

Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for North Kesteven in Lincolnshire

Further electoral review

May 2005

Translations and other formats

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What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. It is responsible for conducting electoral reviews as directed by The Electoral Commission or the Secretary of State.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)

Robin Gray

Joan Jones CBE

Ann M. Kelly

Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

When conducting reviews our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils.

Executive summary

The Boundary Committee for England is responsible for conducting electoral reviews of local authorities, as directed by The Electoral Commission or the Secretary of State. As a result of the poor levels of electoral equality in the district of North Kesteven under the existing arrangements, The Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to review the electoral arrangements of the district on 2 June 2004. The broad objective of this electoral review is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the district as a whole.

Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements, eight wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the district average. The development that the District Council forecast for the five-year period that occurred between 1996 and 2001 during the last review was not realised, particularly in Sleaford Navigation and Skellingthorpe wards. However, in Sleaford Quarrington ward, more development was undertaken than expected, which has resulted in it having a particularly poor variance, with currently 37% more electors than the district average.

The table below outlines the four stages of this review.

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	30 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	17 May 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	9 August 2005	Final deliberation prior to our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission

Submissions received

During Stage One, we received 16 submissions, including three district-wide schemes, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the District Council. The District Council, Sleaford and North Hykeham Constituency Labour Party (the Labour Party) and Councillor Hudson all submitted district-wide schemes. We also received six submissions from parish and town councils, two from district councillors, two from Sleaford town councillors and two from local residents.

Analysis and draft recommendations

Electorate figures

During the last review, a 9% increase in electorate was projected between 1996 and 2001. However, since 1996, there has been a 13% increase in the electorate of North Kesteven district. The Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2008, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 11% over the five year

period from 2003 to 2008. The District Council stated that at Stage Three it may put forward amendments to its projected electorate in light of further information available by that time. Concerns were expressed by two respondents as to the accuracy of the District Council's projected electorate figures and the possibility that it had underestimated future electorate growth. We noted these concerns but are content that the District Council's figures provide the best estimates currently available.

Council size

We received proposals for three different council sizes of 40, 42 and 43. A local resident stated that the current council size of 40 should not increase. The District Council argued that a council of 42 members would provide convenient and effective local government. Councillor Hudson and the Labour Party argued that a council size of 43 would be acceptable to the electorate, would provide an additional councillor to each of the two towns and would not increase costs. We requested further evidence and having carefully considered this and investigated the distribution of councillors across the district, we are recommending a council size of 43.

General analysis

Our draft recommendations are a mixture of the District Council, the Labour Party and Councillor Hudson's proposals as well as our own proposals. For much of the district, we did not receive any evidence to justify the proposals submitted, therefore in these cases we have investigated various different options and proposed wards which would provide good electoral equality. We are proposing to create 11 single-member, seven two-member and six three-member wards.

What happens next?

There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for North Kesteven contained in this report. We will take into account fully all submissions received by 8 August 2005. Any received **after** this date may not be taken into account.

We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for North Kesteven and welcome comments from interested parties. In particular, we found our decisions regarding Sleaford to be a difficult judgement between our statutory criteria. We would particularly welcome local views, backed up by demonstrable evidence, during Stage Three. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations

Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Review Manager
North Kesteven Review
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of Councillors	Constituent areas
1 Ashby de la Launde	1	Ashby de la Launde ward and part of Cranwell & Byard's Leap ward (the parish of Temple Bruer with Temple High Grange)
2 Bassingham & Brant Broughton	3	Bassingham ward; part of Brant Broughton ward (parishes of Beckingham, Brant Broughton & Stragglethorpe, Carlton le Moorland, Norton Disney and Stapleford) and Witham St Hughs parish (part of Bassingham ward and part of Brant Broughton ward south of A46)
3 Billingham & Martin	2	Billingham ward; part of Kyme ward (parish of North Kyme); part of Martin ward (parishes of Martin, Timberland and Walcott)
4 Bracebridge Heath & Waddington East	3	(unchanged) Bracebridge Heath & Waddington East ward
5 Branston	2	(unchanged) Branston & Mere ward
6 Cliff Villages	2	(unchanged) Cliff Villages ward
7 Cranwell & Osbournby	2	Osbournby ward; part of Cranwell & Byard's Leap ward (parishes of Braucewell and Cranwell & Byard's Leap); part of Heckington Rural ward (parish of Burton Pedwardine); part of Leasingham & Roxholm ward (parishes of North Rauceby and South Rauceby)
8 Eagle & Skellingthorpe	3	Eagle & North Scarle ward; Skellingthorpe ward; part of Brant Broughton ward (parish of Swinderby)
9 Heckington Rural	2	part of Heckington Rural ward (parishes of Great Hale, Heckington, Helpringham and Little Hale)
10 Heighington & Washingborough	3	(unchanged) Heighington & Washingborough ward
11 Kirkby la Thorpe & South Kyme	1	part of Kyme ward (parishes of Anwick, Asgarby & Howell, Ewerby & Evedon, Kirkby la Thorpe and South Kyme)
12 Leasingham & Ruskington	3	Ruskington ward; part of Leasingham & Roxholm ward (parishes of Leasingham and Roxholm)

Table 1 (continued): Draft recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of Councillors	Constituent areas
13 Metheringham	2	Metheringham ward; part of Martin ward (parish of Blankney)
14 North Hykeham Forum	1	part of North Hykeham Forum ward; part of North Hykeham Memorial ward
15 North Hykeham Memorial	2	part of North Hykeham Memorial ward; part of North Hykeham Mill ward and part of North Hykeham Moor ward
16 North Hykeham Mill	1	part of North Hykeham Mill ward
17 North Hykeham Moor	1	part of North Hykeham Forum ward; part of North Hykeham Moor ward
18 North Hykeham Witham	1	North Hykeham Witham ward; part of North Hykeham Mill ward
19 Sleaford Central	1	Part of Sleaford Castle ward; part of Sleaford Mareham ward
20 Sleaford Holdingham	1	(unchanged) Sleaford Holdingham ward
21 Sleaford Navigation	1	Sleaford Navigation ward; part of Sleaford Castle ward; part of Sleaford Westholme ward
22 Sleaford Quarrington	3	Sleaford Quarrington ward; part of Sleaford Castle ward; part of Sleaford Mareham ward
23 Sleaford Westholme	1	part of Sleaford Westholme ward
24 Waddington West	1	(unchanged) Waddington West ward

Notes:

1. The whole district is parished.
2. The maps accompanying this report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.
3. We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.

