

Final recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements  
for New Forest in Hampshire

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

*July 2000*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of New Forest in Hampshire.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke CBE (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

© Crown Copyright 2000

Applications for reproduction should be made to: Her Majesty's Stationery Office Copyright Unit.

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by the Local Government Commission for England with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.

Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: GD 03114G.

This report is printed on recycled paper.

Report no: 173

# CONTENTS

|   | page       |
|---|------------|
| LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE                            | <i>v</i>   |
| SUMMARY   | <i>vii</i> |
| 1 INTRODUCTION  | <i>1</i>   |
| 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS                            | <i>3</i>   |
| 3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS                                     | <i>7</i>   |
| 4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION                                 | <i>9</i>   |
| 5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS                        | <i>11</i>  |
| 6 NEXT STEPS  | <i>31</i>  |
| <br>  |            |
| APPENDICES  |            |
| A Final Recommendations for New Forest:<br>Detailed Mapping | <i>33</i>  |
| B Draft Recommendations for New Forest (February 2000)      | <i>41</i>  |

A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for the areas of Fawley, Hordle, Hythe & Dibden, Lymington & Pennington, Milford-on-Sea and New Milton 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 New Forest under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in February 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 modifications have been made (see paragraph 107) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in New Forest.

We recommend that New Forest District Council should be served by 60 councillors representing 34 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 be elected every four years.

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 District 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 New Forest on 20 July 1999. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 22 February 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 New Forest:

- **in 22 of the 33 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district and 11 wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average, both initially and by 2004.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs (107-108) are that:

- **New Forest District Council should have 60 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 34 wards, instead of 33 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 29 of the existing wards should be modified and four wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 28 of the proposed 34 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with only one ward expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2004.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Copythorne, Fawley, Hythe & Dibden, Lymington & Pennington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton & Eling;**
- **the warding of Hordle parish for the first time.**

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

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

|    | <b>Ward name</b>                         | <b>Number of councillors</b> | <b>Constituent areas</b>  | <b>Map reference</b>    |
|----|--|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1  | Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh | 2                            | Copythorne South ward (part); Colbury ward (the parish of Ashurst & Colbury); Netley Marsh ward (the parish of Netley Marsh)                              | Maps 2 and A4           |
| 2  | Barton                                   | 2                            | Barton ward; Becton ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map     |
| 3  | Bashley                                  | 1                            | Bashley ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map     |
| 4  | Becton                                   | 2                            | Becton ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map     |
| 5  | Boldre & Sway                            | 2                            | Boldre ward (the parish of Boldre); Sway ward (the parish of Sway)  | Map 2                   |
| 6  | Bramshaw, Copythorne North & Minstead    | 1                            | Forest North ward; Copythorne South ward (part)   | Maps 2 and A4           |
| 7  | Brangore & Burley                        | 2                            | Brangore & Sopley ward (part - the parish of Brangore); Forest West ward (part - the parish of Burley)  | Map 2                   |
| 8  | Brockenhurst & Forest South East         | 2                            | Brockenhurst ward (the parish of Brockenhurst); Forest South ward (the parishes of Beaulieu, Denny Lodge, East Boldre and Exbury & Lepe)                  | Map 2                   |
| 9  | Buckland                                 | 1                            | Lymington Town ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map     |
| 10 | Butts Ash & Dibden Purlieu               | 2                            | Dibden Purlieu ward (part); Hythe South ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map     |
| 11 | Dibden & Hythe East                      | 2                            | Dibden & Hythe North ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map     |
| 12 | Downlands & Forest                       | 1                            | Downlands ward (the parishes of Breamore, Damerham, Martin, Rockbourne and Whitsbury); Forest North West ward (part - the parishes of Hale and Woodgreen) | Map 2                   |
| 13 | Fawley, Blackfield & Langley             | 2                            | Blackfield & Langley ward (part); Fawley Holbury ward (part)  | Map 2, A6 and large map |
| 14 | Fernhill                                 | 2                            | Bashley ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map     |

|    | <b>Ward name</b>           | <b>Number of councillors</b> | <b>Constituent areas</b>  | <b>Map reference</b> |
|----|----------------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 15 | Fordingbridge              | 2                            | <i>Unchanged</i>  | Map 2                |
| 16 | Forest North West          | 1                            | Ringwood North ward (part - the parish of Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley); Forest North West ward (part - the parishes of Godshill and Hyde) | Map 2                |
| 17 | Furzedown & Hardley        | 1                            | Fawley Holbury ward (part); Hythe South ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map  |
| 18 | Holbury & North Blackfield | 2                            | Blackfield & Langley ward (part); Fawley Holbury ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map  |
| 19 | Hordle                     | 2                            | Hordle ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map  |
| 20 | Hythe West & Langdown      | 2                            | Dibden & Hythe North ward (part); Dibden Purlieu (part); Hythe South ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map  |
| 21 | Lymington Town             | 2                            | Lymington Town ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map  |
| 22 | Lyndhurst                  | 1                            | <i>Unchanged</i>  | Map 2                |
| 23 | Marchwood                  | 2                            | <i>Unchanged</i>  | Map 2                |
| 24 | Milford                    | 2                            | Milford ward (the parish of Milford); Hordle ward (part)  | Map 2 and large map  |
| 25 | Milton                     | 2                            | Milton ward: Becton ward (part)   | Map 2 and large map  |
| 26 | Pennington                 | 2                            | Lymington Town ward (part); Pennington ward   | Map 2 and large map  |
| 27 | Ringwood East & Sopley     | 1                            | Forest West ward (part); Bransgore & Sopley ward (part - the parish of Sopley)  | Maps 2, A2 and A3    |
| 28 | Ringwood North             | 2                            | Ringwood North ward (part); Ringwood South ward (part); Forest West ward (part)   | Maps 2, A2 and A3    |
| 29 | Ringwood South             | 2                            | Forest West ward (part); Ringwood South ward (part)   | Maps 2, A2 and A3    |
| 30 | Totton Central             | 2                            | Totton Central ward (part)  | Maps 2 and A5        |
| 31 | Totton East                | 2                            | Totton Central ward (part); Totton North ward (part)  | Maps 2 and A5        |

|    | <b>Ward name</b> | <b>Number of councillors</b> | <b>Constituent areas</b>                             | <b>Map reference</b> |
|----|------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| 32 | Totton North     | 2                            | Totton Central ward (part); Totton North ward (part) | Maps 2 and A5        |
| 33 | Totton South     | 2                            | <i>Unchanged</i>                                     | Maps 2 and A5        |
| 34 | Totton West      | 2                            | Totton Central ward (part)                           | Maps 2 and A5        |

*Notes: 1 The whole district is parished.*

*2 Map 2, Appendix A and the large maps in the back of the report, illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.*

Figure 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for New Forest

| 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 Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh | 2                     | 4,682             | 2,341                             | 4                       | 5,018             | 2,509                             | 7                       |
| 2 Barton                                   | 2                     | 4,464             | 2,232                             | -1                      | 4,621             | 2,311                             | -1                      |
| 3 Bashley                                  | 1                     | 2,217             | 2,217                             | -1                      | 2,308             | 2,308                             | -1                      |
| 4 Becton                                   | 2                     | 4,137             | 2,069                             | -8                      | 4,428             | 2,214                             | -5                      |
| 5 Boldre & Sway                            | 2                     | 4,328             | 2,164                             | -4                      | 4,461             | 2,231                             | -5                      |
| 6 Bramshaw, Copythorne North & Minstead    | 1                     | 2,136             | 2,136                             | -5                      | 2,222             | 2,222                             | -5                      |
| 7 Bransgore & Burley                       | 2                     | 4,730             | 2,365                             | 5                       | 4,439             | 2,220                             | -5                      |
| 8 Brockenhurst & Forest South East         | 2                     | 4,553             | 2,277                             | 1                       | 4,604             | 2,302                             | -2                      |
| 9 Buckland                                 | 1                     | 2,333             | 2,333                             | 4                       | 2,441             | 2,441                             | 4                       |
| 10 Butts Ash & Dibden Purlieu              | 2                     | 5,090             | 2,545                             | 13                      | 5,095             | 2,548                             | 9                       |
| 11 Dibden & Hythe East                     | 2                     | 4,525             | 2,263                             | 1                       | 4,648             | 2,324                             | -1                      |
| 12 Downlands & Forest                      | 1                     | 2,355             | 2,355                             | 5                       | 2,354             | 2,354                             | 0                       |
| 13 Fawley, Blackfield & Langley            | 2                     | 4,854             | 2,427                             | 8                       | 4,838             | 2,419                             | 3                       |
| 14 Fernhill                                | 2                     | 4,483             | 2,242                             | 0                       | 4,796             | 2,398                             | 2                       |
| 15 Fordingbridge                           | 2                     | 4,832             | 2,416                             | 7                       | 5,056             | 2,528                             | 8                       |
| 16 Forest North West                       | 1                     | 2,136             | 2,136                             | -5                      | 2,144             | 2,144                             | -8                      |
| 17 Furzedown & Hardley                     | 1                     | 2,429             | 2,429                             | 8                       | 2,495             | 2,495                             | 7                       |
| 18 Holbury & North Blackfield              | 2                     | 5,025             | 2,513                             | 12                      | 5,005             | 2,503                             | 7                       |
| 19 Hordle                                  | 2                     | 4,197             | 2,099                             | -7                      | 4,351             | 2,176                             | -7                      |
| 20 Hythe West & Langdown                   | 2                     | 4,730             | 2,365                             | 5                       | 5,092             | 2,546                             | 9                       |

| 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 % |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 21 Lyminster Town         | 2                     | 4,714             | 2,357                             | 5                       | 4,871             | 2,436                             | 4                       |
| 22 Lyndhurst              | 1                     | 2,490             | 2,490                             | 11                      | 2,523             | 2,523                             | 8                       |
| 23 Marchwood              | 2                     | 3,750             | 1,875                             | -17                     | 4,457             | 2,229                             | -5                      |
| 24 Milford                | 2                     | 4,296             | 2,148                             | -5                      | 4,225             | 2,113                             | -11                     |
| 25 Milton                 | 2                     | 4,562             | 2,281                             | 1                       | 4,704             | 2,352                             | 0                       |
| 26 Pennington             | 2                     | 4,709             | 2,355                             | 5                       | 4,821             | 2,411                             | 3                       |
| 27 Ringwood East & Sopley | 1                     | 2,037             | 2,037                             | -9                      | 2,111             | 2,111                             | -10                     |
| 28 Ringwood North         | 2                     | 4,783             | 2,392                             | 6                       | 4,858             | 2,429                             | 4                       |
| 29 Ringwood South         | 2                     | 4,418             | 2,209                             | -2                      | 4,720             | 2,360                             | 1                       |
| 30 Totton Central         | 2                     | 4,381             | 2,191                             | -3                      | 4,425             | 2,213                             | -6                      |
| 31 Totton East            | 2                     | 4,305             | 2,153                             | -4                      | 4,423             | 2,212                             | -6                      |
| 32 Totton North           | 2                     | 3,920             | 1,960                             | -13                     | 4,841             | 2,421                             | 3                       |
| 33 Totton South           | 2                     | 4,652             | 2,326                             | 3                       | 4,859             | 2,430                             | 4                       |
| 34 Totton West            | 2                     | 3,765             | 1,883                             | -16                     | 4,297             | 2,149                             | -8                      |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>60</b>             | <b>135,018</b>    | <b>-</b>                          | <b>-</b>                | <b>140,551</b>    | <b>-</b>                          | <b>-</b>                |
| <b>Averages</b>           | <b>-</b>              | <b>-</b>          | <b>2,250</b>                      | <b>-</b>                | <b>-</b>          | <b>2,343</b>                      | <b>-</b>                |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by New Forest 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 New Forest in Hampshire. We have now reviewed 13 districts in Hampshire 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 New Forest. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in January 1976 (Report No. 130). The electoral arrangements of Hampshire County Council were last reviewed in October 1980 (Report No. 397). We intend reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, ie 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* contained 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 District 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 district.

5 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (third edition published in October 1999), which 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 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the district as a whole. Having regard to our statutory criteria, our aim is to achieve as low a level of electoral imbalance as is practicable. 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 1999/00 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 New Forest District 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 district, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the district 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 District 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 22 February 2000 with the publication of our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for New Forest in Hampshire*, and ended on 17 April 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 district of New Forest is situated in the south-west corner of Hampshire. It covers 290 square miles and has 40 miles of coastline, and is geographically one of the largest district council areas in England. With a population of nearly 170,000, it is also one of the most populous shire districts. The district is dominated by the New Forest with over 90 per cent of the Forest being contained within the district's boundaries. Totton & Eling is the largest town with a population of 26,000. The other main settlements are New Milton, Hythe & Dibden, Fawley, Lymington & Pennington and Ringwood. There are 37 parishes.

14 The electorate of the district is 135,018 (February 1999) which is forecast to increase by around 4 per cent over the next five years, to 140,551. The council presently has 58 members who are elected from 33 wards. Six of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 13 are each represented by two councillors and 14 are single-member wards. The council is elected as a whole every four years.

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

16 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in New Forest district, with around 32 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments. The most notable increases have been in the eastern parishes of the district (Totton & Eling, Marchwood, Hythe & Dibden and Fawley) and the coastal towns of New Milton and Lymington & Pennington in the south of the district.

17 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,328 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 2,423 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 22 of the 33 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, of which 11 wards vary by more than 20 per cent and seven wards vary by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Bransgore & Sopley ward where the councillor represents 76 per cent more electors than the district average. Electoral equality is predicted to deteriorate further over the next five years.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in New Forest*

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 Barton                | 2                     | 3,781             | 1,891                             | -19                     | 3,900             | 1,950                             | -20                     |
| 2 Bashley               | 2                     | 6,700             | 3,350                             | 44                      | 7,104             | 3,552                             | 47                      |
| 3 Becton                | 2                     | 5,348             | 2,674                             | 15                      | 5,706             | 2,853                             | 18                      |
| 4 Blackfield & Langley  | 2                     | 4,042             | 2,021                             | -13                     | 3,952             | 1,976                             | -18                     |
| 5 Boldre                | 1                     | 1,609             | 1,609                             | -31                     | 1,609             | 1,609                             | -34                     |
| 6 Bransgore & Sopley    | 1                     | 4,098             | 4,098                             | 76                      | 3,941             | 3,941                             | 63                      |
| 7 Brockenhurst          | 1                     | 2,784             | 2,784                             | 20                      | 2,820             | 2,820                             | 16                      |
| 8 Colbury               | 1                     | 1,750             | 1,750                             | -25                     | 1,927             | 1,927                             | -20                     |
| 9 Copythorne South      | 1                     | 1,522             | 1,522                             | -35                     | 1,573             | 1,573                             | -35                     |
| 10 Dibden & Hythe North | 3                     | 7,284             | 2,428                             | 4                       | 7,800             | 2,600                             | 7                       |
| 11 Dibden Purlieu       | 1                     | 2,601             | 2,601                             | 12                      | 2,529             | 2,529                             | 4                       |
| 12 Downlands            | 1                     | 1,457             | 1,457                             | -37                     | 1,442             | 1,442                             | -40                     |
| 13 Fawley Holbury       | 3                     | 6,785             | 2,262                             | -3                      | 6,842             | 2,281                             | -6                      |
| 14 Fordingbridge        | 2                     | 4,832             | 2,416                             | 4                       | 5,054             | 2,527                             | 4                       |
| 15 Forest North         | 1                     | 1,831             | 1,831                             | -21                     | 1,909             | 1,909                             | -21                     |
| 16 Forest North West    | 1                     | 2,052             | 2,052                             | -12                     | 2,087             | 2,087                             | -14                     |
| 17 Forest South         | 1                     | 1,769             | 1,769                             | -24                     | 1,785             | 1,785                             | -26                     |
| 18 Forest West          | 2                     | 4,257             | 2,129                             | -9                      | 4,309             | 2,155                             | -11                     |
| 19 Hordle               | 2                     | 4,381             | 2,191                             | -6                      | 4,537             | 2,269                             | -6                      |
| 20 Hythe South          | 3                     | 5,941             | 1,980                             | -15                     | 6,051             | 2,017                             | -17                     |
| 21 Lymington Town       | 3                     | 7,215             | 2,405                             | 3                       | 7,429             | 2,493                             | 3                       |
| 22 Lyndhurst            | 1                     | 2,490             | 2,490                             | 7                       | 2,523             | 2,523                             | 4                       |
| 23 Marchwood            | 1                     | 3,750             | 3,750                             | 61                      | 4,457             | 4,457                             | 84                      |
| 24 Milford              | 2                     | 4,112             | 2,056                             | -12                     | 4,039             | 2,020                             | -17                     |
| 25 Milton               | 2                     | 4,034             | 2,017                             | -13                     | 4,184             | 2,074                             | -14                     |
| 26 Netley Marsh         | 1                     | 1,715             | 1,715                             | -26                     | 1,832             | 1,832                             | -24                     |

| 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 % |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 27 Pennington     | 2                     | 4,541             | 2,271                             | -2                      | 4,653             | 2,327                             | -4                      |
| 28 Ringwood North | 2                     | 3,883             | 1,942                             | -17                     | 3,835             | 1,918                             | -21                     |
| 29 Ringwood South | 2                     | 4,712             | 2,356                             | 1                       | 5,011             | 2,506                             | 3                       |
| 30 Sway           | 1                     | 2,719             | 2,719                             | 17                      | 2,852             | 2,852                             | 18                      |
| 31 Totton Central | 3                     | 9,443             | 3,148                             | 35                      | 10,846            | 3,615                             | 49                      |
| 32 Totton North   | 3                     | 6,928             | 2,309                             | -1                      | 7,141             | 2,380                             | -2                      |
| 33 Totton South   | 2                     | 4,652             | 2,326                             | 0                       | 4,858             | 2,429                             | 0                       |
| <b>Totals</b>     | <b>58</b>             | <b>135,018</b>    | –                                 | –                       | <b>140,551</b>    | –                                 | –                       |
| <b>Averages</b>   | –                     | –                 | <b>2,328</b>                      | –                       | –                 | <b>2,423</b>                      | –                       |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by New Forest 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 1999, electors in Downlands ward were relatively over-represented by 37 per cent, while electors in Bransgore & Sopley ward were significantly under-represented by 76 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### 3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

18 During Stage One we received seven representations, including a district-wide scheme from New Forest District Council, four parish councils and two local residents. 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 New Forest in Hampshire*.

19 Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's proposals, which achieved improvement in electoral equality, and allocated the correct level of representation across the district. However, we moved away from the District Council's scheme in a number of areas, affecting four wards, to further improve electoral equality overall. We proposed that:

- New Forest District Council should be served by 60 councillors, compared with the current 58, representing 34 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 29 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in an increase of one, and four wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for the parishes of Copythorne, Fawley, Hythe & Dibden, Lymington & Pennington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton & Eling.

**Draft Recommendation**

New Forest District Council should comprise 60 councillors, serving 34 wards. The Council should continue to be elected every four years.

20 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 28 of the 34 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 10 per cent from the average in 2004.



## 4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

21 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, eight representations were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of New Forest District Council and the Commission.

### **New Forest District Council**

22 The District Council supported the majority of the draft recommendations. However, it proposed that the proposed boundary between Hordle and Milford ward should be modified to follow the length of the Milford Road (as included in its Stage One submission) and that the parish warding of Fawley parish should be modified.

### **Parish and Town Councils**

23 Fawley, Hythe & Dibden and Marchwood Parish Councils opposed the proposed Furzedown & Hardley ward. Each suggested that our proposals in this area would not reflect distinct local community identities, provide convenient and effective local government for electors or utilise identifiable boundaries. Fawley Parish Council also proposed alternative parish warding arrangements.

24 New Milton Town Council and Totton & Eling Town Council supported the draft recommendations with regard to their respective towns.

### **Other Representations**

25 County Councillor Randall, member for Totton South division, supported the draft recommendations for Totton. Hampshire County Council opposed the proposed Furzedown & Hardley ward as it would “not reflect the identities and interests of the local communities and nor will it secure effective and convenient local government”.



## 5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

26 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for New Forest 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 – 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, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

27 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.

28 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.

29 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**

30 At Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 4 per cent from 135,018 to 140,551 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expects most of the growth to be in Totton Central ward, although some is also expected in Marchwood ward. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and 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.

31 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**

32 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.

33 New Forest District Council is at present served by 58 councillors. At Stage One the District Council proposed an increase in council size from 58 to 60. It stated that this achieved the best possible numerical solution together with sensible boundaries, taking into account many of the parish councils' views.

34 In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 60 members.

35 At Stage Three there was general acceptance of the proposed council of 60 members and no proposals for an alternative council size were received. We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for a council size of 60.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

36 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the district-wide scheme from the District Council. In view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the District Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we concluded that we should base our recommendations on the District Council's scheme. We considered that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other proposals submitted at Stage One. However, to improve electoral equality further and having regard to local community identities and interests, we decided to move away from the District Council's proposals in two areas.

37 The response to our draft recommendations report has been generally positive, with a number of respondents supporting our proposals. However, we have noted some local concerns regarding our proposed wards affecting the parishes of Fawley, Hythe & Dibden, Hordle and Milford, and where possible, we are modifying our draft recommendations in these areas, to better reflect community identities. For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Downlands, Fordingbridge and Forest West wards;
- (b) Bransgore & Sopley, Forest West, Ringwood North and Ringwood South wards;
- (c) Colbury, Copythorne South, Forest North and Netley Marsh wards;
- (d) Brockenhurst, Forest South and Lyndhurst wards;
- (e) Marchwood, Totton Central, Totton North and Totton South wards;

- (f) Blackfield & Langley, Dibden & Hythe North, Dibden Purlieu, Fawley Holbury and Hythe South wards;
- (g) Boldre, Hordle, Milford and Sway wards;
- (h) Lymington Town and Pennington wards;
- (i) Barton, Bashley, Becton and Milton wards.

38 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.

### **Downlands, Fordingbridge and Forest West wards**

39 These three wards are located in the north-west of the district. The single-member ward of Downlands comprises the parishes of Breamore, Damerham, Martin, Rockbourne and Whitsbury and is the most over-represented ward in the district. The number of electors per councillor varies from the district average by 37 per cent (40 per cent by 2004). The two-member ward of Fordingbridge comprises the parishes of Fordingbridge and Sandleheath and is relatively well represented, varying from the average by 4 per cent both initially and by 2004. The single-member ward of Forest North West, comprising the parishes of Godshill, Hale, Hyde and Woodgreen, is presently over-represented by 12 per cent (14 per cent by 2004).

40 During the District Council's own consultation a number of parishes suggested that Sandleheath parish should form part of a ward consisting of other small parishes in the area. However, both Fordingbridge and Sandleheath parish councils proposed no change to the existing arrangements. Therefore, as the existing Fordingbridge ward would continue to be reasonably well represented, both initially and by 2004, the District Council proposed no change to the existing two-member Fordingbridge ward. Under the District Council's scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the ward under a council size of 60 would initially vary from the average by 7 per cent (8 per cent by 2004).

41 The District Council also proposed a single-member Downlands & Forest ward comprising the parishes of Breamore, Damerham, Hale, Martin, Rockbourne, Whitsbury and Woodgreen. Under the District Council's scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the ward would vary from the average by 5 per cent initially but equal the average by 2004.

42 With the exception of Rockbourne, all the parish councils that responded to the District Council's own consultation, from the existing Downlands and Forest North West wards, favoured the retention of single-member wards in rural areas, and they generally supported the District Council's proposals for the area.

43 We concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the District Council's proposals appeared to enhance the community identity of this area, particularly with regard to the parishes of Fordingbridge and Sandleheath. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for an unchanged Fordingbridge ward and the new ward of Downlands & Forest, without amendment.

44 At Stage Three the District Council expressed support for our proposals in this area and we received no other comments. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Downlands & Forest and Fordingbridge, as final. We consider that the proposals provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Bransgore & Sopley, Forest West, Ringwood North and Ringwood South wards**

45 These four wards lie in the west of the district. The single-member ward of Bransgore & Sopley comprises the parishes of the ward name, and is the most under-represented ward in the district. The number of electors per councillor varies from the district average by 76 per cent (63 per cent by 2004). The two-member ward of Forest West, comprising the parish of Burley and the Bisterne and Hangersley town wards of Ringwood, is presently over-represented, varying from the average by 9 per cent (11 per cent by 2004). The two-member Ringwood North ward, comprising the parish of Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley and the Ringwood North town ward of Ringwood, is over-represented by 17 per cent (21 per cent by 2004). The two-member Ringwood South ward, comprising the Ringwood South town ward of Ringwood, is relatively well represented, varying from the average by 1 per cent (3 per cent by 2004).

46 During Stage One, the District Council, with support from Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council, proposed including the parish in a modified single-member Forest North West ward, together with the parishes of Godshill and Hyde. In the remainder of the area the District Council proposed a two-member Bransgore & Burley ward, comprising the parishes of Bransgore and Burley, a single-member Ringwood East & Sopley ward, comprising the parish of Sopley and the rural area of Ringwood and two two-member wards of Ringwood North and Ringwood South from the 'built up' area of Ringwood. The District Council informed us that the boundaries of the proposed new wards which lie within Ringwood Town had been agreed in consultation with the Town Council.

47 The District Council stated that it appreciated that the proposed single-member ward of Ringwood East & Sopley has a forecast electoral variance of 10 per cent. However, Ringwood Town Council strongly supported the boundaries proposed for the three wards involving Ringwood. It had considered including 150 electors from the more urban area of Ringwood in the single-member ward, but this was not supported. It also considered combining the existing Bisterne town ward with the proposed single-member ward. However, the Town Council identified a community link between electors living in the "ribbon development" either side of the B3347 road both north and south of the existing boundary between Ringwood South and Bisterne town wards.

48 We concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the District Council's proposals appeared to enhance the community identity of this area, particularly with regard to the re-warding of the town of Ringwood. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for the single-member Ringwood East & Sopley ward and the two-member wards of Bransgore & Burley, Ringwood North and Ringwood South, without amendment.

49 Under the District Council's 60-member scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the wards would vary from the average by 9 per cent, 5 per cent, 6 per cent and 2 per cent respectively (10 per cent, 5 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the town wards of Ringwood, to reflect the proposed district wards.

50 At Stage Three the District Council expressed support for our proposals in this area and we received no other comments. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Bransgore & Burley, Ringwood East & Sopley, Ringwood North and Ringwood South, as final. We consider the proposals to provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Colbury, Copythorne South, Forest North and Netley Marsh wards**

51 These single-member wards are located in the north-eastern corner of the district, and each is substantially over-represented. Colbury ward, comprising the parish of Ashurst & Colbury, presently varies from the average by 25 per cent (20 per cent by 2004). Copythorne South ward, comprising the South parish ward of Copythorne, is over-represented by 35 per cent both initially and by 2004. Forest North ward, comprising the parishes of Bramshaw and Minstead and the North parish ward of Copythorne, is over-represented by 21 per cent, both initially and by 2004. Netley Marsh ward, comprising the parish of the same name, varies from the average by 26 per cent (24 per cent by 2004).

52 During Stage One the District Council proposed amending the boundary between the Copythorne North and Copythorne South parish wards. The proposed Copythorne North parish ward would be included in a new single-member ward with the parishes of Bramshaw and Minstead, while the revised Copythorne South parish ward would form part of a two-member ward with the parishes of Ashurst & Colbury and Netley Marsh. The proposals for this part of the district were "positively favoured" by the parishes of Ashurst & Colbury and Minstead.

53 However, Bramshaw Parish Council stated a preference for forming part of a ward with the parishes which lie to its west, rather than remaining in a ward with Copythorne North and Minstead. The District Council considered alternative warding arrangements but stated that they would have involved the warding of a parish or an unacceptable level of electoral equality. Netley Marsh Parish Council stated a preference for remaining in a single-member ward, but the District Council did not "realistically expect that such a proposal would be acceptable to the Commission". This is indeed the case, given the electoral inequality which would result.

54 Copythorne Parish Council stated a desire for the parish not to be divided between two district wards. The District Council considered ways in which this might be possible (for example by forming a two-member ward of Copythorne, Netley Marsh & Minstead); however, it concluded that "it would have caused problems in forming acceptable wards" in this part of the district.

55 The District Council's proposed northern boundary between Copythorne North and Copythorne South parish wards appeared at first glance to be somewhat arbitrary. Therefore, in consultation with the District Council, we proposed redrawing the boundary along the M27 road until it met the District Council's proposed boundary. This minor boundary amendment would affect 40 electors and would have a positive effect on electoral equality in both of the proposed wards.

56 We noted the views of Bramshaw and Copythorne parish councils. However, we believed that the District Council had considered all viable options and the impact of such a proposal on the district as a whole. Therefore, we were content that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council (albeit with a minor boundary modification) secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the parishes of Bramshaw and Copythorne would have similar warding arrangements to those which presently exist.

57 The number of electors per councillor in the proposed wards of Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh and Bramshaw, Copythorne North & Minstead under a council size of 60 would vary from the average by 4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (7 per cent and 5 per cent by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the parish wards of Copythorne, to reflect the proposed district wards.

58 At Stage Three the District Council expressed support for our proposals in this area and we received no other comments. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh and Copythorne North & Minstead, as final. We consider that the proposals provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Brockenhurst, Forest South and Lyndhurst wards**

59 The single-member wards of Brockenhurst and Lyndhurst are centrally located and comprise the parishes of the same names. Both wards are presently under-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the average by 20 per cent and 7 per cent respectively (16 per cent and 4 per cent by 2004). The single-member Forest South ward, which stretches from the centre to the south-eastern corner of the district, comprises the parishes of Beaulieu, Denny Lodge, East Boldre and Exbury & Lepe. The ward is over-represented, with an electoral variance of 24 per cent (26 per cent by 2004).

60 At Stage One the District Council proposed no change to the existing single-member Lyndhurst ward. It also proposed a two-member Brockenhurst & Forest South East ward, combining the existing Brockenhurst and Forest South wards. Under the District Council's scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the wards would vary initially from the average by 11 per cent and 1 per cent respectively (8 per cent and 2 per cent by 2004).

61 The proposals for this part of the district were "positively favoured" by the parishes of Brockenhurst, Denny Lodge and Lyndhurst during the District Council's own consultation. We concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council

secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for the two-member wards of Brockenhurst & Forest South East and Lyndhurst, without amendment.

62 At Stage Three the District Council expressed support for our proposals in this area and we received no further comments. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Brockenhurst & Forest South East and Lyndhurst, as final. We consider the proposals to provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Marchwood, Totton Central, Totton North and Totton South wards**

63 The single-member ward of Marchwood is located on the eastern side of the district between the town of Totton & Eling and the parish of Hythe & Dibden. The ward, which comprises the parish of the same name, is substantially under-represented. The number of electors per councillor varies from the average by 61 per cent and is projected to have the worst level of representation in the district, at 84 per cent, by 2004.

64 The town of Totton & Eling is the largest settlement in the district, and the electorate is forecast to increase by more than 1,800 by 2004. The three-member ward of Totton Central is substantially under-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the average by 35 per cent (49 per cent by 2004). However, the three-member Totton North ward and the two-member Totton South ward are well represented, with an electoral variance of 1 per cent and equal to the average (2 per cent and equal to the average by 2004).

65 The District Council stated that there is a major housing development due for completion by 2002, which will significantly increase the electorate of Marchwood parish. Therefore the District Council, with support from Marchwood Parish Council, proposed increasing the current representation of the ward from one to two members, whilst retaining its existing boundaries.

66 The District Council originally consulted on the possibility of combining electors from the northern and central parts of Totton with the parishes of Ashurst & Colbury and Netley Marsh, as such a combination could achieve a good level of electoral equality. However, there was strong opposition from Totton & Eling Town Council, neighbouring parish councils and from district councillors to any new warding arrangements which combined electors from the urban Totton & Eling area with electors from the rural parishes adjoining the town. In the light of these considerations, the District Council did not pursue this option.

67 Therefore, the District Council proposed that ten members should represent the town area, which should be divided into five two-member wards. The boundaries of these proposed new wards had been formulated in consultation with the Town Council, which, we understand, considered that they were the best solution for the town, taking into account community identity and the need for electoral equality. The existing Totton South ward would be retained on its current boundaries. The remaining four new wards would be created from redrawing the boundaries between the existing Totton North and Totton Central wards.

68 We concluded that the District Council's proposals for Marchwood and the town of Totton & Eling would secure a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the District Council's proposals appeared to have enhanced the community identity of this area, particularly with regard to the re-warding of the town of Totton & Eling. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for the two-member wards of Marchwood, Totton Central, Totton East, Totton North, Totton South and Totton West, without amendment.

69 Under the District Council's 60-member scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the wards would vary from the average by 17 per cent, 3 per cent, 4 per cent, 13 per cent, 3 per cent and 16 per cent respectively (5 per cent, 6 per cent, 6 per cent, 3 per cent, 4 per cent and 8 per cent by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the town wards of Totton & Eling, to reflect the proposed district wards.

70 At Stage Three the District Council and Totton & Eling Town Council supported our proposals in this area. Councillor Randall, member for Totton South division, also expressed support for our recommendations. Marchwood Parish Council made a number of comments regarding the proposed Furzedown & Hardley ward, detailed later.

71 Having noted the local support for our proposals in this area, we confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Marchwood, Totton Central, Totton East, Totton North, Totton South and Totton West, as final. We consider the proposals to provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Blackfield & Langley, Dibden & Hythe North, Dibden Purlieu, Fawley Holbury and Hythe South wards**

72 The parishes of Hythe & Dibden and Fawley are located on the eastern side of the district. There are currently three district wards contained within the parish of Hythe & Dibden. The three-member Dibden & Hythe North ward and the single-member Dibden Purlieu ward are under-represented. The number of electors per councillor vary from the average by 4 per cent and 12 per cent respectively (7 per cent and 4 per cent by 2004). The single-member Hythe South ward is over-represented, with an electoral variance of 15 per cent (17 per cent by 2004). There are two district wards contained within the parish of Fawley. The two-member Blackfield & Langley ward and the three-member Fawley Holbury ward are over-represented. The number of electors per councillor vary from the average by 13 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (18 per cent and 6 per cent by 2004).

73 At Stage One, the District Council stated that the parishes of Hythe & Dibden and Fawley are relatively densely populated compared to much of the rest of the district. Immediately to the west of the settlements is the underdeveloped New Forest, from which Hythe & Dibden is separated by a busy by-pass. The parish of Denny Lodge, which stretches along the western boundary of Hythe & Dibden, and most of the western boundary of Fawley, is the largest parish in the district geographically, but has the lowest population density and no population 'centre'. This contrast between the 'Waterside' settlements and the sparsely populated Forest, and the physical boundary of the by-pass, meant that the Council's Working Party rejected at an early

stage the possibility of including any of the Forest parishes to the west of the Waterside in a district ward based on a Waterside settlement. This would have meant that the Forest parishes were simply used as a ‘make weight’, to be dominated by the large parish or town which would make up the majority of the ward.

74 There was also considerable debate as to whether 11 members should represent the Hythe & Dibden and Fawley area as a whole or seven members for Hythe & Dibden and five members for Fawley. Either alternative would have enabled the District Council to propose a scheme with an electoral variance of 10 per cent or less being achieved in each ward. However, the District Council proposed that six members should represent Hythe & Dibden parish, four should represent Fawley parish and there should be a single-member ward comprising electors from the southern area of Hythe and the northern area of Fawley.

75 The District Council “fully appreciated the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and that a ward comprising part of one parish and part of another is not an ideal solution.” However, it also recognised that in this case this might be necessary in the interests of formulating the best overall proposal for the district, and that the majority of wards in rural areas combined electors from more than one parish in the interests of improving electoral equality.

76 The District Council stated that its “main consideration in proposing this solution was its recognition that the primary legislative objective of the review is to achieve electoral equality.” It considered that on balance this solution was preferable, as it resulted in a better than average level of electoral equality across the town and the parishes covering the eastern side of the district as a whole. While it accepted that a proposal involving a cross-boundary ward is not an ideal solution, it considered it more satisfactory than one which would result in Hythe & Dibden being substantially under-represented and Fawley substantially over-represented.

77 Therefore the District Council proposed that 11 members should represent the area covered by the two parishes. We understand that the proposed boundaries had been agreed in consultation with both Hythe & Dibden and Fawley parish councils, which considered that (subject to Hythe & Dibden’s objection in principle to a cross-boundary ward) they are “the best that can be formed”.

78 In the proposed two-member wards of Butts Ash & Dibden Purlieu, Dibden & Hythe East and Hythe West & Langdown (contained within the parish of Hythe and Dibden), the number of electors per councillor would vary from the average by 13 per cent, 1 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (9 per cent, 1 per cent and 9 per cent by 2004). In the two-member wards of Fawley, Blackfield & Langley and Holbury & North Blackfield (contained within the parish of Fawley), the number of electors per councillor would vary from the average by 8 per cent and 12 per cent respectively (3 per cent and 7 per cent by 2004). The single-member Furzedown & Hardley ward, comprising part of the parishes of Hythe & Dibden and Fawley, would vary from the average by 8 per cent (7 per cent by 2004).

79 We acknowledged the views of Hythe & Dibden Parish Council regarding the proposed single-member ward of Furzedown & Hardley. However, we believed that the District Council had considered all the options and noted that the proposals it recommended aimed to provide electoral equality across the district, an approach that we commend. We concluded that the

proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured an improved level of electoral equality. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for the two-member wards of Butts Ash & Dibden Purlieu, Dibden & Hythe East, Hythe West & Langdown, Fawley, Blackfield & Langley, Holbury & North Blackfield and the single-member ward of Furzedown & Hardley. As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the parish wards of Fawley and Hythe & Dibden, to reflect the proposed district wards.

80 At Stage Three the District Council supported the majority of our proposals in this area, acknowledging that "it is accepted that the recommendations are not an ideal solution for the parishes of Hythe and Dibden and Fawley, but the Council has not identified a solution for the district as a whole which better meets the statutory criteria". However, it did propose alternative warding arrangements for Fawley parish. These proposals are outlined in more detail later in the Chapter.

81 Fawley, Hythe & Dibden and Marchwood parish councils and Hampshire County Council opposed the proposed Furzedown & Hardley ward. They contended that the single-member ward would not reflect distinct local community identities, provide convenient and effective local government for electors or utilise identifiable boundaries. However, the only alternative proposed came from the parishes of Fawley and Hythe & Dibden. They proposed reducing the representation of Totton & Eling from ten to nine members and allocating that member to the Hythe/Fawley area. However, this would clearly result in Totton being under-represented and one of the proposed Fawley wards varying by 15 per cent by 2004. Fawley Parish Council also proposed alternative parish warding arrangements which are dealt with later in the Chapter.

82 We have not been persuaded by the argument opposing the district wards in this area, and propose endorsing our draft recommendations as final, without modification. The number of electors per councillor is the same as under the draft recommendations. These proposals are outlined on the large map at the back of the report.

83 However, we have been persuaded by the evidence submitted by the District Council and Fawley Parish Council regarding the parish warding of Fawley, and propose alternative parish warding arrangements. Please see paragraph 113, Map A6 and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Boldre, Hordle, Milford and Sway wards**

84 These four wards are located in the south of the district. The single-member wards of Boldre and Sway, comprising the parishes of the same names, presently have varying degrees of electoral equality. Boldre ward is over-represented by 31 per cent (34 per cent by 2004) and Sway ward is under-represented by 17 per cent (18 per cent by 2004). The two-member ward of Hordle, comprising the parish of the same name, is reasonably well represented. The number of electors per councillor varies from the average by 6 per cent, both initially and by 2004. The two-member Milford ward, comprising the parish of Milford-on-Sea, is over-represented by 12 per cent (17 per cent by 2004).

85 During Stage One the District Council proposed combining the single-member wards of Sway and Boldre into a two-member ward. The only alternatives would have been modified single-member wards; this would involve dividing Sway parish between two wards, with the inclusion of 600 electors in a ward with Boldre, and the remainder of Sway forming a single-member ward. The Council concluded by stating a preference for not warding small parishes, “if there is a practicable alternative which achieves a good level of electoral equality”.

86 The District Council also proposed warding the parish of Hordle and proposed modified two-member wards of Hordle and Milford. During the District Council’s own consultation, Milford-on-Sea Parish Council stated that it did have links with the southern area of Hordle (Everton). The District Council contended that “the majority of the electorate of the parish live in Milford-on-Sea village, which is a considerable distance from the main settlements of either New Milton to the west or Lymington & Pennington to the east, but is geographically quite close to the Everton area of Hordle.” The District Council proposed that the area south of the A337 road was the only appropriate area of Everton to be included in a Milford ward.

87 The District Council acknowledged that the proposed Milford ward would have an electoral variance of 11 per cent by 2004, the only ward which would exceed an electoral variance of 10 per cent by 2004. However, it contended that “the A337 road is the main arterial route from Lymington to New Milton and is a busy road which is often difficult to cross. Although drawing a more northerly boundary so as to increase the electorate in Milford enough to reduce the imbalance to 10 per cent or less would be mathematically possible, it was considered that this would result in a wholly artificial boundary for the sake of identifying a few tens of electors. It would also have an adverse effect on the degree of electoral equality of Hordle ward.”

88 While we noted the District Council’s comments on the proposed boundary, we considered an alternative boundary between the proposed wards of Hordle and Milford in an attempt to improve on the electoral variance of the only ward forecast to be above 10 per cent by 2004 (Milford). Our alternative, which would pass to the north of the A337 Milford road would result in an electoral variance of 10 per cent, but would not provide as clear a boundary as that proposed by the District Council. However, our boundary would result in no ward in the district varying by more than 10 per cent by 2004, and we consulted on our recommended boundary between the wards of Hordle and Milford.

89 We concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council’s proposals for the two-member Boldre & Sway ward and the two-member wards of Hordle and Milford, subject to the minor boundary modification noted earlier.

90 The number of electors per councillor in the wards would vary from the average by 4 per cent, 7 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (5 per cent, 7 per cent and 10 per cent by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations to ward the parish of Hordle for the first time, to reflect the proposed district wards.

91 At Stage Three the District Council supported the majority of our proposals in this area. However, it proposed that the proposed boundary between the wards of Hordle and Milford be

modified to follow the length of Milford Road (A337), as it had proposed at Stage One. It stated that “the A337 forms a much stronger boundary in the extreme south west of Hordle than that proposed by the Commission”, arguing that the marginal improvement in electoral equality would be significantly detrimental to local community identities.

92 We have considered the evidence and been persuaded that the District Council’s proposal would provide a better balance between electoral equality, the reflection of community identities and identifiable boundaries. We therefore recommend that the boundary between the wards of Hordle and Milford be modified to follow the A337. Under these proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 7 per cent below the district average in Hordle ward (unchanged by 2004) and 5 per cent below the average in Milford ward (11 per cent by 2004). These proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Lymington Town and Pennington wards**

93 The three-member Lymington Town ward and the two-member Pennington ward are located in the south of the district and are contained within the town of Lymington & Pennington. Both wards are relatively well represented at present, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the average by 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively (3 per cent and 4 per cent by 2004).

94 At Stage One the District Council proposed that five members should continue to represent the town area, but proposed a re-configuration of the existing wards to reflect community identities. It also proposed a decrease in representation for Lymington ward from three to two members. The proposed single-member Buckland ward would be created from electors in the north of the existing Lymington Town ward and a small section of the existing Pennington ward. The District Council also proposed transferring some electors from the south west of the existing Lymington Town ward to the revised Pennington ward.

95 The District Council informed us that the boundaries of the proposed new wards which lie within the boundaries of Lymington & Pennington Town Council had been agreed in consultation with the Town Council. We also understand that the Town Council considers that the proposed wards are the best solution for the town, taking into account community identity and the need for electoral equality.

96 The wards in the town presently enjoy a good level of electoral equality under a 58-member council and this is forecast to continue. The District Council and Lymington & Pennington Town Council proposed revised warding arrangements which provide for a similar level of electoral equality, while we received no representations arguing for the retention of the existing arrangements. Therefore, we concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured a continued good level of electoral equality under a 60-member council without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the District Council’s proposals appeared to enhance the community identity of the town. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council’s proposals for the new single-member Buckland ward and the modified two-member wards of Lymington Town and Pennington, without amendment.

97 Under the District Council's 60-member scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed wards of Buckland, Lymington Town and Pennington would vary from the average by 4 per cent, 5 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (4 per cent, 4 per cent and 3 per cent by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the town wards of Lymington & Pennington, to reflect the proposed district wards.

98 At Stage Three the District Council expressed support for our proposals in this area and we received no other comments. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Buckland, Lymington Town and Pennington, as final. We consider the proposals to provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

### **Barton, Bashley, Becton and Milton wards**

99 The town of New Milton is represented by four two-member wards and suffers from varying but poor degrees of electoral inequality. Barton and Milton wards are over-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the average by 19 per cent and 13 per cent respectively (20 per cent and 14 per cent by 2004). The wards of Bashley and Becton are under-represented, with an electoral variance of 44 per cent and 15 per cent respectively (47 per cent and 18 per cent by 2004).

100 At Stage One the District Council proposed that nine members should represent the town area, which should be divided into one single-member and four two-member wards. The existing two-member Bashley ward in the north of the town, is one of the most under-represented wards in the district. Therefore, the District Council proposed dividing the existing ward, creating a new two-member Fernhill ward and a modified single-member Bashley ward. In the south of the town, the District Council proposed transferring some electors from the existing Becton ward to the wards of Barton and Milton.

101 The District Council informed us that New Milton Town Council had been fully consulted on the proposals and was content that they take into account the need for electoral equality and clearly reflected community identities within the town. We also received two representations from local residents of the town. They argued that the Ashley area of New Milton should be represented by its own town and district councillors, to reflect community identity and interests.

102 We concluded that the proposals for this part of the district put forward by the District Council secured a substantially improved level of electoral equality without, as far as we could gauge, having an adverse effect on local community ties. Indeed, the District Council's proposals appeared to enhance the community identity of the town. Therefore we were content to adopt the District Council's proposals for the two-member wards of Barton, Becton, Fernhill and Milton and the single-member ward of Bashley, without amendment.

103 Under the District Council's 60-member scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the wards would vary from the average by 1 per cent, 1 per cent, 8 per cent, equal to the average and 1 per cent respectively (1 per cent, 1 per cent, 5 per cent, 2 per cent and equal to the average

by 2004). As a consequence of these proposals we made recommendations for change to the town wards of New Milton, to reflect the proposed district wards.

104 At Stage Three the District Council and New Milton Town Council supported our proposals in this area. Having noted this support we propose confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Barton, Bashley, Becton, Fernhill and Milton, as final. We consider the proposals to provide the best balance presently available between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under our draft recommendations.

## **Electoral Cycle**

105 At Stage One the District Council stated a preference for retaining whole-council elections. We received no other proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the district. Accordingly, we made no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

106 At Stage Three no further comments were received to the contrary, and we confirm our draft recommendation as final.

## **Conclusions**

107 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:

- that the boundary between the wards of Hordle and Milford be modified to better reflect community identities;
- that the parish warding arrangements for Fawley parish be modified to better reflect community identities.

108 We conclude that, in New Forest:

- there should be an increase in council size from 58 to 60;
- there should be 34 wards, one fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 29 of the existing wards should be modified;
- the Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

109 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  | 58                   | 60                    | 58                       | 60                    |
| Number of wards  | 33                   | 34                    | 33                       | 34                    |
| Average number of electors per councillor                              | 2,328                | 2,250                 | 2,423                    | 2,343                 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average | 22                   | 6                     | 22                       | 1                     |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average | 11                   | 0                     | 11                       | 0                     |

110 As Figure 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 22 to six with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent from the district average. This improved level of electoral equality would improve further in 2004, with only one ward, Hordle, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average, at 11 per cent. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

**Final Recommendation**  
 New Forest District should comprise 60 councillors serving 34 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 whole-council elections every four years.

**Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

111 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, in our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for the parishes of Copythorne, Fawley, Hordle, Hythe & Dibden, Lymington & Pennington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton & Eling to reflect the proposed district wards.

112 The parish of Copythorne is currently served by nine councillors representing two wards: Copythorne North parish ward returning three councillors and Copythorne South parish ward returning six councillors. As mentioned earlier, we proposed modifying the boundary between the existing Copythorne North and Copythorne South parish wards to reflect our proposed district ward boundaries, and proposed that the revised wards should return four parish councillors and five parish councillors respectively. During Stage Three, the District Council supported our revised parish wards, therefore we confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**  
Copythorne Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Copythorne North (returning four councillors) and Copythorne South (five). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map A4 in Appendix A.

113 The parish of Fawley is currently served by 15 councillors, representing Fawley, Hardley/Holbury and Blackfield/Langley parish wards. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that Fawley should be represented by three revised parish wards. Hardley parish ward should return three parish councillors and Fawley, Blackfield & Langley and Holbury & North Blackfield parish wards should return six parish councillors respectively. During Stage Three, the District Council and Fawley Parish Council proposed that the Holbury & North Blackfield and Hardley parish wards be retained. However, they also recommend three revised parish wards (covering the Fawley, Blackfield & Langley district ward); Fawley parish ward should return two parish councillors, Calshot parish ward should return one parish councillor and Blackfield & Langley parish ward should return five parish councillors. We are content to endorse these recommendations.

**Final Recommendation**  
Fawley Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing five parish wards: Hardley parish ward (returning one parish councillor), Holbury parish ward (returning six parish councillors), Blackfield & Langley parish ward (returning five parish councillors), Fawley parish ward (returning two parish councillors) and Calshot parish ward (returning one parish councillor). The boundaries are illustrated and named on Map A6 and the large map inserted in the back of the report.

114 The parish of Hordle is represented by 11 councillors and is not warded at present. During Stage One the District Council proposed that, in order to facilitate the proposals at district level, the parish be divided into two parish wards of Everton South and Hordle. It proposed that Everton South parish ward be represented by one parish councillor and Hordle parish ward be represented by 10 parish councillors. During Stage Three, the District Council and Hordle Parish Council proposed that the boundary should be revised to continue to follow the A337. We are content to endorse this recommendation.

**Final Recommendation**

Hordle Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Everton South parish ward (returning one parish councillor) and Hordle parish ward (returning 10 parish councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted in the back of the report.

115 The parish of Hythe & Dibden is currently served by 17 councillors, representing Butts Ash, Dibden, Dibden Purlieu, Hythe North and Hythe South. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that Hythe & Dibden should be served by 13 councillors, representing seven parish wards as part of our draft recommendations. Furzedown and Langdown parish wards should return one parish councillor, Butts Ash parish ward should return three parish councillors and the parish wards of Dibden, Hythe East, Hythe West and Dibden Purlieu should each return two parish councillors. During Stage Three we received no evidence to persuade us to move away from our draft recommendations. Therefore we propose to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**

Hythe & Dibden Parish Council should comprise 13 parish councillors, instead of the current 17, representing seven wards: Furzedown and Langdown parish wards (each returning one parish councillor), Butts Ash parish ward (returning three parish councillors) and Dibden, Hythe East, Hythe West and Dibden Purlieu parish wards (each returning two parish councillors). The boundaries between the parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted in the back of the report.

116 The town of Ringwood is currently served by 14 councillors, representing Bisterne, Hangersley, Ringwood North and Ringwood South town wards. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that Ringwood should be represented by three revised town wards as part of our draft recommendations. Ringwood East town ward should return two town councillors and Ringwood North and Ringwood South town wards should return six town councillors respectively. During Stage Three we received no evidence to persuade us to move away from our draft recommendations. Therefore we propose to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**

Ringwood Town Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Ringwood East town ward (returning two town councillors) and Ringwood North and Ringwood South Town wards (returning six town councillors respectively). The boundaries between the three town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Maps A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

117 The town of Totton & Eling is currently served by 16 town councillors, representing Totton Central, Totton North and Totton South town wards. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that Totton & Eling should be served by 20 town councillors representing four revised town wards and an unchanged Totton South town ward as part of our draft recommendations. Totton Central, Totton East, Totton North, Totton South and Totton West wards should return four town councillors respectively. During Stage Three, the District Council, Totton & Eling Town Council and Councillor Randall supported our draft recommendations. Therefore we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**

Totton & Eling Town Council should comprise 20 town councillors, instead of the current 16, representing five wards: Totton Central, Totton East, Totton North, Totton South and Totton West town wards (returning four town councillors respectively). The boundaries between the five town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on Map A5 in Appendix A.

118 The town of Lyminster & Pennington is currently served by 14 town councillors, representing Lyminster and Pennington town wards. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that Lyminster & Pennington should be served by 15 town councillors representing three town wards as part of our draft recommendations. Buckland ward should return three town councillors and the revised Lyminster Town and Pennington town wards should return six town councillors respectively. During Stage Three, the District Council supported our draft recommendations, no other submissions were received. Therefore we confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**

Lyminster & Pennington Town Council should comprise 15 town councillors, instead of the current 14, representing three wards: Buckland town ward (returning three town councillors) and Lyminster Town and Pennington town wards (returning six town councillors respectively). The boundaries between the three town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted in the back of the report.

119 The town of New Milton is currently served by 18 councillors, representing Ballard, Barton, Bashley, Becton, Fernhill and Milton town wards. In order to facilitate our proposals for revised district warding, we proposed that New Milton should be represented by five town wards as part of our draft recommendations. Bashley town ward should return two town councillors and Barton, Becton, Fernhill and Milton town wards should return four town councillors respectively. During Stage Three, the District Council and New Milton Town Council supported our draft recommendations. Therefore we confirm our draft recommendations as final.

**Final Recommendation**  
New Milton Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Bashley town ward (returning two town councillors and Barton, Becton, Fernhill and Milton town wards (returning four town councillors respectively). The boundaries between the five town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted in the back of the report.

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

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

*Map 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for New Forest*

## 6 NEXT STEPS

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

122 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.

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

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



## APPENDIX A

### **Final Recommendations for New Forest: Detailed Mapping**

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

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Maps A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 and the large map at the back of the report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding of Ringwood town.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposed warding of Ringwood town.

**Map A4** illustrates the proposed warding of Copythorne parish.

**Map A5** illustrates the proposed warding of Totton & Eling town.

**Map A6** illustrates the proposed parish wards of Fawley and Calshot.

The **large maps** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for the areas of Fawley, Hordle, Hythe & Dibden, Lymington & Pennington, Milford-on-Sea and New Milton.

*Map A1: Final Recommendations for New Forest: Key Map*

*Map A2: Proposed Warding of Ringwood Town*

*Map A3: Proposed Warding of Ringwood Town*

*Map A4: Proposed Warding of Copythorne Parish*

*Map A5: Proposed Warding of Totton & Eling Town*

*Map A6: Proposed Parish Wards of Fawley and Calshot*



## APPENDIX B

### Draft Recommendations for New Forest

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of only one ward, where our draft proposals are set out below.

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

| Ward name | Constituent areas  |
|-----------|--|
| Hordle    | Hordle ward (part)                                       |
| Milford   | Milford ward (the parish of Milford); Hordle ward (part) |

*Figure B2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward*

| 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 % |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Hordle    | 2                     | 4,197             | 2,099                             | -7                      | 4,351             | 2,176                             | -7                      |
| Milford   | 2                     | 4,296             | 2,148                             | -5                      | 4,225             | 2,113                             | -10                     |

*Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by New Forest 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.*

