

Final recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Eastleigh in Hampshire

Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions

July 2000

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Eastleigh in Hampshire.

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Eastleigh town is inserted inside the back cover of the report.



Local Government Commission for England

25 July 2000

Dear Secretary of State

On 20 July 1999 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Eastleigh under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in January 2000 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some minor modifications have been made (see paragraph 80) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Eastleigh.

We recommend that Eastleigh Borough Council should be served by 44 councillors representing 19 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

The Local Government Bill, containing legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements, is currently being considered by Parliament. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Eastleigh on 20 July 1999. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 18 January 2000, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

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

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Eastleigh:

- **in 12 of the 17 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and nine wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2004 electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 14 wards and by more than 20 per cent in eight wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 80-81) are that:

- **Eastleigh Borough Council should have 44 councillors, the same as at present;**
- **there should be 19 wards, instead of 17 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 16 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of two, with only one ward retaining its existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In all of the proposed 19 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all 19 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2004.**

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 Bishopstoke, Fair Oak & Horton Heath, Hound, Hedge End and West End.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 4 September 2000:

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

Figure 1: The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map Reference
1 Bishopstoke East	2	Bishopstoke ward (part – part Bishopstoke parish); Fair Oak ward (part – part Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish)	Maps 2, A2 and A3
2 Bishopstoke West	2	Bishopstoke ward (part – part Bishopstoke parish)	Maps 2, A2 and A3
3 Botley	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (Botley parish)	Map 2
4 Bursledon & Old Netley	3	Bursledon ward (Bursledon parish); Hound ward (part – the proposed Old Netley parish ward); West End South ward (part – the proposed West End South parish ward of West End parish)	Maps 2 and A5
5 Chandler's Ford East	2	Chandler's Ford ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
6 Chandler's Ford West	2	Chandler's Ford ward (part); Eastleigh West ward (part); Hiltisbury West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
7 Eastleigh Central	3	Eastleigh Central ward; Eastleigh North ward (part); Eastleigh South ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
8 Eastleigh North	3	Eastleigh North ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
9 Eastleigh South	3	Eastleigh South ward (part); Eastleigh West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
10 Fair Oak & Horton Heath	3	Fair Oak ward (part – the proposed Fair Oak & Horton Heath East parish ward of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish)	Maps 2 and A2
11 Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath	2	Hamble ward (Hamble-le-Rice parish); Hound ward (part – the proposed Butlocks Heath parish ward of Hound parish)	Maps 2 and A8
12 Hedge End St John's	3	Hedge End St John's ward (part – the proposed St Helen's and St John's parish wards of Hedge End parish); Hedge End Wildern ward (part – the proposed Freegrounds parish ward of Hedge End parish)	Maps 2 and A7
13 Hedge End Grange Park	2	Hedge End Wildern ward (part – the proposed Grange Park parish ward of Hedge End parish)	Maps 2 and A6
14 Hedge End Wildern	2	Hedge End Wildern ward (part – the proposed Wildern parish ward); Hedge End St John's ward (part – part the proposed Wildern parish ward of Hedge End parish)	Maps 2 and A7

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map Reference
15	Hiltingbury East	2	Hiltingbury East ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
16	Hiltingbury West	2	Hiltingbury West ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
17	Netley Abbey	2	Hound ward (part – the proposed Ingleside and Netley Abbey parish wards of Hound parish)	Maps 2 and A9
18	West End North	2	West End North ward (part – the proposed West End North parish ward of West End parish)	Maps 2 and A4
19	West End South	2	West End South ward (part – the proposed West End South parish ward of West End parish)	Maps 2, A4 and A5

Figure 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for Eastleigh

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)
1	Bishopstoke East	2	4,085	2,043	1	4,348	2,174	4
2	Bishopstoke West	2	4,264	2,132	6	4,345	2,173	4
3	Botley	2	3,999	2,000	0	3,883	1,942	-6
4	Bursledon & Old Netley	3	5,423	1,808	-10	5,897	1,966	-6
5	Chandler's Ford East	2	3,870	1,935	-4	3,926	1,963	-6
6	Chandler's Ford West	2	4,225	2,113	4	4,217	2,109	1
7	Eastleigh Central	3	6,185	2,062	2	6,537	2,179	5
8	Eastleigh North	3	6,105	2,035	1	5,946	1,982	-5
9	Eastleigh South	3	6,002	2,001	-1	6,234	2,078	0
10	Fair Oak & Horton Heath	3	6,312	2,104	4	6,747	2,249	8
11	Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath	2	3,790	1,895	-6	4,385	2,193	5
12	Hedge End St John's	3	5,979	1,993	-1	5,796	1,932	-7
13	Hedge End Grange Park	2	3,886	1,943	0	4,115	2,058	-7
14	Hedge End Wildern	2	4,018	2,009	-4	3,895	1,948	-1
15	Hiltingbury East	2	4,200	2,100	4	4,059	2,030	-3
16	Hiltingbury West	2	4,064	2,032	1	4,194	2,097	1

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average (%)
17	Netley Abbey	2	4,168	2,084	3	4,049	2,025	-3
18	West End North	2	3,709	1,855	-9	4,531	2,266	8
19	West End South	2	4,457	2,229	10	4,591	2,296	10
	Totals	44	88,741	-	-	91,695	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,017	-	-	2,084	-

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

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Eastleigh in Hampshire. We have now reviewed the 11 districts in Hampshire and Portsmouth and Southampton city councils as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 This was our first review of the electoral arrangements of Eastleigh. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in 1975 (Report No.69). The electoral arrangements of Hampshire County Council were last reviewed in 1980 (Report No.397). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

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

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

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also make recommendations on the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the borough.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties*. This sets out our approach to the reviews.

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

7 Second, the broad objective of PERs is then to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the district as a whole. For example, we will require particular justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

8 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that district but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a district's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a district council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other districts.

9 In July 1998, the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one half of the district council would be elected, in year two half the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral areas in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. The proposals are now being taken forward in a Local Government Bill, published in December 1999, and are currently being considered by Parliament.

10 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1999/2000 PER programme, including the Hampshire districts, that the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the October 1999 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we considered that local authorities and other interested parties might wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas.

11 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 20 July 1999, when we wrote to Eastleigh Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Hampshire Local Councils Association, parish and town councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and the Members of the European Parliament for the South East Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 25 October 1999. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

12 Stage Three began on 18 January 2000 with the publication of our report, *Draft recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Eastleigh in Hampshire*, and ended on 13 March 2000. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

13 The borough of Eastleigh lies on the banks of Southampton Water in southern Hampshire. It incorporates historic villages such as Hamble-le-Rice, Bursledon and Botley, and also developing areas such as Hedge End, West End and Fair Oak. Its administrative and commercial centre is the town of Eastleigh. With a population of 106,000 covering an area of 7,967 hectares, the borough has witnessed a rapid expansion in residential, commercial and industrial development over recent years. The M27 and M3 motorways run through the borough, and Southampton International Airport is located within it. Eastleigh is served by rail services to London, Southampton, Portsmouth and the South Coast.

14 The borough contains eight parishes, but Eastleigh town and Chandler's Ford are unparished. The unparished area comprises approximately 40 per cent of the borough's total electorate.

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

16 The electorate of the borough is 88,741 (February 1999). The Council presently has 44 members who are elected from 17 wards. Ten of the wards are each represented by three councillors and seven are two-member wards. The Council is elected by thirds.

17 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Eastleigh borough, with around 40 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments. At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,017 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,084 by the year 2004 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 12 of the 17 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in nine wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Hedge End Wildern ward where the councillor represents 105 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Eastleigh

Figure 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bishopstoke	3	7,495	2,498	-24	7,849	2,616	26
2 Botley	2	4,000	2,000	-1	3,884	1,942	-7
3 Bursledon	2	4,323	2,162	7	4,791	2,396	15
4 Chandler's Ford	3	4,989	1,663	-18	5,077	1,692	-19
5 Eastleigh Central	3	4,430	1,477	-27	4,638	1,546	-26
6 Eastleigh North	3	6,885	2,295	14	6,726	2,252	8
7 Eastleigh South	3	3,777	1,259	-38	4,008	1,336	-36
8 Eastleigh West	3	5,756	1,919	-5	5,847	1,949	-6
9 Fair Oak	3	7,166	2,389	18	7,601	2,534	22
10 Hamble	2	3,034	1,517	-25	3,434	1,717	-18
11 Hedge End St John's	2	5,068	2,534	26	4,952	2,476	19
12 Hedge End Wildern	2	8,283	4,142	105	8,310	4,155	99
13 Hiltlingbury East	3	4,380	1,460	-28	4,223	1,408	-32
14 Hiltlingbury West	3	4,434	1,478	-27	4,593	1,531	-27
15 Hound	3	5,470	1,823	-10	5,552	1,851	-11
16 West End North	2	3,884	1,942	-4	4,718	2,359	13
17 West End South	2	5,367	2,684	33	5,491	2,746	32
Totals	44	88,741	-	-	91,695	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,017	-	-	2,084	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Eastleigh Borough 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1999, electors in Eastleigh South ward were relatively over-represented by 38 per cent, while electors in Hedge End Wildern ward were relatively under-represented by 105 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

18 During Stage One we received two representations, including a borough-wide scheme from Eastleigh Borough Council. This scheme proposed retaining 44 members, the same as at present, serving 19 wards, compared to the existing 17 wards. The Council's proposals would retain the existing mix of multi-member wards. The Council's scheme was also submitted on behalf of the following groups: Eastleigh Constituency Labour Party, Eastleigh Liberal Democrats, Romsey County Liberal Democrats, Romsey Conservative Association, Romsey Constituency Labour Party, Bishopstoke Parish Council, Botley Parish Council, Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council, Bursledon Parish Council, Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council, Hedge End Town Council, Hound Parish Council and West End Parish Council.

19 We also received a representation from Eastleigh Conservative Association which supported the Borough Council's proposals with the exception of the boundaries for Bishopstoke and Fair Oak & Horton Heath. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Eastleigh in Hampshire*.

20 Our draft recommendations were based on the Borough Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality and a pattern of two- and three-member wards in the borough. However, we moved away from the Borough Council's scheme in the Hiltingbury and Chandler's Ford areas, affecting four wards, where we proposed our own warding pattern. We proposed parish warding in a number of areas to facilitate the Borough Council's proposed wards. However, we did not propose a parish ward at the north-eastern edge of West End parish, to include part of West End North ward as it would have contained only 24 electors. We proposed that:

- Eastleigh Borough Council should be served by 44 councillors, as at present, representing 19 wards, two more than at present;
- the boundaries of 16 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in an increase of two, with only one ward retaining its existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Bishopstoke, Fair Oak & Horton Heath, Hound, Hedge End and West End.

Draft Recommendation

Eastleigh Borough Council should comprise 44 councillors, serving 19 wards. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

21 In all of the proposed 19 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This improved level of electoral equality was forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all 19 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2004.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

22 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 10 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Eastleigh Borough Council and the Commission.

Eastleigh Borough Council

23 The Borough Council, along with Eastleigh Constituency Labour Party, Eastleigh Liberal Democrats, Romsey County Liberal Democrats, Romsey Conservative Association, Romsey Constituency Labour Party, Bishopstoke Parish Council, Botley Parish Council, Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council, Bursledon Parish Council, Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council, Hedge End Town Council, Hound Parish Council and West End Parish Council, supported the majority of the draft recommendations. However, the Borough Council's submission did argue that its original proposals for the four wards of Chandler's Ford East, Chandler's Ford West, Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West would better reflect community ties in the area and supported their adoption in the final recommendations.

Parish and Town Councils

24 Bishopstoke Parish Council supported the draft recommendations insofar as they affected the parish. Hedge End Town Council equally supported the draft recommendations as they affected the parish.

Other Representations

25 A further seven representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from local political groups, a county councillor and four residents. Romsey Conservative Association and Romsey Constituency Labour Party opposed our draft recommendations for the far north wards of the borough and supported the Borough Council's Stage One proposals.

26 County Councillor Mrs Holden-Brown proposed a minor boundary modification to Queen's Road and noted the close connections between local residents and the Church of St Martin's on this road. A submission from a local resident also commented on this connection and supported the Stage One proposals from the Borough Council.

27 Two local residents proposed retaining the existing boundary between Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards with one stating that "the effect of the proposed modification is unnecessary and marginal". Another resident supported the Borough Council's Stage One proposals.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Eastleigh is, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor is as nearly as possible the same. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

29 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. We also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken.

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

31 Our *Guidance* states that, while 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 kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity and interests. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates.

Electorate Forecasts

32 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 3 per cent from 88,741 to 91,694 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expects much of the growth to be in the existing ward of West End North, although significant growth is also expected in Fair Oak ward. 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. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

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

Council Size

34 As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

35 Eastleigh Borough Council is at present served by 44 councillors. At Stage One the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing council size. Eastleigh Conservative Association supported the Borough Council's proposed council size.

36 During Stage Three we received no further comments on council size for Eastleigh. We are therefore confirming a council size of 44 members for Eastleigh as part of our final recommendations.

Electoral Arrangements

37 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the borough-wide scheme from the Borough Council. From these representations, some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

38 In view of the agreement behind the Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we concluded that we should base our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme, although we noted the Conservatives' alternatives for three wards, which we also considered. We judged that the Council's scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements.

39 In response to our draft recommendations report, a number of respondents expressed the view that the Council's original proposals in the four Hiltingbury and Chandler's Ford wards should be adopted. We have re-visited the area and carefully considered all the submissions and available evidence and our conclusions are contained later in this chapter. Elsewhere in the borough, we welcome the broad support for our draft recommendations.

40 We also noted in our draft recommendations report that the Borough Council had undertaken a parish review before submitting its proposals to the Commission and had based its borough warding pattern on its proposed new parish boundaries. At the time of formulating our draft recommendations, the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) had indicated it would be unable to give effect to the Borough Council's parishing modifications before the end of the Periodic Electoral Review. We could therefore only base our draft recommendations on existing parish boundaries. However, we managed to accommodate the majority of the proposals in the areas affected by utilising existing or proposed parish wards.

41 For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West;
- (b) Chandler's Ford;

- (c) Eastleigh Central, Eastleigh North, Eastleigh South and Eastleigh West;
- (d) Bishopstoke and Fair Oak
- (e) Botley, West End North and West End South
- (f) Hedge End St John's and Hedge End Wildern
- (g) Bursledon, Hound and Hamble

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

Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards

43 These two wards lie in the north of the borough, and each returns three members. Both wards are significantly over-represented under current arrangements, with Hiltingbury East ward and Hiltingbury West ward having electoral variances of 28 per cent and 27 per cent respectively (32 per cent and 27 per cent in 2004).

44 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed retaining much of the existing Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards, transferring only an area south of Merdon Avenue and west of Winchester Road from Hiltingbury East ward into a new Chandler's Ford West ward, together with an area of the existing Hiltingbury West ward broadly south of Valley Road/Merdon Avenue. Under the Borough Council's proposals, the revised Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards would have electoral variances of 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively (4 per cent and 2 per cent in 2004). We received no further comments on this area.

45 We carefully examined the Borough Council's proposals for these wards, which we noted would achieve good electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. However, we did not adopt the Council's proposals in their entirety in our draft recommendations as we considered a boundary modification to the Borough Council's proposed Chandler's Ford West ward (detailed later) would better reflect community identity and the settlement pattern in the area. Therefore, we proposed retaining the existing southern ward boundary in Hiltingbury East ward and we proposed modifying the western ward boundary, transferring electors from an area around Gordon Road and Hiltingbury Close into Hiltingbury West ward. We also proposed transferring an additional area of Hiltingbury West ward around Common Road and Heathlands Road from Hiltingbury West ward to Chandler's Ford West ward. Under our draft recommendations for Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards, the electoral variance would be 4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively (3 per cent and 1 per cent in 2004).

46 At Stage Three, the Borough Council objected to our draft recommendations in this area, continuing instead to support its Stage One warding pattern. The Council stated that it, "recognises that it is difficult to find ideal boundaries. However, the strong views of all the councillors for the area are that the proposals in the Commission's Draft Recommendations less reflect the local settlement patterns, than do [the Council's Stage One proposals]".

47 We also received submissions from Romsey Constituency Labour Party, which opposed Gordon Road forming part of Hiltingbury West ward and supported the Borough Council's original warding pattern for the area. Romsey Conservative Association also supported the Council's original proposals, for community identity reasons. County Councillor Holden-Brown,

member for Eastleigh North County division, noted the proposed boundary along Queen's Road would isolate a small number of properties in Hiltingbury West ward, whereas the remainder of Queen's Road would fall within the proposed Hiltingbury East ward.

48 We received four further representations on this area from local residents. One commented that the Gordon Road residents had strong links with Hiltingbury East ward which would not be reflected in the draft recommendations and proposed retaining the existing boundary between Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards. Two of the submissions supported the Borough Council's Stage One scheme for the area.

49 We have carefully considered the representations we have received in relation to this area. While we note that our draft recommendations and the Borough Council's alternative proposals would both provide significant improvements to electoral equality, we have not been persuaded that our draft recommendations in the Hiltingbury area provide a worse reflection of the statutory criteria than the Borough Council's proposals, or that new evidence has been received to indicate that the Council's warding pattern provides a significantly better reflection of community identity in particular. Specifically, officers from the Commission have re-visited the area, we are not persuaded that including the area of housing south of Merdon Avenue (around Merdon Junior School) in Chandler's Ford West ward, as proposed by the Borough Council, would better reflect community interests.

50 However, in the light of the submissions received, we propose making a number of minor boundary modifications along Nichol Road and Queen's Road in order to better locate a number of individual properties. These modifications are shown on the large map at the rear of the report. Elsewhere, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards as final. Under our final recommendations for Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards, the electoral variance would be 4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively (3 per cent and 1 per cent in 2004). Our proposals are illustrated on the large map at the rear of the report.

Chandler's Ford ward

51 The three-member Chandler's Ford ward, located in the north-east of the borough, is currently over-represented by 18 per cent. This inequality is anticipated to worsen marginally to 19 per cent in 2004.

52 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating two two-member wards in this area. Chandler's Ford East ward would contain much of the current Chandler's Ford ward, encompassing the Oakmount area, together with the area west of Winchester Road and Park Road. The proposed Chandler's Ford West ward would comprise part of Hiltingbury East ward (south of Merdon Avenue and west of Winchester Avenue), part of Hiltingbury West ward (south of Valley Road/Merdon Avenue), part of Chandler's Ford ward (north of the Eastleigh to Romsey railway line) and part of Eastleigh West ward (north of Leigh Road and west of the M3 motorway). Under the Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Chandler's Ford East ward would be 4 per cent below the average (6 per cent below in 2004) and in Chandler's Ford West ward it would be 4 per cent above (1 per cent in 2004).

53 We considered the Borough Council's Stage One proposals for this area. We were not persuaded that the Council's proposals for Chandler's Ford West ward satisfactorily reflected the

settlement pattern in the area. In particular, we were concerned that community interests in the area of housing around Merdon Junior School may not be reflected were it to form part of Chandler's Ford West ward. Therefore, in order to achieve a more satisfactory warding pattern, we modified the ward's northern boundary to follow Lakewood Road, then west along Merdon Avenue and Valley Road before turning north to Common Road and the existing boundary. Under our draft recommendations for Chandler's Ford East and Chandler's Ford West wards the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average and 5 per cent above the average respectively (6 per cent below and 1 per cent above in 2004).

54 At Stage Three, the Borough Council commented that it opposed the draft recommendations in Chandler's Ford West ward which would "split Valley Road between Chandler's Ford West and Hiltingbury West" asserting that Valley Road has a "single community identity". The Council also commented that the proposed boundary along Common Road would similarly not reflect community identity in the area. Romsey Conservative Association proposed that the Borough Council's Stage One proposals for Chandler's Ford East and Chandler's Ford West wards should be adopted as they utilised "the centre of the arterial roads wherever possible". Romsey Constituency Labour Party also supported the Borough Council's Stage One proposals for the Chandler's Ford area stating "residents in the Heathlands Road area have commented that the proposed changes would split Common Road ... and also Valley Road. The original Borough Council scheme would reflect the settlement pattern more accurately". One local resident stated that the draft recommendations did not reflect the different community identities to the north and south of the railway line, although he did not offer an alternative warding pattern.

55 We have carefully considered all the representations we received for Chandler's Ford and we also re-visited the area before finalising our recommendations. While we have noted the views expressed in terms of the boundaries used in our draft recommendations and the Borough Council's Stage One scheme, we cannot look at one area in isolation and must have regard to the warding pattern for the borough as a whole. Furthermore, in order to achieve an acceptable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, in this instance, we found it necessary to utilise boundaries to the rear of properties in a number of areas, whereas the Borough Council's scheme did not. For these reasons, as outlined above, we have not been persuaded that the Borough Council's proposals offer a better warding pattern for the area. Furthermore, we do not consider that where the rear of properties have been utilised as ward boundaries, our proposals fail to provide clearly identifiable boundaries or to reflect the statutory criteria. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final, as illustrated on the large map at the rear of the report.

Eastleigh Central, Eastleigh North, Eastleigh South and Eastleigh West wards

56 These four wards cover the town of Eastleigh. Each ward currently returns three councillors. Eastleigh Central, Eastleigh South and Eastleigh West wards are all over-represented by 27 per cent, 38 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (26 per cent, 36 per cent and 6 per cent in 2004). Eastleigh North ward is under-represented, with 14 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (8 per cent in 2004).

57 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed three three-member wards for the area, with a large area of the existing Eastleigh West ward forming part of a new Chandler's Ford West ward. Under the Council's proposals, Eastleigh North ward would retain its existing northern, eastern

and western ward boundaries, although the present southern boundary would be modified to follow a line north of the railway line along Shakespeare Road, thereby transferring properties around The Quadrangle into a modified Eastleigh Central ward. The southern boundary of Eastleigh Central ward would also be modified to follow the length of Derby Road to the junction with Southampton Road. The Council proposed that Eastleigh South ward should comprise all of the existing ward apart from an area north of Derby Road, together with an area of the existing Eastleigh West ward broadly south of Leigh Road and east of Bournemouth Road. Under the Council's proposals, the electoral variances in the revised Eastleigh North, Eastleigh Central and Eastleigh South wards would be 1 per cent, 2 per cent and 1 per cent respectively (5 per cent, 5 per cent and equal to the average in 2004). After carefully considering the Council's proposals we considered that they achieved good electoral equality while utilising clearly identifiable ward boundaries and we adopted them without modification as part of our draft recommendations.

58 At Stage Three, the Borough Council expressed its support for the proposals in Eastleigh town. We received no further comments on this area and we are therefore confirming them as final. Our proposals are illustrated on the large map at the rear of the report.

Bishopstoke and Fair Oak wards

59 Bishopstoke and Fair Oak wards (and parishes) are located at the far north-eastern end of the borough and are both under-represented, with 24 per cent and 18 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (26 per cent and 22 per cent in 2004).

60 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed three new wards for this area in order to address the current under-representation. A two-member Bishopstoke West ward would comprise the western part of the existing ward, with its eastern boundary located to the east of Underwood Road, following part of Fair Oak Road and continuing south across open land to the west of West Horton Farm. The Council's proposed two-member Bishopstoke East ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Bishopstoke ward along with an area of the adjoining parish of Fair Oak & Horton Heath (broadly south of Athena Close/Pilchards Avenue, west of Sandy Lane/Allington Lane and north of Quobleigh Pond). The Council's proposed three-member Fair Oak & Horton Heath ward would comprise the whole of the existing Fair Oak ward, apart from the area transferred to the new Bishopstoke East ward. Under the Council's proposals, the electoral variances in Bishopstoke West, Bishopstoke East and Fair Oak & Horton Heath wards would be 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively (4 per cent, 4 per cent and 8 per cent in 2004).

61 Eastleigh Conservative Association, while supporting the majority of the Borough Council's submission, proposed an alternative warding pattern in this area in its Stage One submission. The Conservative Association proposed a three-member Bishopstoke ward which would retain its existing boundaries, apart from its eastern boundary which would move west to follow Abbotsbury Road and Alan Drayton Road, turning south to the west of Stokewood Close before rejoining the existing boundary. The Association proposed two, two-member wards of Fair Oak West and Fair Oak East & Horton Heath. Fair Oak West ward would comprise that part of the Bishopstoke parish not located in Bishopstoke ward under their proposals, along with an area of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish broadly west of Winchester Road and north of Fair Oak Road/Alan Drayton Way (although including an area around Brookfield Farm). The proposed ward of Fair Oak East & Horton Heath would comprise the remainder of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish. Under the Conservative Association's proposal the electoral variances in

Bishopstoke, Fair Oak West and Fair Oak East & Horton Heath wards would be 4 per cent, 7 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (7 per cent, 1 per cent and 11 per cent in 2004).

62 At Stage One, we concluded that both approaches would significantly improve electoral equality in the area and utilised clear ward boundaries. However, we judged that the Borough Council's scheme achieved marginally better electoral equality and provided a better reflection of community identity in the area and therefore the Borough Council's proposals, supported by Bishopstoke Parish Council, formed part of our draft recommendations.

63 At Stage Three, we received a submission from Bishopstoke Parish Council which supported the draft recommendations, as did the Borough Council in its submission. We received no further representations for this area and are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final. Our proposals are illustrated on Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A and the consequential changes to parishing arrangements are detailed later in this chapter.

Botley, West End North and West End South wards

64 The three wards of Botley, West End North and West End South are located in the centre of the borough and have electoral variances of 1 per cent, 4 per cent and 33 per cent respectively (7 per cent, 13 per cent and 32 per cent in 2004). Each of the three wards returns two councillors. Botley Parish is coterminous with the ward of the same name and West End Parish comprises the two West End wards.

65 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing Botley ward unaltered, apart from transferring a small area (24 electors) of West End North ward into Botley ward. This modification reflected the Council's proposed parish ward boundary modifications submitted to the Secretary of State, on which no order has yet been made. In our draft recommendations report we noted that, in conducting our statutory duties we must have regard to the existing parish boundaries in the area and therefore to adopt the Borough Council's proposals unaltered would require creating a parish ward of West End Parish containing 24 electors. We did not judge that this would provide convenient and effective local government in the area and therefore did not recommend modifications to the warding of West End parish to facilitate the proposed borough warding between the existing Botley and West End North wards in our draft recommendations. We proposed retaining the existing Botley ward unchanged as part of our draft recommendations, which would continue to provide a good level of electoral equality.

66 The Borough Council also proposed a modified West End North ward, including transferring 24 electors from the ward into Botley parish, as noted above. The Council further proposed modifying the ward's southern boundary with West End South ward, transferring an area of the Townhill Farm development from West End South ward. West End North ward's eastern boundary would also be modified, transferring broadly the area of the Peppercorn estate (549 electors) into a modified Hedge End Grange Park ward. West End South ward would comprise the majority of the existing ward with the exception of the Townhill Farm area, and an area in the far south of the ward, comprising a corridor to the west of the A27 to the borough boundary with Southampton City, which the Council proposed should form part of a modified Bursledon ward. Under the Council's proposed West End North and West End South wards, the number of electors per councillor would initially be 9 per cent below and 10 per cent above the average respectively (8 per cent and 10 per cent above respectively in 2004, due to significant growth in the area).

67 In our draft recommendation report, we concluded that the Borough Council's proposals achieved significantly improved electoral equality in the area and provided a good reflection of the existing settlement pattern. We adopted its proposed West End North ward (subject to retaining 24 electors in Botley ward, as described above) and West End South ward as part of our draft recommendations. Under our draft recommendations, the resulting electoral variances in West End North and West End South wards would be 8 per cent and 10 per cent respectively (9 per cent and 10 per cent in 2004).

68 At Stage Three, the Borough Council supported the draft proposals for this area. However, the Borough Council additionally asked us for our view on the proposed transfer of 24 electors from West End Parish to Botley parish, a recommendation which stemmed from the Council's parish review, but which we did not adopt in the draft recommendations. We remain of the view that we should not recommend the creation of a parish ward of West End parish with only 24 electors.

69 We received no further comments on the area at Stage Three and are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final. The consequential parishing arrangements, are detailed later in this chapter. Our proposals for parish wards are illustrated on Maps A4, A5 and A6 in Appendix A.

Hedge End St John's and Hedge End Wildern wards

70 The two two-member wards of Hedge End St John's and Hedge End Wildern are located in the centre of the borough, bordered to the west by West End parish and the east by Botley parish. Hedge End St John's ward has an electoral variance of 26 per cent (19 per cent in 2004). Hedge End Wildern has the worst electoral variance in the borough, with each councillor representing 105 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (99 per cent in 2004).

71 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed addressing the severe under-representation in the Hedge End area through the creation of two two-member wards for the area broadly covered by the existing Hedge End Wildern ward. It proposed a Hedge End Grange Park ward comprising the majority of the Grange Park development, along with the Peppercorn estate area of West End parish. It also proposed a new two-member Hedge End Wildern ward, with the southern boundary between the two wards following a line north of Herald Road, Charterhouse Way and Radley Close to the junction with Old Shamblehurst Lane, where the boundary would turn south to follow the centre of this road and finally east along Drummond Road then south along Maunsell Way before turning east along Grange Road to the parish boundary. The eastern and western boundaries would be formed by the parish boundaries, with a revised southern boundary following Upper Norton Road (B3036) from the existing western parish boundary to its eastern boundary.

72 The Council also proposed a modified Hedge End St John's ward, comprising the existing ward apart from an area north of Upper Norton Road and broadly west of Wildern Lane which would form part of the Council's proposed Hedge End Wildern ward. That part of the existing Hedge End Wildern ward south of Upper Norton Road would also form part of the Council's revised Hedge End St John's ward. We received no further proposals for this area at Stage One. Under the Council's proposals the electoral variances in Hedge End Grange Park, Hedge End Wildern and Hedge End St John's wards would be 4 per cent below, zero and 1 per cent below

the average respectively (1 per cent below, 7 per cent below and 7 per cent below in 2004). We judged that the Borough Council's proposals, supported by Hedge End Town Council, would achieve significant improvements in electoral equality, while reflecting local settlement patterns and utilising, where possible, clearly identifiable ward boundaries and we therefore adopted them unaltered as part of our draft recommendations.

73 At Stage Three, the Council's supported the draft recommendations. We also received a representation from Hedge End Town Council supporting the Commission's draft recommendations in the area. In the absence of any further comments, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these wards as final. Our proposals are illustrated on Maps A6 and A7 in Appendix A. Proposals for consequential changes to the parishing arrangements in Hedge End are detailed at the end of this chapter.

Bursledon, Hound and Hamble wards

74 The two two-member wards of Bursledon and Hound and the three-member ward of Hamble occupy the southern part of the borough. Each ward is also coterminous with a parish of the same name. Bursledon ward is under-represented, with an electoral variance of 7 per cent (15 per cent in 2004). Hound and Hamble wards are each over-represented, with electoral variances of 10 per cent and 25 per cent respectively (11 per cent and 18 per cent in 2004).

75 The Borough Council proposed a modified three-member Bursledon ward, to be called Bursledon & Old Netley, which would comprise the whole of the existing ward along with the northern part of Hound parish and the extreme southern part of West End parish. The Council also proposed that the far south-western part of Hound parish, incorporating the majority of Netley Village and the Ingleside estate, north of the railway line, should form a new two-member Netley Abbey ward. The remaining part of Hound parish, including Butlocks Heath, together with the entire parish of Hamble-le-Rice, would form a modified two-member Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath ward. We received no further representations on this area at Stage One.

76 Under the Borough Council's Stage One proposals, Bursledon & Old Netley, Netley Abbey and Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath wards would have electoral variances of 10 per cent, 3 per cent and 6 per cent respectively (6 per cent, 3 per cent and 5 per cent in 2004). In looking at the Borough Council's proposals, we concluded that these three wards would achieve a significant improvement in electoral equality in the area while closely reflecting the pattern of the three settlements of Bursledon, Netley and Hamble-le-Rice and we therefore adopted them unaltered as part of our draft recommendations.

77 At Stage Three, the Council supported our draft recommendations and we received no further comments on the area. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for these wards as final. The proposals are illustrated on Maps A8 and A9 in Appendix A. We have made recommendations for consequential changes to the parish electoral arrangements for these three parishes, which are detailed at the end of this chapter.

Electoral Cycle

78 At Stage One we received no proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the borough. Accordingly, we make no recommendation for change to the present system of elections by thirds.

79 At Stage Three no further comments were received, and we confirm our draft recommendation for no change to the present system of elections by thirds as final.

Conclusions

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

- between Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards we propose that minor modifications be made to the boundaries along Queen’s Road and Nichol Road in order to better locate individual properties in these areas.

81 We conclude that, in Eastleigh:

- (i) a council of 44 members should be retained;
- (ii) there should be 19 wards, two more than at present;
- (iii) the boundaries of 16 of the existing 17 wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of two wards;
- (iv) elections should continue to be held by thirds.

82 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1999 and 2004 electorate figures.

Figure 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1999 electorate		2004 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	44	44	44	44
Number of wards	17	19	17	19
Average number of electors per councillor	2,017	2,017	2,084	2,084
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	12	0	14	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	9	0	8	0

83 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Eastleigh Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from 12 to none. By 2004 this improvement in electoral equality is anticipated to continue.

Final Recommendation

Eastleigh Borough Council should comprise 44 councillors serving 19 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

84 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements we are required to comply, so far as is reasonably practicable, with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972. The Schedule provides that if a parish council area is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Eastleigh Borough Council has undertaken a parish review and submitted recommendations to the Secretary of State for changes to a number of parish boundaries. Should the Secretary of State be minded to accept those recommendations, a number of consequential parish warding proposals contained in this report would no longer be required, and we would be content for any appropriate modifications to be made. We have included proposed consequential warding arrangements for the parishes of Bishopstoke, Fair Oak & Horton Heath and West End. We are also making recommendations for parish warding in the parishes of Hedge End, Bursledon and Hound to reflect the proposed borough wards.

85 In response to our consultation report, the Borough Council, with the support of the parish and town councils in the borough, supported our proposed parish warding, suggesting only one amended ward name.

86 The parish of Bishopstoke is served by 14 councillors and is not currently warded. In its Stage One submission the Borough Council, supported by Bishopstoke Parish Council, proposed a borough warding pattern in Bishopstoke which would require warding the parish. We did not, however, receive any proposals for revised parish arrangements in order to facilitate our warding at borough level.

87 Consequently, in the absence of any proposals from the borough or parish councils, we recommended that Bishopstoke parish should comprise two parish wards, Bishopstoke West and Bishopstoke East, which would be coterminous with our proposed borough wards as they fall within the parish. We did not propose any change to the current parish council size, with each of the two wards returning seven councillors.

88 At Stage Three, the Borough Council's submission, supported by Bishopstoke Parish Council, supported the draft recommendations. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Bishopstoke parish as final.

Final Recommendation

Bishopstoke Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Bishopstoke West (returning seven councillors) and Bishopstoke East (returning seven councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

89 The parish of Fair Oak & Horton Heath is currently served by 15 councillors and is not warded. At Stage One, the Borough Council, supported by Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council, proposed modified borough warding in the area which would require consequential parish warding. However, neither the Borough nor the Parish Council submitted proposals at Stage One for revised parishing arrangements, and therefore we formulated our own draft recommendations.

90 We recommended that the parish of Fair Oak & Horton Heath should comprise two parish wards, Fair Oak & Horton Heath West ward (comprising that part of the parish within the borough ward of Bishopstoke East) and Fair Oak & Horton Heath East ward (coterminous with the proposed borough ward of Fair Oak & Horton Heath). Although there is no legislative requirement for electoral equality at parish level, in the absence of alternative proposals we proposed that Fair Oak & Horton Heath West parish ward should return two parish councillors, based upon its proportion of the whole parish electorate, and that Fair Oak & Horton Heath East parish ward should return 13 councillors.

91 At Stage Three, the Borough Council's submission (including Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council) supported the draft recommendations for parish warding in this area. In the absence of any further representations and we are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final.

Final Recommendation

Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Fair Oak & Horton Heath West parish ward (returning two councillors) and Fair Oak & Horton Heath East ward (returning 13 councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

92 The parish of West End comprises 15 councillors and is currently divided into two parish wards which are coterminous with the existing borough wards of West End North and West End South. West End North parish ward currently returns six councillors and West End South parish ward returns nine councillors. The Borough Council's Stage One proposal for borough warding in this area would involve re-warding the parish of West End to create four new parish wards. The Borough Council in its Stage One submission, supported by West End Parish Council, stated that "no proposals have been submitted by the Parish Council in respect of the name or level of representation for any new ward".

93 As we based our borough warding pattern in West End parish on the Borough Council's proposals, we also made consequential recommendations for modifications to West End parish. We proposed creating a new parish ward, West End East, which would comprise that part of the parish which, for borough warding purposes, would form part of Hedge End Grange Park ward. We proposed that this ward should return one councillor. We also proposed new West End North and West End South wards which would be coterminous with our proposed borough wards of the same names. We proposed that these two parish wards should return six and seven parish councillors respectively.

94 For the area of West End parish west of the A27, which would form part of our proposed Bursledon & Old Netley ward, we proposed creating a parish ward, named West End Peninsula, returning one councillor.

95 At Stage Three, the Borough Council (supported by West End Town Council) supported the draft warding pattern in the parish. However, the Council stated it preferred to rename the proposed West End Peninsula ward as West End Kaneshill. We received no further comments at Stage Three and based on the present parish boundaries, we are confirming our draft recommendations. We are content with the proposed parish ward name West End Kaneshill, suggested by the Council and supported by the Parish Council, and we are adopting it as part of our final recommendations.

Final Recommendation

West End Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing four wards: West End East (returning one councillor), West End North (six), West End South (seven) and West End Kaneshill (one). Our proposals are illustrated on Maps A4, A5 and A6 in Appendix A.

96 The parish of Hedge End currently returns 20 councillors and is formed of six wards: St John's (returning four councillors), St Helen's (three), Wildern (three), Freegrounds (three), Grange Park South (three) and Grange Park North (four). At Stage One, the Borough Council, supported by Hedge End Town Council, proposed re-warding this parish in order to reflect its proposed borough warding pattern in the area. It also proposed increasing the number of town councillors from 20 to 21 and increasing the number of parish wards from six to seven. Each parish ward would return three councillors. It also proposed that three parish wards should cover the area of the proposed borough ward of Hedge End St John's: St John's, St Helen's and Freegrounds. For the proposed borough ward of Hedge End Grange Park, it proposed two parish wards: Grange Park East and Grange Park West. The proposed borough ward of Hedge End Wildern would also comprise two parish wards: Wildern and Shamblehurst.

97 Having adopted the Borough Council's proposed warding pattern for Hedge End, we adopted the Borough Council's proposals for parish re-warding unaltered as part of our draft recommendations.

98 At Stage Three, we received a representation from Hedge End Town Council which supported the draft recommendations as they impacted upon the parish. In the absence of any further representations, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final.

Final Recommendation

Hedge End Town Council should comprise 21 parish councillors, one more than at present, representing seven wards: St John's, St Helen's, Freegrounds, Grange Park East, Grange Park West, Wildern and Shamblehurst. Each ward should return three town councillors. Our proposals are illustrated on Maps A6 and A7 in Appendix A.

99 The parish of Hound currently has 15 councillors returned from three parish wards: Butlocks Heath & Ingleside (five councillors), Netley Abbey (eight) and Old Netley (two). In its Stage One submission, the Borough Council, supported by Hound Parish Council, proposed re-warding the parish in order to reflect its proposed borough warding pattern in the area. It proposed four new parish wards: Old Netley parish ward would be coterminous with the proposed borough ward of Bursledon & Old Netley, and Butlocks Heath parish ward would be coterminous with that part of Hound parish within its proposed borough ward of Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath. For the borough ward of Netley Abbey it proposed two parish wards: Netley Abbey (returning nine councillors) and Ingleside (two councillors).

100 Having adopted the Borough Council's proposed borough warding pattern in this area, we adopted its proposed parish warding as part of our draft recommendations. At Stage Three, the Borough Council's submission supported our proposed parishing arrangements in Hound and we are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final.

Final Recommendation

Hound Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Old Netley (returning two councillors), Butlocks Heath (two), Ingleside (two) and Netley Abbey (nine). Our proposals are illustrated on Maps A8 and A9 in Appendix A.

101 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the borough. We received no further comments at Stage Three and we are therefore confirming this as final.

Final Recommendation

For parish councils, elections should continue to be held at the same time as elections for the principal authority.

Map 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for Eastleigh

6 NEXT STEPS

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

103 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made before 4 September 2000.

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

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

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Eastleigh: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Eastleigh area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Maps A2 to A9 and the large map at the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed boundary between Bishopstoke East and Fair Oak & Horton Heath wards and the proposed Fair Oak & Horton Heath West, Fair Oak & Horton Heath East parish wards of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish.

Map A3 illustrates the proposed boundary between Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West wards and the proposed parish wards of Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West of Bishopstoke parish.

Map A4 illustrates the proposed boundary between West End North and West End South wards and the proposed parish wards of West End North and West End South of West End parish.

Map A5 illustrates the proposed boundary between West End South and Bursledon & Old Netley wards and the proposed West End Kanes Hill parish ward of West End parish.

Map A6 illustrates the proposed boundary between Hedge End Grange Park and Hedge End Wildern wards and the proposed parish wards of West End East, Grange Park West, Grange Park East, Shamblehurst and Wildern of West End and Hedge End parishes.

Map A7 illustrates the proposed boundary between Hedge End Wildern and Hedge End St John's wards and the proposed parish wards of Freegrounds, St John's and St Helen's of Hedge End parish.

Map A8 illustrates the proposed boundaries between Bursledon & Old Netley and Hamble-Le-Rice & Butlocks Heath wards and the parish ward boundaries of Old Netley and Butlocks Heath of Hound parish.

Map A9 illustrates the proposed boundary between Netley Abbey and Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath ward and the proposed parish wards of Ingleside and Netley Abbey of Hound parish.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the unparished area.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Eastleigh: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed Boundary between Bishopstoke East and Fair Oak & Horton Heath Wards and the Proposed Fair Oak & Horton Heath West, Fair Oak & Horton Heath East Parish Wards of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish.

Map A3: Proposed Boundary between Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West Wards and the Proposed Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West Parish Wards of Bishopstoke parish.

Map A4: Proposed Boundary between West End North and West End South Wards and the Proposed West End North and West End South Parish Wards of West End parish.

Map A5: Proposed Boundary between West End South and Bursledon & Old Netley Ward and the Proposed West End Kanes Hill parish ward of West End parish.

Map A6: Proposed Boundary between Hedge End Grange Park and Hedge End Wildern Wards and the Proposed West End East, Grange Park West, Grange Park East, Shamblehurst and Wildern Parish Wards of West End and Hedge End parishes.

Map A7: Proposed Boundary between Hedge End Wildern and Hedge End St John's Wards and the Proposed Freegrounds, St John's and St Helen's Parish Wards of Hedge End parish.

Map A8: Proposed Boundary between Bursledon & Old Netley and Hamble-Le-Rice & Butlocks Heath Wards and Old Netley and Butlocks Heath Parish Wards of Hound parish.

Map A9: Proposed Boundary between Netley Abbey and Hamble-le-Rice & Butlocks Heath wards and the Proposed Ingleside and Netley Abbey Parish Wards of Hound parish.