrook area of Horsham town citing the road and foot links across the Horsham by pass between the two areas. It also argued that changing the name of the proposed ward to Rusper & Colgate would more accurately reflect the constituent parishes of the ward.

69 We have carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period and, given the level of support for the LGCE's draft recommendations and the failure of Slinfold Parish Council to put forward any workable alternatives, we propose confirming the draft recommendations as final. However, we have decided that Rusper ward should be renamed Rusper & Colgate, as proposed by the District Council, in order to better reflect the constituent parishes in the ward.

70 Under our final recommendations our proposed two-member Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham ward (comprising the parishes of Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham) and single-member Rusper & Colgate ward (comprising the parishes of Colgate and Rusper) would have councillor:elector ratios 8% below and 13% below the district average (8% and 10% below by 2006). The proposed single-member Nuthurst (comprising the parishes of Lower Beeding and Nuthurst) and three-member Southwater ward (comprising the parish of Southwater) would have councillor:elector ratios 1% and 5% above the district average (3% and 8% above the district average by 2006). Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 and illustrated on Map 2.

Billingshurst, Itchingfield & Shipley, Rudgwick and Slinfold wards

71 The existing wards of Billingshurst (a two-member ward comprising the parish of Billingshurst), Itchingfield & Shipley (a single-member ward comprising the parishes of Itchingfield and Shipley), Rudgwick (a single-member ward comprising the parish of Rudgwick) and Slinfold (a single-member ward comprising the parish of Slinfold) cover the northwest of the district. Under the current arrangements Billingshurst, Itchingfield & Shipley, Rudgwick and

Slinfold wards have councillor:elector ratios 15% above, 6% below, 5% below, and 38% below the district average. By 2006 the councillor:elector ratio is expected to worsen in Billingshurst ward to 22% above the district average. The councillor:elector ratio is expected to deteriorate in Itchingfield & Shipley, Rudgwick and Slinfold wards to 7%, 7% and 36% below the district average respectively by 2006.

72 At Stage One the District Council proposed that this area should comprise three wards. It proposed creating a new three-member Billingshurst ward comprising the parishes of Billingshurst and Shipley, a new two-member Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham ward as discussed earlier, and retaining the existing single-member Rudgwick ward. No other representations were received regarding this area.

73 Having considered the District Council's representations, the LGCE decided to adopt them. It was of the opinion that its' proposed wards placed parishes with good transportation links in the same district wards and provided good levels of electoral equality. The LGCE also noted that the District Council's proposals had been consulted on locally.

74 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the councillor:elector ratio in the proposed three-member Billingshurst ward (comprising the parishes of Billingshurst and Shipley) and the proposed single-member Rudgwick ward (comprising the parish of Rudgwick) would be 7% and 3% below the district average respectively. By 2006 the councillor:elector ratio would improve slightly to 3% below the district average in Billingshurst ward and would worsen slightly in Rudgwick ward to 5% below the district average.

75 At Stage Three the District Council largely endorsed the draft recommendations for this area. However it proposed a changing the name of Billingshurst ward to Billingshurst & Shipley ward in order to more accurately reflect the constituent parts of the ward. A number of local residents and the two parish councils of Shipley and West Grinstead objected to the proposed Billingshurst ward. Shipley Parish Council and a number of local residents stated that the parishes of Billingshurst and Shipley have no community links and that the rural parish of Shipley should be warded with the similar parishes of West Grinstead, Thakeham and Cowfold. The parish council's argued that they all posses the same rural nature and share close ties. Shipley Parish Council stated 'Apart from residents in the west of the parish using Billingshurst for shopping and medical facilities there is no natural affinity between the two parishes'. Seven local residents supported Shipley Parish Council's proposals, arguing that the parishes of Shipley, West Grinstead and Thakeham have strong community links and should be placed in a ward together at district level. West Grinstead Parish Council also argued that the proposed draft recommendations would effect the quality of service that residents of West Grinstead parish received from the district council and that the proposal that West Grinstead be placed in a ward with two councillors would effectively half the representation the that residents in West Grinstead receive. It went on to strongly recommend, ' that the existing single district council member for our parish be retained'. Slinfold Parish Council objected to the proposed Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham ward, but was unable to suggest an alternative within the given specifications.

76 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three we have decided to endorse the LGCE's recommendations in this area as final. We have noted the representations of the Shipley Parish Council and the local residents, however, we have not been convinced by the evidence and argumentation provided. Having visited the area we are of the opinion that there are good road links between the parishes of Billingshurst and Shipley and that this warding arrangement results in reasonable levels of electoral equality. Placing the parishes of Cowfold, Shipley, Thakeham and West Grinstead in the same district ward as proposed by Shipley Parish would result in poor electoral equality elsewhere in the north-west of the district and we are not able to consider electoral arrangements in any ward in isolation from the rest of the district. For the same reason we area unable to consider retaining a single-member West Grinstead ward as this would have consequential effects on the surrounding wards which would result in poor levels of electoral equality. We also propose that the proposed Billingshurst ward

be renamed Billingshurst & Shipley ward as put forward by the District Council in order to better reflect the constituent parts of the ward.

77 Our final recommendations in this area will provide the same level of electoral equality as the draft recommendations, as outlined earlier. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 and are illustrated on Map 2.

Broadbridge Heath, Denne, Forest, Holbrook, Riverside, Roffey North and Trafalgar wards

78 The existing wards of Broadbridge Heath (a single-member ward comprising the parish of Broadbridge Heath), Denne (a three-member ward), Forest (a three-member ward), Holbrook (a two-member ward), Riverside (a three-member ward), Roffey North (a two-member ward) and Trafalgar (a three-member ward) cover the urban area of Horsham town and the area just outside it. The wards of Denne, Forest, Riverside and Trafalgar currently have councillor:elector ratios 13%, 14%, 1% and 31% below the district average respectively (8%, 17%, 3% and 29% below the district average by 2006). Broadbridge Heath, Holbrook and Roffey North wards currently have councillor:elector ratios 2%, 70% and 10% above the district average respectively (2% below, 66% above and 6% above the district average respectively by 2006).

79 At Stage One the District Council proposed that this area comprise eight wards. It proposed a new two-member Denne ward comprising part of the existing Denne ward less the area to the north of Albion Way and Park Way; a new two-member Holbrook East ward comprising the area of the existing Holbrook ward to the east of North Heath Lane; a new two-member Holbrook West ward comprising part of the existing Holbrook ward and the existing Trafalgar ward to the south of the railway line and to the north of Warnham Road. It proposed a new two-member Horsham Park ward comprising that part of the existing Denne and the existing Riverside ward to the west of Orchard Road and a new two-member Riverside ward comprising an area of the existing Riverside ward and an area of the existing Forest ward. It proposed retaining the existing two-member Roffey North ward and creating a new two-member Roffey South ward comprising an area of the existing Roffey parish ward and a new two-member Trafalgar ward comprising the area of the existing Trafalgar ward less the Parkfield area to the east of North Parade.

80 The LGCE also received a representation from the Horsham Liberal Democrats proposing an alternative warding arrangement for the Horsham town area. It proposed creating a new two-member Denne ward and a new three-member Trafalgar ward. The Liberal Democrats also proposed creating a new two-member Forest ward and a new three-member Roffey North ward. They proposed retaining the existing three-member Holbrook & Riverside wards and proposed no change to the existing Holbrook ward. They argued that their proposed wards would help to better reflect community in the Horsham town area given that they respect the existing Neighbourhood Council boundaries.

81 Having considered the representations received at Stage One the LGCE adopted the District Council's proposals for the whole of Horsham town, with the exception of its proposed Horsham Town and Riverside wards, where it put forward its own warding arrangements. It was of the opinion that the District Council's proposed boundary between Denne and Horsham Park wards and Horsham Park and Trafalgar wards utilised strong, easily identifiable boundaries and provided a balance between good electoral equality and community identity. It also avoids splitting the Carfax area of the town centre and the latter ensures that Parkfield is included in a district ward to the east of North Parade by running the boundary along North Parade. It was of the opinion that the District Council's proposal to create a ward in the centre of Horsham town straddling the railway line was sensible in light of the road links between the two areas on either side. However, it was of the opinion that the boundary between the proposed Horsham Park and Riverside wards arbitrarily split the area to the east of Horsham town centre and did not adequately reflect community identity. Consequently, in order to better reflect community identity in this area it proposed amending the boundary between the District Council's proposed

Horsham town and Riverside wards by moving an area from the Council's proposed Riverside ward to the proposed Horsham Park ward. This would create a single-member Riverside ward and a three-member Horsham Park ward, which would better reflect community identity.

82 The LGCE also noted that the proposals of Horsham Liberal Democrats provided good levels of electoral equality across Horsham town with the exception of Holbrook ward, which would have a variance of 13% by 2006. It also noted that the scheme put forward by the Liberal Democrats makes only two amendments to the existing boundaries within Horsham town and uses strong natural boundaries such as St Leonards and Crawley Roads and the railway line. However, it was of the opinion that their proposed Holbrook ward had an unacceptably high level of electoral inequality and noted that the Liberal Democrat's proposals in the centre of the town would create a Trafalgar ward, which stretches from the western boundaries of Horsham town to the town centre and would not adequately reflect community identity in the area. Therefore it was unable to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposals in Horsham Town.

83 Under the LGCE's draft recommendations the councillor:elector ratio in its proposed single-member Broadbridge Heath ward (comprising the parish of Broadbridge Heath), two-member Denne ward, two-member Holbrook East ward (comprising the proposed Holbrook East parish ward of North Horsham parish), two-member Holbrook West ward (comprising the proposed Holbrook West parish ward of North Horsham parish), three-member Horsham Park ward, single-member Riverside ward, two-member Roffey North ward (comprising the proposed Roffey North parish ward of North Horsham parish), two-member Roffey South ward and two-member Trafalgar ward would be 5% above, 4% below, 2% below, 3% below, 2% below, 4% below, 13% above, 5% above, 4% above the district average respectively. By 2006 the councillor:elector ratio will be equal to the district average in Broadbridge Heath ward. It is expected to worsen in our proposed Holbrook East, Holbrook West, Horsham Park, Riverside and Trafalgar wards to be 5%, 5%, 4%, 8% below and 7% above the district average respectively. It is expected to improve in our proposed Roffey North and South wards to 9% above and 1% above the district average respectively and to remain the same in our proposed Denne ward.

84 At Stage Three the District Council proposed two minor amendments to the boundary between the proposed Riverside and Horsham Park wards, arguing that the boundary should be moved southwards from Bennett's Recreation Ground, to run to the rear of the properties on St Leonard's Road in order to include the recreation ground in a district ward with which it has more in common. It also argued that part of the eastern boundary of the LGCE's proposed Horsham Park ward should be amended to run along the middle of Comptons Lane rather than to the rear of four properties on its east side. It argued that a proposed new development would mean that the four properties on the east of Compton's Lane would be adjacent to other properties in the proposed Riverside ward. It argued therefore that the boundary could be run along the middle of Comptons Lane without isolating the four mentioned properties from other properties in the proposed Riverside ward. The District Council also proposed a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Rusper and Roffey North wards to place the residents of Moorhead Farm in the proposed Roffey North ward, arguing that the residents of the farm identify with the Horsham town area.

85 North Horsham Parish Council proposed amending the boundary between Roffey North and Rusper wards in order to include Moorhead Farm in the proposed Roffey North ward. It also proposed consequential changes to the boundary between North Horsham and Roffey North parish wards. It proposed amending the boundary between Holbrook West and Rusper district wards in order to include the proposed North Horsham parish ward of North Horsham Parish Council in Holbrook West district ward, arguing that the area has stronger community links with Horsham town rather than the parishes of Rusper and Colgate. It also proposed a reallocation of parish councillors between parish wards in North Horsham Parish.

86 County Councillor Clausen objected to the proposed warding arrangement in Horsham town and proposed alternative warding arrangements. He argued that the LGCE's proposals resulted

in the boundaries of neighbourhood councils being breached across the unparished areas of Horsham town. He proposed creating a three-member Holbrook ward, taking in some of the proposed Roffey North ward to the north of the railway line to resolve the existing high level of electoral inequality in Holbrook ward. He also proposed creating two new two-member wards in the Roffey area, arguing that this would respect the boundaries of the existing neighbourhood council boundaries. He also proposed that Riverside ward be renamed Forest ward and Horsham Park ward be renamed Riverside ward and allocating two councillors to each ward. He also proposed creating a three-member Trafalgar and two-member Denne ward to the west of the railway line, arguing that the existing neighbourhood council boundaries would be reflected and the distinct communities to the east and west of the railway line would be respected.

87 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three we have largely decided to endorse the draft recommendations as final in this area. We have noted the minor boundary amendments proposed by the District Council and we have been persuaded by the evidence received that that they would help to better reflect community identity in the respective areas. Therefore we propose adopting its three boundary amendments in the Horsham town area as well as changing the ward names of Horsham Park and Riverside wards to Riverside and Forest wards respectively. We have also been persuaded by the evidence received from North Horsham Parish Council justifying its proposal to place the proposed North Horsham Parish ward of North Horsham Parish Council in the proposed Holbrook West ward. We are of the opinion that the village of Old Holbrook identifies with the Horsham town area to the south of the Horsham by-pass and that there are sufficient road and foot links to connect the two areas. We also propose merging the existing North Horsham parish ward into Holbrook west parish ward to create a new Holbrook West parish ward.

88 However we have not been convinced by the argumentation put forward by County Councillor Clausen to justify his alternative warding arrangements for the Horsham town area. We are of the opinion that he has not sufficiently justified his proposed wards which breach strong boundaries such as the railway line and Crawley Road in the north of the town, and that by breaching such strong guidelines his proposed wards fail to reflect community identity in the area.

89 Under our final recommendations the councillor:elector ratio in our proposed single-member Broadbridge Heath ward (comprising Broadbridge Heath parish), single-member Forest ward, two-member Denne ward, two-member Holbrook East ward (comprising the proposed Holbrook East parish ward of North Horsham parish), two-member Holbrook West ward (comprising the proposed Holbrook West parish ward of North Horsham parish), two-member Roffey North ward (comprising the proposed Roffey North parish ward of North Horsham parish), two-member Roffey South ward, two-member Trafalgar ward and three-member Riverside ward, would be 5% above, 4% below, 4% below and 2% below, equal to, 13% above, 5% above, 4% above and 2% below the district average respectively. By 2006 the councillor:elector ratio will be equal to the district average in Broadbridge Heath ward and Denne ward would be 4% above. The councillor:elector ratio is expected to worsen slightly in our proposed Holbrook East, Holbrook West, Forest, Riverside and Trafalgar wards to 5%, 2%, 8% and 4% below and 7% above the district average respectively. It is expected to improve in our proposed Roffey North and South wards to 9% and 1% above the district average respectively.

Electoral cycle

90 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 cycle.

Conclusions

91 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to the LGCE's consultation report, we have decided to substantially endorse its draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- In Horsham town we propose minor boundary amendments between Horsham Park and Riverside wards, Rusper & Colgate and Roffey North wards and Holbrook West and Rusper & Colgate wards.
- We also propose that Billingshurst ward be renamed Billingshurst & Shipley, Horsham Park be renamed Riverside, Rusper ward be renamed Rusper & Colgate, Riverside ward be renamed Forest, and Storrington ward be renamed Chantry.

92 We conclude that, in Horsham:

- there should be an increase in council size from 43 to 44;
- there should be 22 wards, three fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified.

93 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	43	44	43	44
Number of wards	25	22	25	22
Average number of electors per councillor	2,219	2,168	2,299	2,247
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	14	3	13	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	8	0	10	0

94 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 14 to three, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the district average. This level of electoral equality would improve further in 2006, with no wards varying by more than 10% from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final recommendation

Horsham District Council should comprise 44 councillors serving 22 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in the Appendix including the large map inside the back cover.

Parish council electoral arrangements

95 When reviewing parish council electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it should also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. In the LGCE's draft recommendations report it proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for Henfield and North Horsham parishes to reflect the proposed district wards.

96 The parish of Henfield is currently served by 15 councillors and is unwarded. In order to facilitate its draft recommendations at a district level the LGCE proposed the creation of new Small Dole and Henfield parish wards. Small Dole parish ward would cover the south-eastern part of Henfield parish comprising area to the south of a boundary running westwards along Horn Lane and Henfield Stream, and would comprise part of Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote district ward. Henfield parish ward would cover the remainder of the parish and comprise Henfield district ward.

97 In response to the LGCE's consultation report, a number of submissions were received objecting to its proposed Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote and Henfield District wards and the consequential parish warding of the Small Dole area of Henfield parish.

98 Having considered all the evidence received and being unable to find any workable alternatives at district level, we are confirming the LGCE's proposed district wards in the area and consequently we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Henfield parish as final.

Final recommendation

Henfield Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Small Dole (returning two councillors) and Henfield (returning 13 councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map A2 in the Appendix.

99 The parish of North Horsham is currently served by 19 councillors representing three wards: Holbrook (returning eight councillors), Roffey North (returning six councillors) and Roffey South (returning five councillors). At Stage One the District Council proposed creating four new wards in the area at district level. The LGCE decided to adopt the Council's recommendations and consequently it proposed creating new Holbrook, North Horsham and Roffey South parish wards and retaining the existing Roffey North parish ward. North Horsham parish ward would cover the area of North Horsham parish to the north of the A264 and would make up part of the Rusper district ward. Holbrook East parish ward would cover the area of Holbrook to the east of North Heath Lane and would form Holbrook East district ward. Holbrook West parish ward would cover the area to the west of North Heath Lane and would form part of Holbrook West district ward. Roffey North and Roffey South parish wards would cover the areas to the north and south of Crawley Road and would form Roffey North and Roffey South district wards respectively.

100 At Stage Three, the district Council and North Horsham Parish Council proposed amending the boundary between Rusper and Roffey North district wards and amending the boundary between Roffey North and North Horsham parish wards. North Horsham Parish Council also proposed amending the boundary between Holbrook West and Rusper & Colgate wards and a consequential changing of the boundary between Holbrook West and North parish wards. Both parties argued that their proposals would help to better reflect community identity in the Horsham town area.

101 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three we have been convinced by the representations received from the District Council and North Horsham District

Council. We are of the opinion that the boundary amendments put forward will better reflect community identity in the area and therefore we have decided to amend the boundary at district level between Ruser ward and Holbrook West ward and between Roffey North and Ruser ward. In light of our proposed changes at district level we propose consequential changes at parish level to North Horsham parish. This would involve amending the boundary between the proposed North Horsham and Holbrook West parish wards of North Horsham parish council to create a new Holbrook West parish ward, and placing Moorhead Farm into Roffey North parish ward.

Final recommendation

North Horsham Parish Council should comprise 19 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Holbrook East (returning one councillor), Holbrook West (returning seven councillors), Roffey North (returning six councillors) and Roffey South (returning five councillors). The boundary between the four parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of this report.

102 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the district.

Map 2: Final recommendations for Horsham

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

103 Having completed the review of electoral arrangements in Horsham 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).

104 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 20 August 2002.

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

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

APPENDIX

Final recommendations for Horsham: Detailed mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Horsham area.

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

Map A2 illustrates the proposed warding of Henfield parish.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Horsham town.

Map A1: Final recommendations for Horsham: Key map

Map A2: Proposed warding of Henfield Parish