

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Havant in Hampshire

January 2000

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations to the Government on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government, the boundaries of individual local authority areas, and their electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of wards and electoral divisions – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, and the number of councillors and ward names.

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

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Havant is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Havant on 20 July 1999.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.**

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

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

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 83-84) are that:

- **Havant Borough Council should have 38 councillors, four fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 14 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 10 of the existing wards should be modified and four wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In all of the proposed 14 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This enhanced level of electoral equality is expected to improve further with no ward varying by more than 8 per cent from the average by 2004.**

This report sets out our draft recommendations on which comments are invited.

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 18 January 2000. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.**
- **It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 13 March 2000:

**Review Manager
Havant Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphyn Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU**

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk

Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
1	Barncroft	2	Barncroft ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)
2	Battins	2	Battins ward (part)
3	Bedhampton	3	Barncroft ward (part); Battins ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); St Faith's ward (part)
4	Bondfields	2	Bondfields ward
5	Cowplain	3	Cowplain ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
6	Emsworth	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Emsworth ward)
7	Hart Plain	3	Cowplain ward (part); Hart Plain ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
8	Hayling East	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Hayling East ward)
9	Hayling West	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Hayling West ward)
10	Purbrook	3	Bedhampton ward (part); Purbrook ward; Stakes ward (part)
11	St Faith's	3	St Faith's ward (part)
12	Stakes	3	Stakes ward (part)
13	Warren Park	2	Battins ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)
14	Waterloo	3	Stakes ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)

Notes: 1 The whole borough is unparished.

2 Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Havant

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 Barncroft	2	4,638	2,319	-5	4,636	2,318	-5
2 Battins	2	4,831	2,416	-1	4,787	2,394	-2
3 Bedhampton	3	6,908	2,303	-5	6,867	2,289	-6
4 Bondfields	2	5,177	2,589	6	5,118	2,559	5
5 Cowplain	3	7,407	2,469	1	7,341	2,447	1
6 Emsworth	3	7,930	2,643	9	7,900	2,633	8
7 Hart Plain	3	7,488	2,496	3	7,291	2,430	0
8 Hayling East	3	7,132	2,377	-2	7,239	2,413	-1
9 Hayling West	3	6,926	2,309	-5	6,995	2,332	-4
10 Purbrook	3	7,441	2,480	2	7,439	2,480	2
11 St Faith's	3	6,764	2,255	-7	6,990	2,330	-4
12 Stakes	3	7,515	2,505	3	7,436	2,479	2
13 Warren Park	2	4,796	2,398	-1	4,669	2,335	-4
14 Waterloo	3	7,486	2,495	3	7,353	2,451	1
Totals	38	92,457	-	-	92,079	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,433	-	-	2,423	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Havant Borough Council.

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

1 INTRODUCTION

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

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Havant. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in December 1975 (Report No. 116). The electoral arrangements of Hampshire County Council were last reviewed in October 1980 (Report No. 397). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

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

- the statutory criteria in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, 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* in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Appendix B).

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

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

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

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

8 Third, 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 district.

9 The review is in four stages (Figure 3).

*Figure 3:
Stages of the Review*

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

10 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, ie 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.

11 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the Hampshire districts and Portsmouth and Southampton city councils, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the *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.

12 Stage One began on 20 July 1999, when we wrote to Havant Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Hampshire Local Councils Association, the Members of Parliament, the Members of the European Parliament with

constituency interests in the South-East region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 25 October 1999.

13 At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

14 Stage Three began on 18 January 2000 and will end on 13 March 2000. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.**

15 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to move away from them in any areas, and submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, he will make an order. The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 The borough of Havant is situated on the south coast and covers an area of over 21 square miles. Havant is divided into four distinct communities: the Western wards (north of the A3(M)), an area comprising Bedhampton, Havant and Leigh Park; Hayling Island; and Emsworth. The borough has a regular service of mainline trains to London, and has good road links including the A3(M). Over the last 20 years Havant has attracted many high technology businesses, particularly in the fields of electronics, plastics and pharmaceuticals.

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

18 The electorate of the borough is 92,457 (February 1999). The Council presently has 42 members who are elected from 14 three-member wards, all of which are relatively urban. The Council is elected by thirds. There are no parishes in the borough.

19 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Havant Borough, with around 15 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments. The most notable increases have been in Stakes and Waterloo wards, with approximately 3,000 more electors in each ward.

20 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,201 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will decrease to 2,192 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 eight of the 14 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, five wards by more than 20 per cent and one ward by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Barncroft ward where the three councillors each represent 39 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Havant

Figure 4: 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 Barncroft	3	3,996	1,332	-39	3,994	1,331	-40
2 Battins	3	5,526	1,842	-16	5,482	1,827	-17
3 Bedhampton	3	6,110	2,037	-7	6,069	2,023	-8
4 Bondfields	3	5,177	1,726	-22	5,118	1,706	-23
5 Cowplain	3	7,077	2,359	7	7,011	2,337	6
6 Emsworth	3	7,930	2,643	20	7,900	2,633	20
7 Hart Plain	3	6,714	2,238	2	6,517	2,172	-1
8 Hayling East	3	7,132	2,377	8	7,239	2,413	10
9 Hayling West	3	6,926	2,309	5	6,995	2,332	6
10 Purbrook	3	7,259	2,420	10	7,257	2,419	10
11 St Faith's	3	7,685	2,562	16	7,911	2,637	20
12 Stakes	3	8,204	2,735	24	8,125	2,708	23
13 Warren Park	3	4,638	1,546	-30	4,511	1,504	-32
14 Waterloo	3	8,083	2,694	22	7,950	2,650	20
Totals	42	92,457	-	-	92,079	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,201	-	-	2,192	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information supplied by Havant Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1999, electors in Barncroft ward were over-represented by 39 per cent, while electors in Stakes ward were under-represented by 24 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

21 At the start of the review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Havant Borough Council.

22 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers and members from the Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received seven representations during Stage One, including borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and Havant Labour Group, all of which may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

23 Following the close of Stage One, the Commission wrote to the Borough Council and the leaders of the three main political groups on the council, requesting further evidence and argument to support proposals for alternative council sizes. These responses are summarised at the end of this chapter.

Havant Borough Council

24 The Borough Council proposed a reduction in council size from 42 to 38; its borough-wide scheme would provide for four two-member and 10 three-member wards, instead of the current pattern of wholly three-member wards. The Council argued that a 38-member council would provide significantly improved electoral equality across the borough and facilitate, as much as possible, the preservation of existing warding arrangements, which “have broadly stood the test of time”.

25 The Council proposed modifying 11 of the existing wards with no change proposed for the wards of Emsworth, Hayling East and Hayling West. The proposed boundaries would reflect prominent natural boundaries in Havant (including the coastal boundary with Hayling Island and the A3(M)) and provide improved electoral equality. All but two wards would have an electoral variance of less than 5 per cent by 2004 (Bedhampton and Emsworth wards would have a variance of 8 per cent by 2004). Havant Borough Council’s proposals are summarised at Appendix A.

Havant Labour Group

26 Havant Labour Group submitted a borough-wide scheme based on a 45-member council, three more councillors than at present, serving 17 wards. Its proposals also included moving to a mix of two- and three-member wards. The Labour Group argued that an increase in council size of three was justified due to the increase in the electorate over the last 20 years.

27 Under its scheme the Labour Group proposed significant modifications to the existing arrangements. Hayling Island would be divided into three wards (rather than two as at present), Emsworth would be divided into two wards and the area north of the A3(M) would be served by six wards, rather than five as at present. The proposals would provide an improved level of electoral equality and the Labour Group asserted that it had “identified specific ‘communities’ and these have been incorporated in the proposals”. Havant Labour Group’s proposals are summarised at Appendix A.

The Conservative Groups

28 Havant Borough Council Conservative Group supported the Borough Council's submission, including proposals for a council size of 38, arguing that it would provide good electoral equality and respect natural communities. Havant Conservative Association also expressed support for the Borough Council's proposals.

Member of Parliament

29 David Willetts, MP for Havant, supported the Borough Council's proposal for a 38-member council. He argued that the recommendations would address the electoral inequality in the borough and cause minimal disruption to "the basic pattern of ward boundaries which are familiar and well-understood".

Other Representations

30 We received a further two representations, from a borough councillor and a local resident.

31 Councillor Mrs O'Brien, member for Stakes ward, opposed both the Borough Council's and the Labour Group's proposals in the Waterloo area. She stated that the Borough Council's proposal to divide Waterloo town centre would undermine community interests and proposed an alternative boundary between Stakes and Waterloo wards to better reflect communities.

32 A local resident proposed that the boundary between Havant and Portsmouth be modified to better reflect community ties.

Further Consultation

33 Given the differing views of the political parties on Havant Borough Council on the issue of council size, we wrote to the Borough Council and the leaders of the three political parties, seeking further evidence on this issue. In response to this consultation we received comments from the Borough Council, with an attached submission it had received from the Emsworth Residents' Association, the Havant Labour Group and the Conservative Group on the Borough Council.

Havant Borough Council

34 The Borough Council stated that, given the current level of imbalance, the existing arrangements are not providing for convenient and effective local government. The Borough Council stated that it had examined a number of options on differing council sizes and considered that a council size of 38 would meet the objectives of seeking electoral equality, while "retaining, as far as practicable, the current pattern of electoral arrangements". It stated that a council size of 38 could produce a scheme which achieved electoral equality, while reflecting the different geographical areas in the borough. Finally it stated that a scheme based on a council size of 38 would allow much of the current warding pattern to be retained, avoiding "confusion and misunderstanding" in the minds of an electorate who are familiar with existing warding patterns. In its letter to the Borough Council, the Emsworth Residents' Association requested that Emsworth remain in one electoral ward.

Havant Labour Group

35 Havant Labour Group stated that it had based its submission on “communities and their identities because in each case there are natural barriers that help do this”. It stated that its proposals for council size did not represent as large a change as that proposed by the Borough Council. It further stated that its proposed council size would more adequately reflect communities and provide effective and convenient local government, as it would recognise the new communities that have emerged since the 1970's; that its scheme would meet the Commission's electoral equality criteria while reflecting natural communities; and that the current wards did not reflect true communities.

The Conservative Group

36 The Conservative Group on Havant Borough Council reiterated many of the arguments raised by the Borough Council. It stated that it had considered the Commission's guidelines, attempting to achieve greater electoral equality while reflecting natural communities and natural boundaries. It further stated that it had “attempted to retain the 42-member structure but could not keep that number and satisfy [the Commission's] guidelines”.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

37 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Havant is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities 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”.

38 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 must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken.

39 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.

40 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, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

41 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting a decrease in the electorate of 0.4 per cent from 92,457 to 92,079 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. However, this decrease in electorate is not expected to occur uniformly across the borough; in fact, the electorate in St Faith’s ward is forecast to grow by 3 per cent. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

42 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the Borough Council’s figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

Council Size

43 As already explained, the Commission’s starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government. Havant Borough Council presently has 42 members.

44 The Borough Council proposed a council of 38 members, which it stated would provide an improved level of electoral equality without significantly altering the existing ward configuration. It argued that the existing ward configuration “has stood the test of time” and that the decrease in representation in the Leigh Park area (Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards) would not adversely affect the provision of convenient and effective local government in that area. The Council also expressed general reservations about increases in council size.

45 Havant Labour Group opposed the Borough Council’s proposal for a 38-member scheme and recommended a council size of 45 as an alternative. It opposed the 38-member scheme on the basis that the Council had adopted the approach of “determining the number of members that ought to make up the Council”, then proceeding to formulate the consequential warding arrangements. It also opposed the 38-member scheme as it would result in the representation of the Leigh Park area (Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards) being reduced from 12 members to eight, and that this would adversely affect those “who just happen to be in and among the most socially deprived areas in the South of England”. It proposed an increase in council size of three on the basis that the population of Havant has grown significantly since 1974 and consequently that the workload of councillors has increased. It also asserted that its scheme would facilitate a better reflection of the community identities in Havant.

46 As stated earlier, we wrote to the Borough Council and the leaders of the three political parties, seeking further evidence on this issue. In response to this consultation we received comments from the Borough Council, Havant Labour Group and Conservative Group on the Borough Council.

47 The Borough Council argued that the Commission’s assumption that the current council size facilitated convenient and effective local government did not hold true in Havant, given the geography of the area and the distribution of electors. It argued that a council size of 38 would meet the objectives of seeking electoral equality, while “retaining, as far as practicable, the current pattern of electoral arrangements” which it stated reflected the different geographical areas in the borough. The Conservative Group also supported proposals for a reduction in council size to 38 for similar reasons.

48 Havant Labour Group highlighted the fact that its proposals would not involve such a large change in council size as the Councils’, arguing that its proposed council size would more adequately reflect communities and provide effective and convenient local government while securing improved levels of electoral equality.

49 We accept that, given the geography of the area, the current council size would not provide for as high levels of electoral equality as under the two alternative council sizes. We have, therefore, carefully considered both these options and the supporting evidence submitted. As

stated in our *Guidance*, the Commission has found it necessary to guard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and require any proposal for an increase in council size to be fully justified. In particular we do not accept that increases in an authority's electorate should automatically result in a commensurate increase in the number of councillors being returned. We note that the majority of councillors do not consider that an increase is necessary. While we note the Labour Group's proposal for a council size of 45, we do not consider that sufficient justification has been advanced for an increase of three councillors.

50 In 1979, the London Borough of Enfield successfully took the Local Government Boundary Commission to judicial review over the procedures adopted in its periodic electoral reviews. The resulting judgement, commonly called the "Enfield Judgement", stated that, in undertaking a periodic electoral review, it is necessary first to identify a council size which facilitates effective and convenient local government and second to formulate recommendations for new electoral arrangements which reflect the statutory criteria and provide high levels of electoral equality, based on such a council size. We do not, therefore, share the Labour Group's concern, expressed in its Stage One submission, at the Borough Council's approach to developing its proposals.

51 The Borough Council argued that the current arrangements, based on a council size of 42 have resulted in high levels of electoral inequality, but respect the specific geography of the area and the separate communities within the borough. Havant Borough, as stated above, is made up of a number of separate communities including Emsworth and Hayling Island. The Borough Council argued that an alternative council size was needed to reflect these separate areas while ensuring a significantly higher degree of electoral equality than exists at present. It therefore proposed a reduction in council size to 38 in order to reflect community identities and interests in the borough. It stated that with a council size of 38, much of the general warding pattern, which is locally recognised and understood, could be retained. We consider that the Borough Council's proposed council size of 38 has been appropriately considered and note that it would command a degree of local support.

52 Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 38 members.

Electoral Arrangements

53 We have carefully considered all the representations received, including the borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and Havant Labour Group. The Council proposed a reduction in council size from 42 to 38, while Havant Labour Group proposed an increase from 42 to 45. Both schemes proposed moving away from the existing pattern of wholly three-member wards. Both schemes would facilitate substantial improvements in electoral equality and in our opinion broadly reflect similar community interests. We have also noted that both borough-wide schemes would provide warding arrangements that respect the four distinct communities in Havant borough: the Western wards; Havant, Bedhampton and Leigh Park; Emsworth; and Hayling Island. Neither scheme included warding arrangements that would breach the boundaries of these four settlements.

54 In view of the support expressed by other Stage One respondents for the Borough Council's scheme and the arguments outlined above regarding council size, we conclude that our draft recommendations should be based on the Borough Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. Additionally, in view of our proposal to recommend that Havant be represented by 38 members, we have been unable to make detailed comparisons with the boundaries proposed under the Labour Group's 45-member scheme, as ward sizes and configurations vary substantially. It is important to note that (based on the 1999 electorate) under a council size of 38 the number of electors per councillor would be 2,433 while under a council size of 45, the number of electors per councillor would be 2,055, a difference of nearly 400 electors per ward.

55 However, to improve electoral equality further, reflect local community identities and interests more accurately and provide a more coherent warding pattern, we propose moving away from the Borough Council's proposals in the Leigh Park area, in the wards of Barncroft, Battins and Warren Park; and in Bedhampton and St Faith's wards. The details of our draft recommendation are discussed in the text below and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Cowplain, Hart Plain and Waterloo wards;
- (b) Purbrook and Stakes wards;
- (c) Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards;
- (d) Bedhampton, Emsworth and St Faith's wards;
- (e) Hayling East and Hayling West wards.

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

Cowplain, Hart Plain and Waterloo wards

57 Located in the north of the borough, these three wards are currently each represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the borough average in Cowplain ward (6 per cent in 2004), 2 per cent above the average in Hart Plain ward (1 per cent below in 2004) and 22 per cent above the average in Waterloo ward (20 per cent in 2004).

58 The Borough Council proposed that this area continue to be represented by three three-member wards, but that the existing boundaries be modified to provide improved electoral equality. Cowplain ward would be extended south to include part of the existing Waterloo ward (broadly north of Cornelius Drive and Harkness Drive), while its western boundary with Hart Plain ward would be modified to follow Linda Grove, rather than Silvester Road as it does at present. The existing Hart Plain ward would be subject to only minor modifications, incorporating a small number of electors from the existing Cowplain and Waterloo wards. Waterloo ward would be modified to exclude an area in the north-east (as outlined above) while its southern boundary would be extended to include Waterlooville town centre. Under the Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor in Cowplain ward would be 1 per cent above the borough average (unchanged in 2004), 3 per cent above the average in Hart Plain and Waterloo wards (equal to and 1 per cent above the average in 2004).

59 Under a 45-member council Havant Labour Group proposed that this area be represented by four three-member wards, rather than the three three-member wards as it is at present. As previously discussed, we were unable to consider the Labour Group's proposed boundaries in detail, due to the significant difference in ward patterns under a 45-member scheme. These proposals would provide for improved electoral equality with no ward varying by more than 6 per cent from the average by 2004.

60 Councillor Mrs O'Brien opposed both the Borough Council's and Labour Group's proposals in this area, for reasons of community identity. She proposed that the Labour Group's Waterloo ward boundaries be adopted, but that the boundary between Waterloo and Stakes wards be modified to better reflect communities. The proposal would result in a worsening of electoral equality compared with either the Borough Council's or Labour Group's proposals.

61 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One and in the light of our recommendation for a 38-member council, we recommend that Havant Borough Council's proposals for the wards of Cowplain, Hart Plain and Waterloo be adopted without modification. We are satisfied that this ward configuration would provide good electoral equality and accurately reflect communities in the area. We also note that these arrangements would broadly reflect the wards proposed by Havant Labour Group. The electoral variances would be the same under our draft recommendations as those proposed under the Borough Council's scheme. These proposals are shown on the map inserted at the back of this report.

Purbrook and Stakes wards

62 The wards of Purbrook and Stakes are situated in the west of the borough and are both represented by three councillors. The members for Purbrook and Stakes wards currently represent 10 per cent and 24 per cent more electors than the borough average (unchanged and 23 per cent more in 2004).

63 The Borough Council proposed that this area continue to be represented by two revised three-member wards of Purbrook and Stakes. It proposed that the eastern boundary of Purbrook ward be extended to follow the A3(M) in the east and part of Portsdown Hill Road in the south and that its northern boundary be extended to include Park Farm Road, currently in Stakes ward. Stakes ward would be revised to exclude Waterlooville town centre in the north which would be included in Waterloo ward, and a small number of electors on Park Farm Road (as detailed above). Under these proposals the electoral variances in Purbrook and Stakes wards would be 2 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (unchanged and 2 per cent respectively by 2004) under this scheme.

64 Havant Labour Group proposed that this area be represented by a revised Purbrook ward and a new Crookhorn ward. As previously discussed, we were unable to consider the Labour Group's proposed boundaries in detail, due to the significant difference in ward patterns under a 45-member scheme. The proposals would provide good electoral equality with neither ward having an electoral variance of more than 2 per cent from the average by 2004.

65 We have carefully considered the Stage One representations and, given our proposal for a council size of 38 and the resulting high levels of electoral equality, we propose that the Borough Council's recommendations for Purbrook and Stakes wards be adopted without modification. We consider that the revised wards would accurately reflect local communities and provide identifiable boundaries, and we are also satisfied that they would provide good electoral equality. Under our draft recommendations the electoral variances would be the same as those under the Borough Council's scheme. These proposals are shown on the map inserted at the back of this report.

Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards

66 These three-member wards are situated in the north of the borough and are all significantly over-represented. The number of electors per councillor is currently 39 per cent below, 16 per cent below, 22 per cent below and 30 per cent below the borough average in Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards respectively, with little or no change forecast by 2004.

67 The Borough Council asserted that under a 38-member council the total electorate of Barncroft, Battins, Bondfields and Warren Park wards would be entitled to eight councillors, four fewer than at present. In order to facilitate this level of representation the Borough Council proposed that this area continue to be covered by four wards, but that each be represented by two councillors, rather than three as at present and that the boundaries of three of the four wards be modified.

68 Under the Council's scheme Barncroft ward would incorporate parts of the existing Barncroft, Battins, Bedhampton and Warren Park wards. The eastern boundary of Barncroft ward would broadly follow the rear of properties on Middle Park Way (from Woolston Road to Hermitage Stream), Finchdean Road, Purbrook Way and Stock Heath Road to Barncroft Way, additionally to include electors from Warren Park and Battins wards. The southern boundary of Barncroft ward would be revised to include electors on Barncroft Way and Ashley Close from Bedhampton ward. The A3(M) would be retained as the western boundary of Barncroft ward.

69 The Council also proposed that Battins ward be modified to exclude Stockheath Common and the allotments (to be included in Barncroft ward), the area south of Tronsnant School (to be included in Bedhampton ward) and Well Meadow, Cotswold Close, Great Close and the factory on Fulford Road (to be included in Warren Park ward). Warren Park ward would be modified to exclude Corhampton Crescent and Ditcham Crescent (to be included in Bedhampton ward) and Middle Park Way (to be included in Barncroft ward). The existing boundaries of Bondfields ward would be retained but the number of councillors representing this ward would be reduced from three to two. The number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent below the borough average in Barncroft ward (unchanged in 2004), 3 per cent below the average in Battins ward (4 per cent in 2004), 6 per cent above in Bondfields ward (5 per cent in 2004) and 2 per cent below in Warren Park ward (4 per cent in 2004).

70 Havant Labour Group asserted that, under its proposal for a 45-member council, these wards would be entitled to 10 councillors (two fewer than at present) and proposed that the number of councillors representing the wards of Barncroft and Warren Park be reduced to two to facilitate this. As previously discussed, we were unable to consider the Labour Group's proposed boundaries in detail, due to the significant difference in ward patterns under a 45-member scheme. Under these proposals the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 1 per cent from the average by 2004.

71 We have carefully considered all the Stage Three representations and, having proposed a council size of 38, we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals, subject to a number of minor modifications to provide more coherent boundaries and ward configurations, as part of our draft recommendations. We recommend that the Borough Council's proposed boundary between the wards of Barncroft and Warren Park be modified, broadly including Chalton Crescent and Cheriton Close in Barncroft ward. We further propose that the Council's Warren Park ward be extended southwards to include Corhampton Crescent, Hermitage Close and Adsdean Close and that the proposed Battins ward be extended southwards to include St Francis Place and Sunnyheath. We consider that the Council's proposals, along with these modifications, would provide improved electoral equality, a more coherent warding arrangement and a reflection of community identities. Under our proposals the members for Barncroft ward would represent 5 per cent fewer electors than the borough average (unchanged in 2004) and in Battins and Warren Park wards the members would represent 1 per cent fewer electors than the average (2 per cent and 4 per cent respectively in 2004). The electoral variance of Bondfield ward would be 6 per cent initially (5 per cent in 2004). These proposals are shown on the map inserted at the back of this report.

Bedhampton, Emsworth and St Faith's wards

72 Bedhampton, Emsworth and St Faith's wards cover a large geographical area in the east of the borough. Each ward is represented by three councillors. The electoral variance in Bedhampton ward is currently 7 per cent (8 per cent in 2004), 20 per cent in Emsworth ward (unchanged in 2004) and 16 per cent in St Faith's ward (20 per cent in 2004).

73 The Borough Council proposed that this area continue to be represented by three three-member wards. It proposed that Emsworth ward retain its existing boundaries and that the western boundary of St Faith's ward be modified to exclude 750 electors around Staunton Road and Cross Way who would be included in the modified Bedhampton ward. A revised Bedhampton ward would include parts of the existing Bedhampton, Barncroft, Battins and St Faith's wards. Its northern boundary would generally follow the existing boundary along Hubert Road, Jessie Road and Park Lane, deviating minimally and affecting a small number of electors. Its eastern boundary would be extended to include that part of Battins ward, south of Tronsnant School, while its western boundary with Purbrook ward would be modified to follow the A3(M) and Portsdown Hill Road. Under this scheme the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent below the average in Bedhampton ward (unchanged in 2004), 9 per cent above the average in Emsworth ward (8 per cent in 2004) and 5 per cent below the average in St Faith's ward (2 per cent in 2004).

74 Havant Labour Group proposed that this area be represented by four wards, rather than the current three, with the existing Emsworth ward divided into two two-member wards; Emsworth and Spencers. As previously discussed, we were unable to consider the Labour Group's proposed boundaries in detail, due to the significant difference in ward patterns under a 45-member scheme. The proposals would provide good electoral equality, with no ward varying by more than 5 per cent from the average by 2004.

75 After carefully considering all the representations received at Stage One and having proposed a council size of 38, we propose adopting the Borough Council's recommendation to retain the existing boundaries of Emsworth ward. We consider that the proposal would provide good electoral equality and accurately reflect community interests in the area. We note that the electoral equality in Emsworth ward under our draft recommendations would not be as high as that under the Havant Labour Group's scheme in the same area. However, it is important to note that, under a council size of 38, further improvements in electoral equality in Emsworth ward would involve dividing distinct communities in the neighbouring areas.

76 We recommend adopting the Borough Council's modification to the western boundary of St Faith's ward, but propose that this boundary be extended further east to include a larger number of electors in Bedhampton ward. We note that the eastern boundary of the Borough Council's Bedhampton ward would not be clearly identifiable and also note that such a modification would improve electoral equality in Bedhampton ward. Under our proposals the boundary would be extended to include Boundary Way, North Way and a number of electors from West Street, Cross Way and Park Way in Bedhampton ward. The number of electors per councillor in the modified Bedhampton ward would be 5 per cent below the borough average (6 per cent in 2004) and 7 per cent below the average in St Faith's ward (4 per cent in 2004). These proposals are shown on the map inserted at the back of this report.

77 A local resident proposed that the boundary between Havant and Portsmouth be modified to include West Bedhampton in Portsmouth, arguing that this would better reflect community ties. As part of a periodic electoral review the Commission is unable to review the external boundaries of local authority areas, which would require a direction from the Secretary of State. We therefore suggest that any queries relating to this issue be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Hayling East and Hayling West wards

78 The two three-member wards of Hayling East and Hayling West cover Hayling Island, situated in the far south of Havant borough. The number of electors per councillor in Hayling East and Hayling West wards is currently 8 per cent and 5 per cent above the borough average respectively (10 per cent and 6 per cent in 2004).

79 The Borough Council proposed that the existing boundaries of these wards be retained. Under a council size of 38, electoral equality in these wards would improve, with the number of electors per councillor being 2 per cent below and 5 per cent below the borough average in Hayling East and Hayling West wards respectively (1 per cent and 4 per cent by 2004).

80 Havant Labour Group recommended that Hayling Island be represented by one three-member ward and two two-member wards. However, as previously discussed, we were unable to consider the Labour Group's proposed boundaries in detail, due to the significant difference in ward patterns under a 45-member scheme. The number of electors per councillor in the three Hayling Island wards would be no more than 1 per cent from the average by 2004.

81 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One and, given a council size of 38, propose adopting the Borough Council's recommendation for no change to the wards of Hayling East and Hayling West. We are satisfied that this proposal would provide good electoral equality and reflect existing community ties in the area. The electoral variances would be the same as under the Borough Council's scheme.

Electoral Cycle

82 We received no representations regarding the Borough Council's electoral cycle and therefore propose no change to the current electoral cycle of elections by thirds.

Conclusions

83 Having considered all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review, we propose that:

- (a) there should be a reduction in council size from 42 to 38;
- (b) there should be 14 wards, as at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 10 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) elections should continue to be held by thirds.

84 Our draft recommendations would involve modifications to all but three of the existing wards in Havant borough, as summarised below.

- (a) in Havant we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals for Bondfields, Cowplain, Hart Plain, Purbrook, Stakes and Waterloo wards;
- (b) we propose that Barncroft, Battins, Bedhampton, St Faith's and Warren Park wards be modified to provide a better reflection of community ties, identifiable boundaries and a more coherent ward configuration;
- (c) there should be no change to the wards of Emsworth, Hayling East and Hayling West.

85 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1999 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2004.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1999 electorate		2004 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	42	38	42	38
Number of wards	14	14	14	14
Average number of electors per councillor	2,201	2,433	2,192	2,423
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	0	8	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	5	0	4	0

86 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Havant Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from eight to none. Additionally, by 2004 no ward is forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough.

Draft Recommendation
 Havant Borough Council should comprise 38 councillors serving 14 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

87 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Havant and welcome comments from the Borough Council and others relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle and ward names. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

Map 2: The Commission’s Draft Recommendations for Havant

5 NEXT STEPS

88 We are putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Havant. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 13 March 2000. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Commission and the Borough Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

89 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Review Manager
Havant Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphyn Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk

90 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.

APPENDIX A

Havant Borough Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations detailed in Figures 1 and 2 differ from those put forward by the Borough Council in only five wards, where the Council's proposals were as follows:

Figure B1: Havant Borough Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Barncroft	Barncroft ward (part); Battins ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)
Battins	Battins ward (part)
Bedhampton	Barncroft ward (part); Battins ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); St Faith's ward (part)
St Faith's	St Faith's ward (part)
Warren Park	Barncroft ward (part); Battins ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)

Figure B2: Havant Borough Council's Proposals: 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 %
Barncroft	2	4,772	2,386	-2	4,770	2,385	-2
Battins	2	4,715	2,358	-3	4,671	2,336	-4
Bedhampton	3	6,736	2,245	-8	6,695	2,232	-8
St Faith's	3	6,936	2,312	-5	7,162	2,387	-2
Warren Park	2	4,778	2,389	-2	4,651	2,326	-4

Source: Electorate figures are based on information supplied by Havant Borough Council.

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

Havant Labour Group's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B3: Havant Labour Group's Proposals: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Barncroft	Barncroft ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)
Battins	Barncroft ward (part); Battins ward (part); Bedhampton ward (part); Warren Park ward (part)
Bedhampton	Bedhampton ward (part); St Faith's ward (part)
Bondfields	Battins ward (part); Bondfields ward; St Faith's ward (part)
Cowplain	Cowplain ward (part); Hart Plain ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
Crookhorn	Purbrook ward (part); Stakes ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
Emsworth	Emsworth ward (part)
Hart Plain	Cowplain ward (part); Hart Plain ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
Hayling Island East	Hayling East ward (part); Hayling West ward (part)
Hayling Island North	Hayling East ward (part); Hayling West ward (part)
Hayling Island West	Hayling West ward (part)
Purbrook	Purbrook ward (part); Stakes ward (part)
Spencers	Emsworth ward (part)
Stakes	Cowplain ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)
St Faith's	St Faith's ward (part)
Warren Park	Warren Park ward (part); Barncroft ward (part)
Waterloo	Stakes ward (part); Waterloo ward (part)

Figure B4: Havant Labour Group's Proposals: 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 %
Barncroft	2	4,083	2,042	-1	4,063	2,032	-1
Battins	3	6,226	2,075	1	6,223	2,074	1
Bedhampton	3	6,014	2,005	-3	5,926	1,975	-4
Bondfields	3	6,340	2,113	3	6,253	2,084	1
Cowplain	3	6,290	2,097	2	6,230	2,077	1
Crookhorn	3	6,108	2,036	-1	6,259	2,086	2
Emsworth	2	3,963	1,982	-4	3,889	1,945	-5
Hart Plain	3	6,181	2,060	0	5,978	1,993	-3
Hayling East	3	6,015	2,005	-2	6,083	2,028	-1
Hayling North	2	4,010	2,005	-2	4,097	2,049	0
Hayling West	2	4,036	2,018	-2	4,063	2,032	-1
Purbrook	3	6,232	2,077	1	6,161	2,054	0
Spencers	2	3,970	1,985	-3	4,017	2,009	-2
Stakes	3	6,318	2,106	3	6,546	2,182	6
St Faith's	3	6,218	2,073	1	6,157	2,052	0
Warren Park	2	4,158	2,079	1	4,071	2,036	-1
Waterloo	3	6,302	2,101	2	6,070	2,023	-2

Source: Electorate figures are based on information supplied by Havant Borough Council.

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

APPENDIX B

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: The Commission's Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear¹. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas will be included in the Commission's review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

2 Under section 13(5) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

- (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- (b) secure effective and convenient local government.

3 In reporting to the Secretary of State, the Commission may make recommendations for such changes to electoral arrangements as are specified in section 14(4) of the 1992 Act. In relation to principal authorities, these are:

- the total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions);
- the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral area, and the years in which they are to be elected; and
- the name of any electoral area.

¹The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.

4 Unlike the LGBC, the Commission may also make recommendations for changes in respect of electoral arrangements within parish and town council areas. Accordingly, in relation to parish or town councils within a principal authority's area, the Commission may make recommendations relating to:

- the number of councillors;
- the need for parish wards;
- the number and boundaries of any such wards;
- the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward or, in the case of a common parish, for each parish; and
- the name of any such ward.

5 In conducting the review, section 27 of the 1992 Act requires the Commission to comply, so far as is practicable, with the rules given in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 for the conduct of electoral reviews.

Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

6 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

7 In relation to shire districts:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the district likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

- (a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the district;
- (b) in a district every ward of a parish council shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district;
- (c) in a district every parish which is not divided into parish wards shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district.

8 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a)–(c) above, regard should be had to:

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

9 The Schedule provides that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards, regard shall be had to whether:

- (f) the number or distribution of electors in the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- (g) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

10 Where it is decided to divide any such parish into parish wards, in considering the size and boundaries of the wards and fixing the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward, regard shall be had to:

- (h) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;
- (i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (j) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

11 Where it is decided not to divide the parish into parish wards, in fixing the number of councillors to be elected for each parish regard shall be had to the number and distribution of electors of the parish and any change which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the fixing of the number of parish councillors.