

## Executive summary

# Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Dacorum in Hertfordshire

The Boundary Committee for England is the body responsible for conducting electoral reviews of local authorities. A further electoral review of Dacorum is being undertaken to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the borough. This review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each borough councillor is approximately the same. The Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to undertake this review on 10 February 2005.

### Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements, four wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the borough average. Since the last review Apsley ward has seen extensive growth, which has resulted in it having a particularly poor variance, with 46% more electors than the borough average; this is expected to rise to 84% more by 2009, if the existing arrangements remain in place.

### Draft recommendations

During Stage One we proposed a reduction in council size of one to 51. We made amendments to 21 of the borough ward boundaries based on a combination of the Borough Council's, the Liberal Democrats' and the Labour

Group's proposals with our own amendments. We received limited community identity arguments at Stage One and therefore made amendments to the existing warding arrangements in order to improve electoral equality.

### Responses to consultation

During Stage Three we received 207 representations in response to our draft recommendations. The Borough Council put forward alternative warding arrangements for Hemel Hempstead. We received particular opposition to our proposed Tring East, Aldbury & Wigginton ward. We also received a number of comments regarding the southern and western areas of Hemel Hempstead. We conducted a period of further consultation on

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	17 May 2005	Submission of proposals to us
Two	9 August 2005	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	29 November 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	7 March 2006	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

these areas of Hemel Hempstead and received a further 126 responses.

## Analysis and final recommendations

### Electorate figures

The Council has forecast an increase in electorate of approximately 1% between 2004 and 2009, from 106,238 to 107,372, most of which is anticipated in Apsley ward. At Stage Three we received two responses about the 2009 electorate forecast for Aldbury parish, both considering that a planned development had not been included in the borough council's projected figures. After contacting the Borough Council regarding this, it confirmed that it was not included in the figures as permission had not yet been granted for the development. Therefore we remain satisfied that the forecast figures remain the best estimates currently available.

### Council size

We proposed reducing council size by one to 51 in our draft recommendations. At Stage Three this council size was accepted and we received no other comments regarding this. Therefore we remain content that a council size of 51 will provide the borough with the best representation.

### General analysis

We are endorsing our draft recommendations in all but

three areas in the borough. We are proposing changes in the southern and western areas of Hemel Hempstead and to our draft proposal for Tring East, Aldbury & Wigginton ward. We are proposing to revert to the existing Aldbury & Wigginton ward.

### What happens next?

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be sent to the Electoral Commission through the contact details below. The Commission will not make an Order implementing them before **26 September 2006**. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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

**Fax: 020 7271 0667  
Email: [implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk)**

The contact details above should only be used for implementation purposes.

### Further information

The full report is available to download at [www.boundarycommittee.org.uk](http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk)