

Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Wealden District Council

Electoral review

September 2016

Translations and other formats

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by the Local Government Boundary 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 100049926 2016

Contents

Summary	1
1 Introduction	3
2 Analysis and final recommendations	5
Submissions received	5
Electorate figures	5
Number of councillors	6
Ward boundaries consultation	6
Draft recommendations consultation	6
Final recommendations	7
North Wealden	8
Crowborough	10
Uckfield	12
West Wealden	15
East Wealden and Heathfield	17
Hailsham and Hellingly	19
South-west Wealden	21
South-east Wealden	23
Conclusions	24
Parish electoral arrangements	25
3 What happens next?	29

Appendices

A Table A1: Final recommendations for Wealden District Council	30
B Submissions received	34
C Outline map	36
D Glossary and abbreviations	38

Summary

Who we are and what we do

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Electoral review

An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed
- How many wards or electoral divisions should there be, where are their boundaries and what should they be called
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division

Why Wealden?

We are conducting a review of the county of East Sussex and all its districts as the value of each vote in council elections varies depending on where you live in East Sussex. Some councillors, particularly in the districts of Hastings and Wealden, currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. In Wealden, 26% of wards have a variance greater than 10%, our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

Our proposals for Wealden

- Wealden should be represented by 45 councillors, 10 fewer than there are now
- Wealden should have 41 wards, six more than now
- The boundaries of all wards will change, none will stay the same

We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Wealden.

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹

The members of the Commission are:

Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)

Dr Peter Knight CBE DL

Alison Lowton

Peter Maddison QPM

Sir Tony Redmond

Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

1 Introduction

1 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Wealden district are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district.

What is an electoral review?

2 Our three main considerations are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

3 Our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Consultation

4 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Wealden. We then held two periods of consultation on warding patterns for the district. The submissions received during consultation informed our draft and final recommendations.

This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
8 September 2015	Number of councillors decided
22 September 2015	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
30 November 2015	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
15 March 2016	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation
16 June 2016	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
27 September 2016	Publication of final recommendations

How will the recommendations affect you?

5 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in and which other communities are in that ward. Your ward name may also change.

2 Analysis and final recommendations

6 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

7 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

8 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2015	2021
Electorate of Wealden	119,688	130,228
Number of councillors	45	45
Average number of electors per councillor	2,660	2,894

9 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'electoral equality'. Thirty-seven of our 41 new wards for Wealden will have electoral equality by 2021.

10 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Wealden district or result in changes to postcodes or local taxes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. We have seen no evidence to suggest that our recommendations will have an effect on house prices or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

11 See Appendix B for details of submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

12 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2021, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2016. These forecasts were broken down to polling district levels and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 8.8% to 2021. This growth is being driven by new developments, particularly in the Uckfield, Crowborough, Hailsham and Polegate areas.

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

13 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We used these figures to produce our draft and final recommendations.

Number of councillors

14 Wealden District Council currently has 55 councillors. We have looked at the evidence provided by the Council with regard to its council size and have been persuaded that a reduction of 10 councillors from 55 to 45 councillors is justified. We are content that the Council has sufficiently demonstrated that the authority can operate efficiently and effectively under this reduced council size and ensure effective representation of local residents. Additionally, in making this reduction, a good level of coterminosity will be achieved between the district ward and county division boundaries.

15 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 45 councillors.

16 We received no submissions about the number of councillors in response to either our consultation on ward patterns or on our draft recommendations. We have therefore based our final recommendations on a 45-member council.

Ward boundaries consultation

17 We received 28 submissions during our consultation on ward boundaries, including two district-wide proposals. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments regarding the warding arrangements in particular areas of the district.

18 The district-wide scheme received from Wealden District Council provided a warding arrangement of 45 single-member wards. We received another district-wide scheme from a member of the public, which provided for a warding arrangement of 27 wards, made up of 13 single-member, 10 two-member and four three-member wards. This latter scheme provided for good electoral equality in the rural areas. However, the Council had expressed a preference for single-member wards across the entire district. Having carefully considered the proposals received we were of the view that the pattern of wards proposed by the council resulted in good electoral levels of equality across much of the district. However, there were areas in which we made significant changes to improve electoral equality and better reflect the statutory criteria.

Draft recommendations consultation

19 We received 215 submissions during the consultation on our draft recommendations. These included comments from Wealden District Council, and submissions from 23 parish and town councils, four district councillors, seven local groups, one political group and 179 local residents. As a result of information received, we propose to alter the boundaries of five wards, Crowborough Central, Crowborough South West, Danehill & Fletching, Uckfield New Town, and Herstmonceaux & Pevensey Levels, as part of our final recommendations.

Final recommendations

20 Pages 8–23 detail our final recommendations for each area of Wealden. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

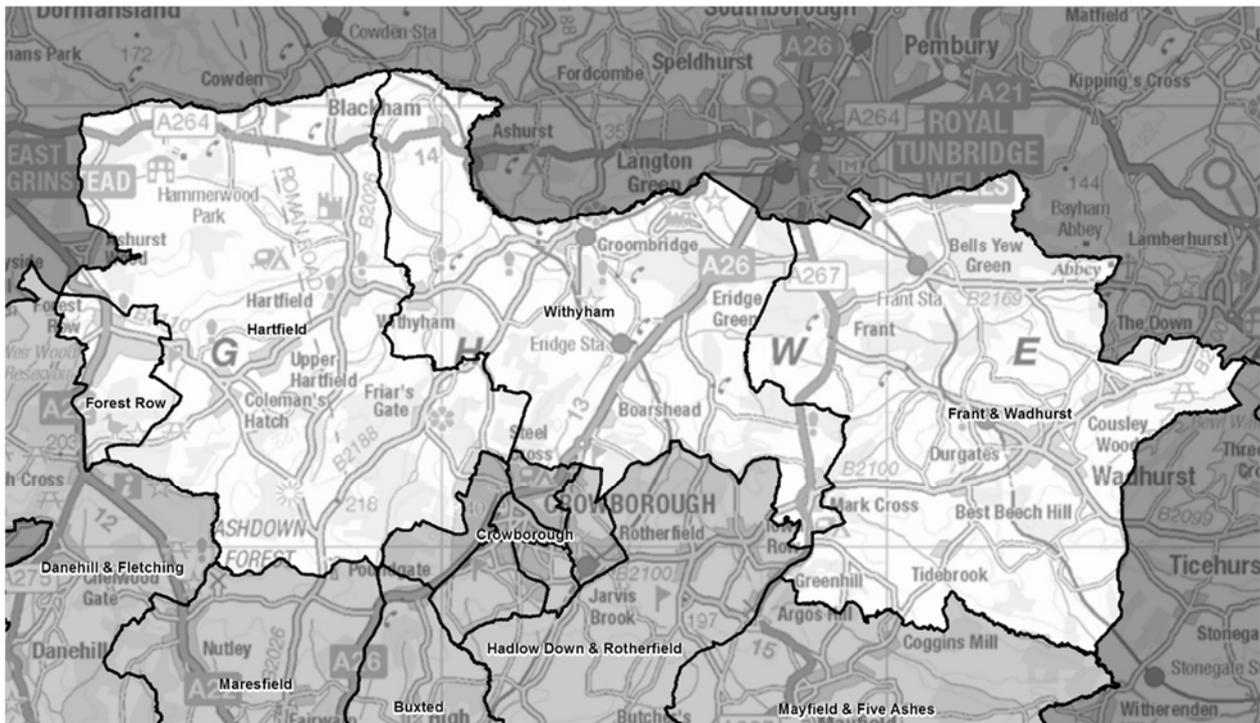
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

21 Our final recommendations are for 41 wards – 37 one-councillor wards and four two-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence.

22 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in Table 1 (on page 31) and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

North Wealden



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Forest Row	1	7%
Frant & Wadhurst	2	-4%
Hartfield	1	1%
Withyham	1	-9%

Ward boundaries in north Wealden

Forest Row and Hartfield

23 We received 16 submissions that referred to the proposed Forest Row and Hartfield wards during consultation on the draft recommendations for this area. The main issue put forward in the submissions was that the proposed Forest Row ward should be made larger to encompass more of the surrounding area. However, no appropriate alternative warding arrangements were provided and to include the entire Forest Row parish, as suggested, in the proposed Forest Row ward would result in a variance of 30% for the ward by 2021. This is considerably outside the range of variances considered to be acceptable by the Commission. We consider that the draft boundaries here provide for a good balance of the statutory criteria. Our final recommendations are therefore identical to our draft recommendations for these wards.

Withyham

24 We received two submissions referring to this area during the consultation on the draft recommendations. One submission proposed that the St John's area be moved from the proposed Hartfield ward into the proposed Withyham ward, and that the Fairwarp area should be moved from the proposed Maresfield ward into the proposed Hartfield ward. However, this would result in a variance of -14% for the Maresfield ward. We do not consider that strong enough evidence was provided to

justify such a high variance. Submissions were also received objecting to the parish warding arrangements for Withyham. However, the Commission does not have the power to propose parish warding arrangements that are not created as a direct consequence of changes to either ward or division boundaries at the outcome of a review. We did consider that compelling evidence was received in Withyham parish to alter the name of the proposed Marden's Hill parish ward to St John's.

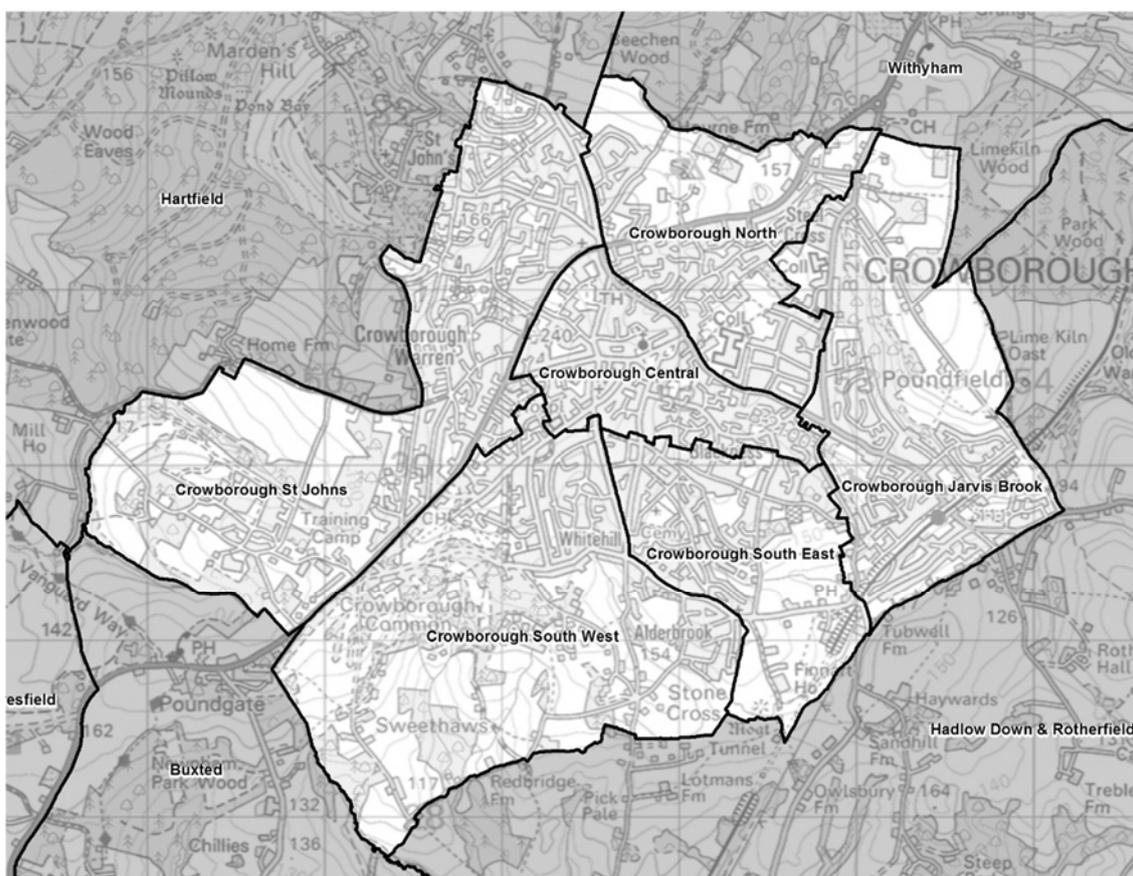
25 We received a submission from a member of the public putting forward an alternative scheme for the district, and whilst the variances were acceptable for this particular area, the scheme would have consequentially caused unacceptably high variances elsewhere in the district (particularly in Uckfield). No compelling evidence was provided to justify this alteration to the boundaries as proposed at draft recommendations.

26 We consider that the draft boundaries for this ward provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria, and we are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations.

Frant & Wadhurst

27 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, we received positive comments regarding the arrangement for this ward from the Council. We consider that this ward provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and we therefore confirm this ward as part of our final recommendations.

Crowborough



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Crowborough Central	1	2%
Crowborough Jarvis Brook	1	-1%
Crowborough North	1	5%
Crowborough South East	1	5%
Crowborough South West	1	7%
Crowborough St Johns	1	-4%

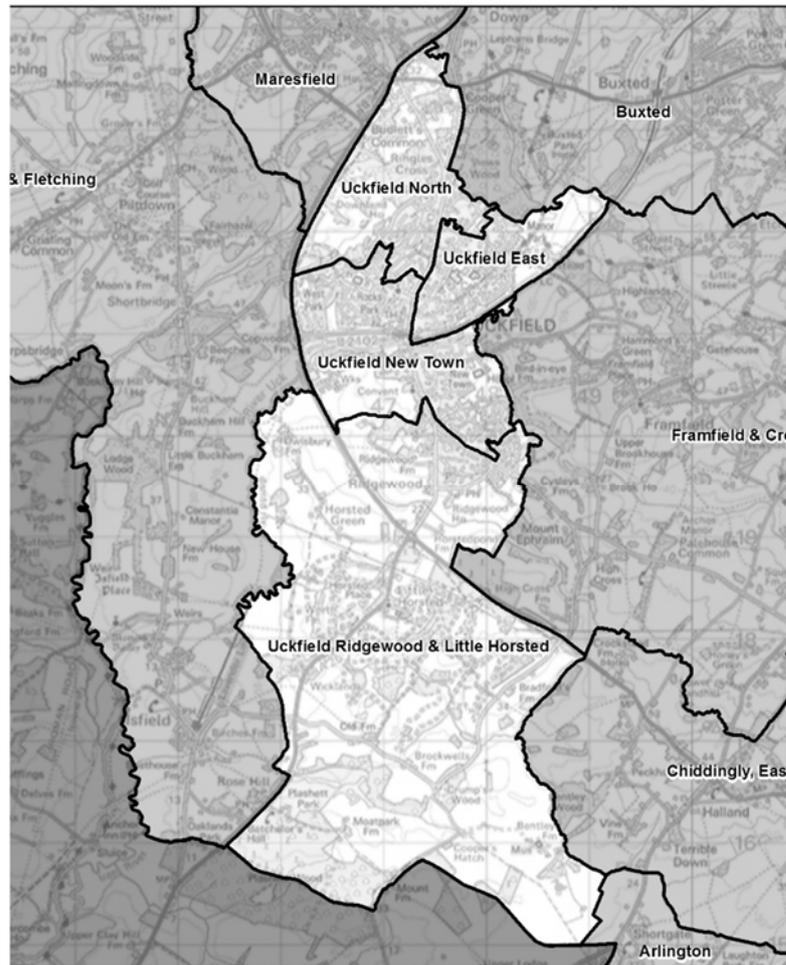
Ward boundaries in Crowborough

28 We received three submissions that related to the Crowborough wards as proposed in the draft recommendations. One submission requested that the external boundary of Crowborough be expanded, but did not provide any further information as to how this might be achieved. One submission requested that all boundaries run behind houses rather than along roads; we have considered this option, however, it is not always possible and in this case would adversely affect the variances across Crowborough.

29 The third submission, from the Council, requested that the boundary between the proposed Crowborough Central and Crowborough South West wards be altered slightly so as to include the hospital in the Crowborough Central ward rather than the Crowborough South West ward. This does not affect the electoral equality in this ward and provides for a strong and identifiable boundary, therefore we propose to include this alteration as part of our final recommendations.

30 We are content that the proposed wards in Crowborough adhere well to the statutory criteria and, subject to the minor change between Crowborough Central and South West wards, are therefore including them as part of our final recommendations.

Uckfield



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Uckfield East	1	-8%
Uckfield New Town	2	-8%
Uckfield North	1	-8%
Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted	1	-10%

Ward boundaries in Uckfield

Uckfield North and Uckfield East

31 We received two submissions referencing these wards during the consultation on our draft recommendations. Both submissions were in support of the warding arrangement as proposed at draft recommendations.

32 One submission proposed alternative warding arrangements across the district. However, the proposals for Uckfield resulted in variances outside the acceptable tolerance range. The North and East wards had acceptable variances but the proposed New Town and Ridgewood wards had variances of 18% and -17% respectively. No evidence was provided to justify this change.

33 We consider that the boundaries for these wards as proposed as part of the draft recommendations adhere well to the statutory criteria, and are therefore confirming the Uckfield North and Uckfield East wards as part of our final recommendations.

Uckfield New Town and Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted

34 We received three submissions regarding the Uckfield part of these wards during consultation. We also received 109 submissions referring to the proposed inclusion of the Piltdown area, and also Isfield and Little Horsted, in these Uckfield wards.

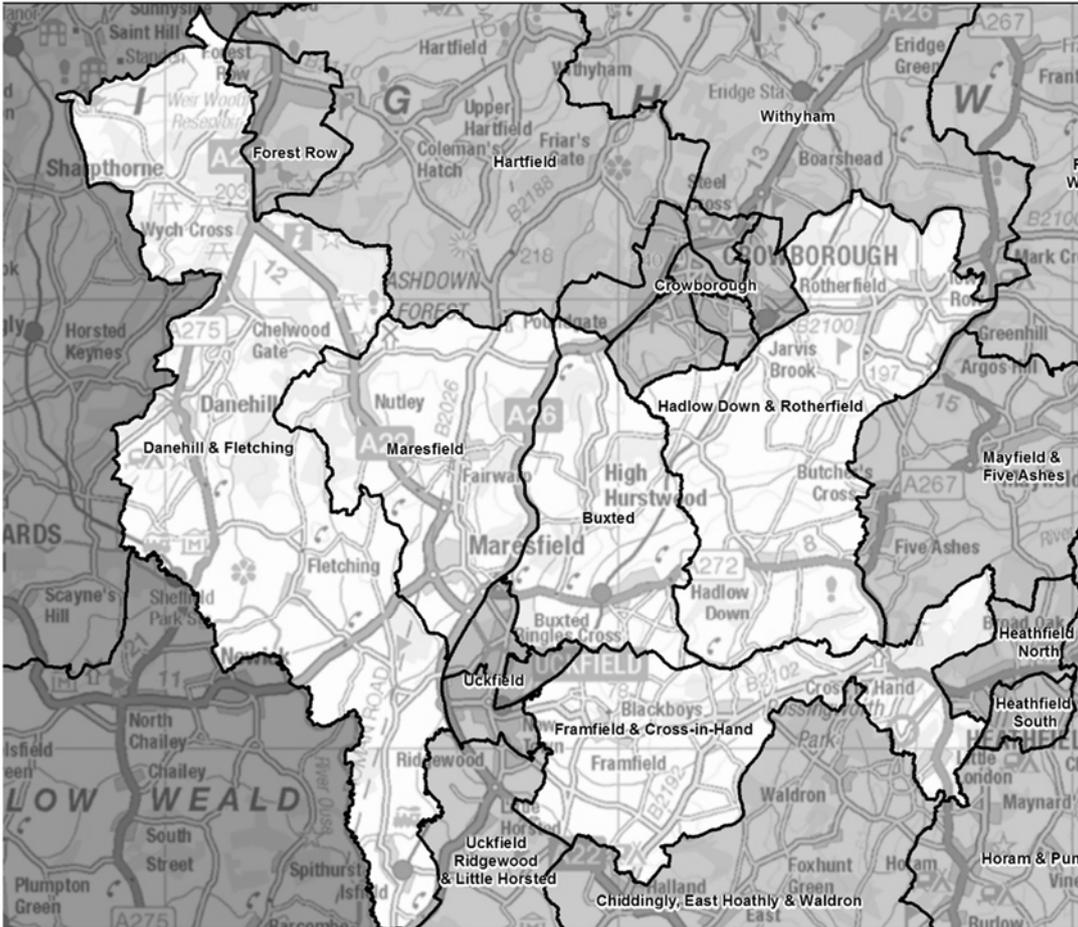
35 These submissions provided strong and compelling evidence to justify the removal of the Shortbridge area of Piltdown and the Isfield area into the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. The submissions described the rural nature of the ward, and particularly the strong links between Shortbridge, Piltdown, and the rest of the parish of Fletching. We are therefore proposing to alter our recommendations to include the parish of Isfield and the Shortbridge area in the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward rather than Uckfield North ward.

36 As a result of this change, it is necessary for an alteration to be made in the centre of Uckfield, to avoid unacceptably high variances. The comments received in regard to the urban Uckfield wards were positive, therefore we consider that the most appropriate action is to join the remainder of the proposed Uckfield West with Isfield ward with the proposed Uckfield New Town ward, to create a new two-member ward named Uckfield New Town that has an electoral variance of -8%. The proposed ward would have very similar external boundaries to the ward as proposed as part of the draft recommendations, but exclude the more rural areas to the west.

37 A number of the submissions also called for the inclusion of the parish of Little Horsted in the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward rather than the proposed Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted ward. The submissions provided evidence of community links in the area, and proposed an alternative solution that would see the northern area of the Danehill & Fletching ward moved into the proposed Forest Row ward, as a consequence of accommodating Little Horsted parish within the southern end of the Danehill & Fletching ward. However, this would have resulted in a variance of 16% for Forest Row and -17% for the remaining Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted ward. No solution provided to rectify these very high variances. We consider therefore that placing Little Horsted in Danehill & Fletching would have detrimental effects to other wards within the district that cannot be justified based on the evidence received.

38 This review seeks to provide for a balance between each of the statutory criteria, one of which is good electoral equality. Electoral equality must exist, within reason, across the entirety of the Wealden district. After careful consideration of the evidence and alternative proposals provided, the Commission are of the view that maintaining the Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted ward as proposed by the draft recommendations provides for the best balance of these criteria. We therefore propose to confirm the Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted ward as part of our final recommendations.

West Wealden



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Buxted	1	-4%
Danehill & Fletching	1	11%
Framfield & Cross-in-Hand	1	-1%
Hadlow Down & Rotherfield	1	-6%
Maresfield	1	9%

Ward boundaries in west Wealden

Danehill & Fletching

39 We received 109 submissions in reference to this ward, and its communities’ relationship with the neighbouring urban Uckfield wards. These submissions provided strong and compelling evidence to justify the removal of the Shortbridge area of Piltdown and the Isfield area from Uckfield into the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. The submissions described the rural nature of the ward to be clearly distinct from Uckfield and also the particularly strong community links between Shortbridge, Piltdown and the rest of the parish of Fletching. We are persuaded by the evidence received and are therefore proposing to alter our recommendations to include the parish of Isfield and the Shortbridge area in the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. The proposed ward would have a variance of 11% but we consider that the evidence provided regarding this change was strong enough to justify this.

40 In addition, a number of the submissions also called for the inclusion of the parish of Little Horsted in the proposed Danehill & Fletching ward. The submissions provided evidence of community links in the area, and proposed an alternative solution that would see the northern area of the Danehill & Fletching ward moved into the proposed Forest Row ward, to accommodate moving the parish of Little Horsted into Danehill & Fletching ward. However, this would have resulted in an electoral variance of 16% for Forest Row and -17% for Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted. No solution was provided to rectify these very high variances. We consider therefore that placing Little Horsted in Danehill & Fletching would have detrimental effects to other wards within the district that cannot be justified based on the evidence received.

41 We therefore propose a Danehill & Fletching ward that contains Shortbridge and Isfield parish, but not Little Horsted parish. We are content that the proposed ward provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

Maresfield, Buxted, Framfield & Cross-in-Hand and Hadlow Down & Rotherfield

42 We did not receive any submissions relating to the proposed Maresfield ward. We are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

43 We received one submission regarding the proposed Framfield & Cross-in-Hand ward. This suggested that part of the ward be included in Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted. However, we do not consider that strong enough evidence was received to justify the alteration, and we are therefore confirming the proposed ward as part of our final recommendations.

44 We received two submissions relating to our proposed Buxted ward, in addition to positive comments from the Council. These submissions requested that the Coopers Green area be included in the proposed Buxted ward rather than in Uckfield North. However, this would result in an Uckfield North ward with an electoral variance of -18%. We do not consider that strong enough evidence was provided to justify such a high variance. We consider that the ward proposed during consultation on the draft recommendations provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and are therefore including the Buxted ward as part of our final recommendations.

45 We received one submission that referred to the proposed Hadlow Down & Rotherfield ward, which supported the recommendations. We are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations.

Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron

47 We received one submission regarding this ward, which requested that the areas of Waldron and Cross-in-Hand remain together. However, no justification was provided for this alteration. We are content that the proposed ward provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

Heathfield North and Heathfield South

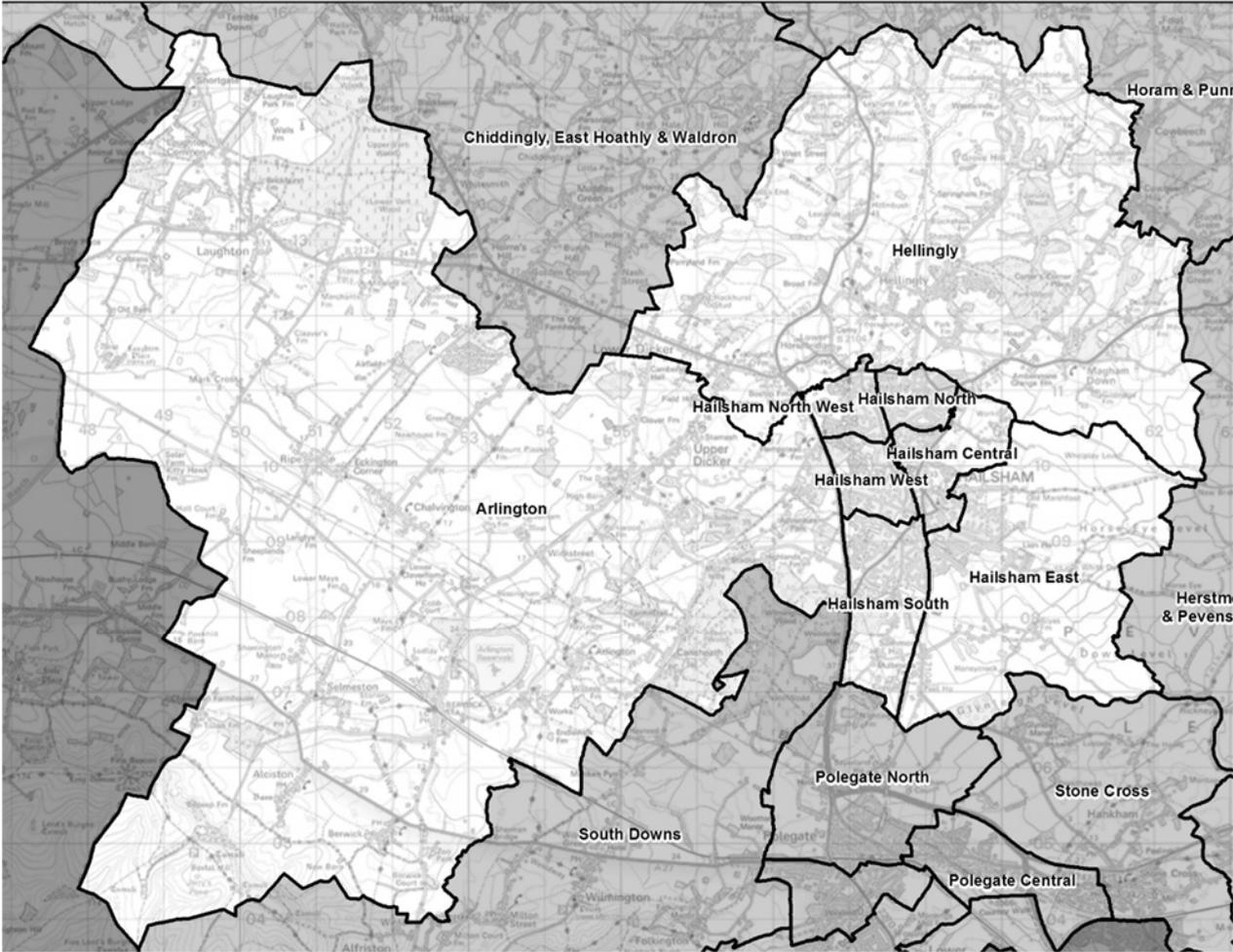
48 We received two submissions relating to our proposed Heathfield wards, along with positive comments from the Council. One of the submissions favoured maintaining the existing Heathfield wards. However, both existing Heathfield wards would have a variance of -26% by 2021, which is a significantly higher electoral variance than normally accepted by the Commission. Another of the submissions requested that part of the proposed Framfield & Cross-in-Hand ward be included in Heathfield, but again no strong evidence was provided for this change. We are therefore confirming both Heathfield wards as part of our final recommendations.

Horam & Punnetts Town

49 We received seven submissions that referred to this ward. All of the submissions objected to the two-member ward and favoured the original proposal put forward by the local authority. Their proposal for this area put forward two wards – Punnetts Town & Rushlake Green and Horam & Old Heathfield. However, these two single-member wards had electoral variances of 13% and -10% respectively. In order to maintain electoral equality within this warding pattern, it would be necessary for us to split communities apart, which would go against our statutory criteria.

50 We consider that our proposed two-member ward avoids splitting any communities. Whilst it does join together disparate communities, it does not divide any, which leads to stronger adherence to the statutory criteria. It is for this reason that we are not proposing any alterations to our proposed Horam & Punnetts Town ward, and are confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

Hailsham and Hellingly



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Arlington	1	-11%
Hailsham Central	1	7%
Hailsham East	1	6%
Hailsham North	1	4%
Hailsham North West	1	11%
Hailsham South	1	-2%
Hailsham West	1	7%
Hellingly	1	4%

Ward boundaries in Hailsham and Hellingly

Arlington

51 We received three submissions relating to the proposed Arlington ward, all of which were positive. We consider that the proposed ward provides for good adherence to the statutory criteria and we are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

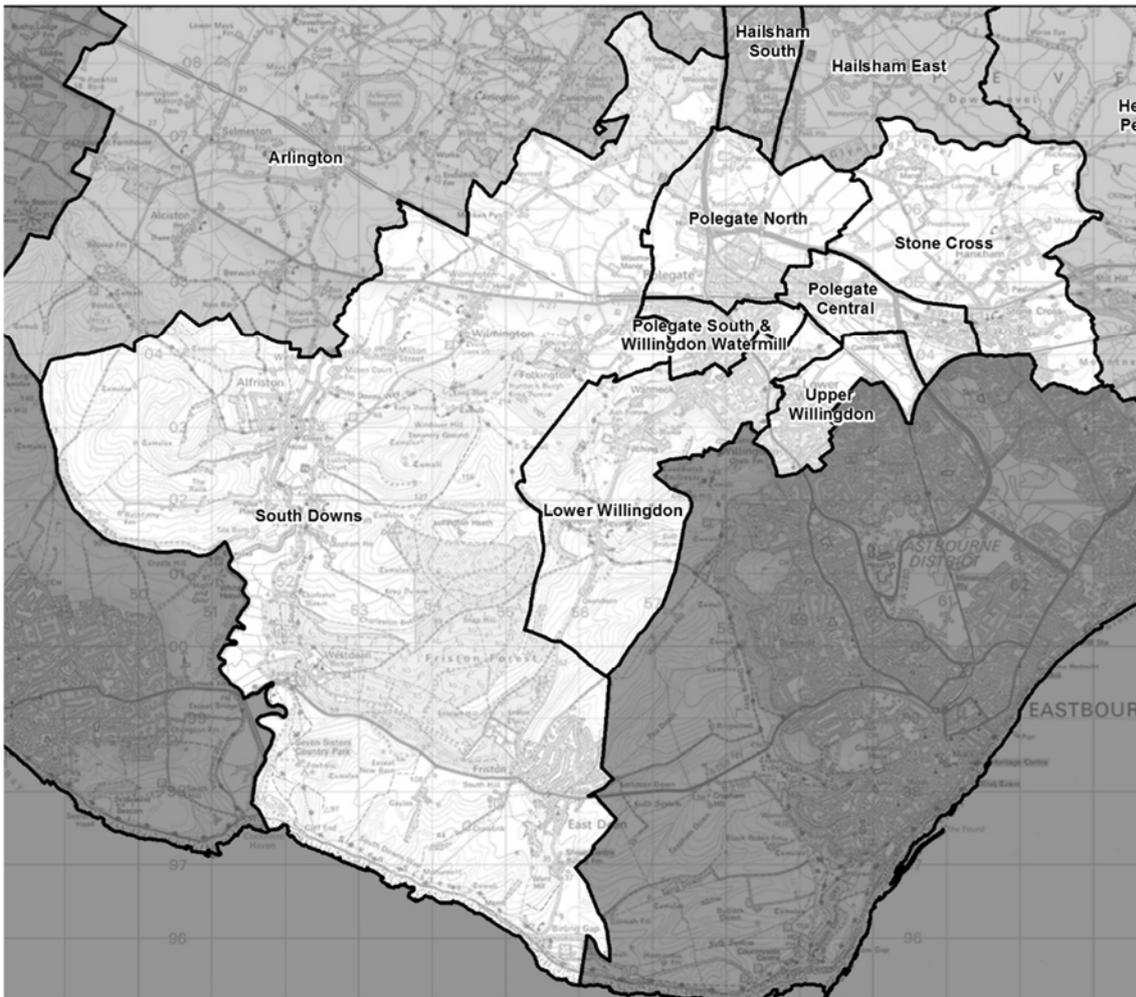
Hailsham

52 We did not receive any submissions relating to our proposed Hailsham wards. We consider that the proposals here provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria, and are therefore confirming these wards as part of our final recommendations.

Hellingly

53 We did not receive any submissions relating to our proposed Hellingly ward. We consider that the proposals here provide for a good balance of our statutory criteria, and are therefore confirming this ward as part of our final recommendations.

South-west Wealden



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Lower Willingdon	1	-4%
Polegate Central	1	-3%
Polegate North	1	9%
Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill	1	5%
South Downs	1	-10%
Stone Cross	1	-6%
Upper Willingdon	1	1%

Ward boundaries in south-west Wealden

South Downs, Lower Willingdon and Upper Willingdon

54 We did not receive any substantive comments on the proposed South Downs ward. We consider that it adheres well to the statutory criteria, and we are therefore confirming it as part of our final recommendations.

55 We received four submissions relating to the proposed Lower Willingdon and Upper Willingdon wards. All of the submissions received made reference to proposed parish warding arrangements, and requested the retention of the existing pattern. We

are required by legislation to propose new parish wards where the changes to the district warding patterns require it. Therefore, we are not able to retain the existing parish wards in this area.

56 One submission suggested that the Willingdon Watermill area, currently in the proposed Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill ward, should join the proposed Lower Willingdon ward. However, this would result in electoral variances of -25% and 25% respectively, and we do not consider that strong enough evidence has been received to justify a change.

57 We are content that the proposed wards provide for good adherence to the statutory criteria and are therefore confirming them as part of our final recommendations.

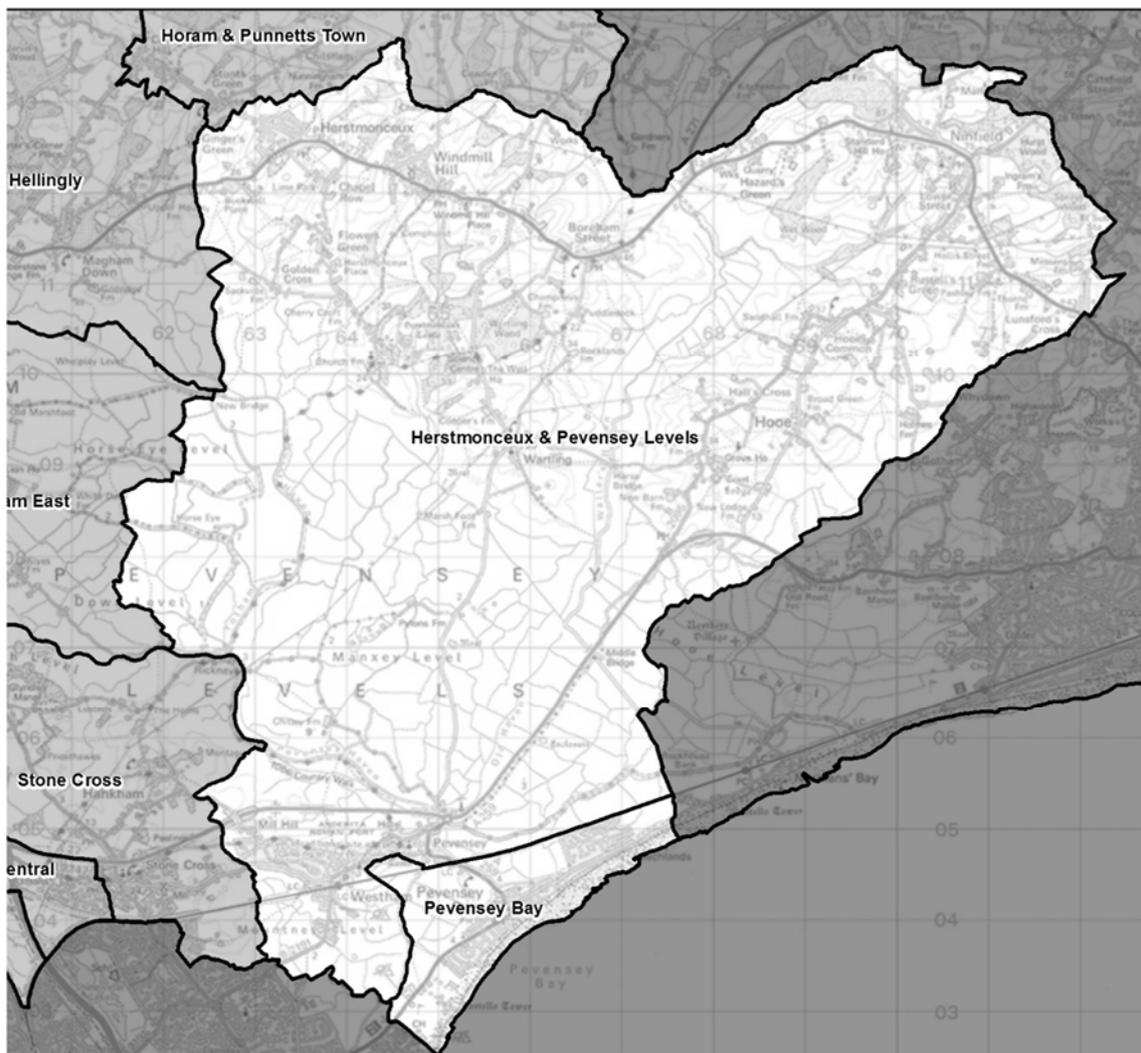
Polegate Central, Polegate North and Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill

58 Aside from the Willingdon Watermill comments outlined above, we did not receive any submissions relating to the proposed Polegate wards. We consider that the wards proposed during the consultation on the draft recommendations provide for good adherence to the statutory criteria, and we are therefore confirming them as part of the final recommendations.

Stone Cross

59 We received three submissions regarding the proposed Stone Cross ward, along with comments from the Council. The submissions referred to the Hankham area, and proposed that it should remain with Westham. However, this would result in a Stone Cross ward with a variance of -19%, and we do not consider that strong enough evidence has been provided to justify an alteration. We are therefore confirming the proposed Stone Cross ward as part of our final recommendations.

South-east Wealden



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021
Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels	2	4%
Pevensey Bay	1	-2%

Ward boundaries in south-east Wealden

Pevensey Bay

60 We received one submission regarding this area during the consultation on our draft recommendations. This was to inform us of the alterations to the boundary of the parish, which came about as a result of a Community Governance Review. We have therefore altered the boundaries of the ward to be coterminous with the revised parish boundary. This does not affect the electoral equality. With these minor alterations, we are confirming the proposed Pevensey Bay ward as part of our final recommendations.

Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels

61 We received 49 submissions regarding this ward during the consultation on our draft recommendations. These submissions objected to the placement of Hooe parish and the areas to the south of Herstmonceux in a different ward to the rest of Herstmonceux and the Ninfield and Wartling parishes. Strong evidence was provided by respondents as to the community links that exist between these areas.

62 Respondents proposed instead that the parish of Hooe be included in the proposed Herstmonceux, Ninfield & Wartling ward; however, doing this would result in an unacceptable high electoral variance of 22% for the ward.

63 The Commission were persuaded by the compelling evidence received that both the parish of Hooe and the Flowers Green area of Herstmonceux, both currently in the proposed Pevensey & Westham ward, should be in the same ward as the parishes of Herstmonceux, Ninfield and Wartling. In order to recommend a ward that better meets the statutory criteria, we are therefore proposing to join the previously proposed Herstmonceux, Ninfield & Wartling ward and the Pevensey & Westham ward together, to form a new two-member Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels ward. Whilst we accept that this will join a number of different communities together, it is clear from the evidence received that the previous recommendations would split communities apart, and as such it is preferable to recommend a ward that encompasses a number of communities entirely rather than divide them.

64 We are therefore proposing a two-member Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels ward, with a variance of 4%, as part of our final recommendations.

Conclusions

65 Table 1 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2015 and 2021 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2015	2021
Number of councillors	45	45
Number of electoral wards	41	41
Average number of electors per councillor	2,660	2,894
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	3
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Final recommendation
 Wealden District Council should be made up of 45 councillors serving 41 wards – 37 one-councillor wards and four two-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Table A1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping
Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Wealden District Council.
 You can also view our final recommendations for Wealden on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Parish electoral arrangements

66 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

67 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Wealden District Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

68 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Buxted, Crowborough, Forest Row, Frant, Hailsham, Heathfield & Waldron, Herstmonceux, Pevensey, Polegate, Uckfield, Westham, Willingdon & Jevington and Withyham parishes.

69 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Buxted parish.

Final recommendation

Buxted Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Buxted (returning nine members), Coopers Green (returning one member) and High Hurstwood (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

70 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Crowborough parish.

Final recommendation

Crowborough Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Crowborough Central (returning three members), Crowborough Jarvis Brook (returning two members), Crowborough North (returning three members), Crowborough South East (returning three members), Crowborough South West (returning three members) and Crowborough St Johns (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

71 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Forest Row parish.

Final recommendation

Forest Row Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Charlwood (returning one member), Hammerwood (returning two members) and Forest Row (returning 12 members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

72 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Frant parish.

Final recommendation

Frant Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Bells Yew Green (returning three members), Frant (returning seven members) and Eridge Green (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

73 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hailsham parish.

Final recommendation

Hailsham Town Council should comprise 24 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards: Hailsham Central (returning four members), Hailsham East (returning four members), Hailsham North (returning four members), Hailsham North West (returning four members), Hailsham South (returning three members), Hailsham West (returning four members) and Magham Down (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

74 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Heathfield & Waldron parish.

Final recommendation

Heathfield & Waldron Parish Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Cross-in-Hand (returning three members), Heathfield North (returning six members), Heathfield South (returning six members), Punnetts Town (returning five members) and Waldron (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

75 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Herstmonceux parish.

Final recommendation

Herstmonceux Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Castle (returning eight members), Cowbeech (returning one member) and Trolliloes (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

76 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Pevensey parish.

Final recommendation

Pevensey Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Pevensey Bay (returning 12 members) and Pevensey Rural (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

77 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Polegate parish.

Final recommendation

Polegate Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Polegate Central (returning three members), Polegate North (returning seven members) and Polegate South (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

78 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Uckfield parish.

Final recommendation

Uckfield Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing five wards: Uckfield East (returning three members), Uckfield New Town (returning four members), Uckfield North (returning three members), Uckfield Ridgewood (returning three members) and Uckfield West (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

79 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Westham parish.

Final recommendation

Westham Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Dittons (returning two members), Stone Cross (returning six members) and Westham (returning five members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

80 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Willingdon & Jevington parish.

Final recommendation

Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council should comprise 19 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Upper Willingdon (returning nine members), Lower Willingdon (returning eight members) and Watermill (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

81 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Withyham parish.

Final recommendation

Withyham Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Groombridge (returning 10 members) and Marden’s Hill (returning three members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

3 What happens next?

82 We have now completed our review of Wealden District Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2019.

Equalities

83 This report has been screened for impact on equalities, with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

Appendix A

Table A1: Final recommendations for Wealden District Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Arlington	1	2,354	2,354	-11%	2,585	2,585	-11%
2	Buxted	1	2,664	2,664	0%	2,792	2,792	-4%
3	Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron	1	2,667	2,667	0%	2,856	2,856	-1%
4	Crowborough Central	1	2,738	2,738	3%	2,966	2,966	2%
5	Crowborough Jarvis Brook	1	2,799	2,799	5%	2,865	2,865	-1%
6	Crowborough North	1	2,737	2,737	3%	3,053	3,053	5%
7	Crowborough South East	1	2,842	2,842	7%	3,052	3,052	5%
8	Crowborough South West	1	2,767	2,767	4%	3,091	3,091	7%
9	Crowborough St Johns	1	2,770	2,770	4%	2,777	2,777	-4%
10	Danehill & Fletching	1	3,052	3,052	15%	3,222	3,222	11%
11	Forest Row	1	2,983	2,983	12%	3,097	3,097	7%
12	Framfield & Cross-in-Hand	1	2,507	2,507	-6%	2,867	2,867	-1%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Frant & Wadhurst	2	5,132	2,566	-4%	5,558	5,558	-4%
14 Hadlow Down & Rotherfield	1	2,590	2,590	-3%	2,730	2,730	-6%
15 Hailsham Central	1	2,366	2,366	-11%	3,089	3,089	7%
16 Hailsham East	1	2,896	2,896	9%	3,061	3,061	6%
17 Hailsham North	1	2,567	2,567	-3%	3,011	3,011	4%
18 Hailsham North West	1	2,341	2,341	-12%	3,226	3,226	11%
19 Hailsham South	1	2,623	2,623	-1%	2,839	2,839	-2%
20 Hailsham West	1	2,930	2,930	10%	3,097	3,097	7%
21 Hartfield	1	2,813	2,813	6%	2,919	2,919	1%
22 Heathfield North	1	2,892	2,892	9%	3,004	3,004	4%
23 Heathfield South	1	2,808	2,808	6%	2,915	2,915	1%
24 Hellingly	1	2,452	2,452	-8%	3,001	3,001	4%
25 Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels	2	5,475	2,738	3%	6,002	6,002	4%

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
26	Horam & Punnetts Town	2	5,519	2,760	4%	5,879	5,879	2%
27	Lower Willingdon	1	2,655	2,655	0%	2,771	2,771	-4%
28	Maresfield	1	3,014	3,014	13%	3,156	3,156	9%
29	Mayfield & Five Ashes	1	2,789	2,789	5%	2,865	2,865	-1%
30	Pevensey Bay	1	2,393	2,393	-10%	2,825	2,825	-2%
31	Polegate Central	1	2,793	2,793	5%	2,793	2,793	-3%
32	Polegate North	1	2,833	2,833	6%	3,162	3,162	9%
33	Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill	1	2,872	2,872	8%	3,025	3,025	5%
34	South Downs	1	2,554	2,554	-4%	2,606	2,606	-10%
35	Stone Cross	1	2,136	2,136	-20%	2,711	2,711	-6%
36	Uckfield East	1	2,617	2,617	-2%	2,671	2,671	-8%
37	Uckfield New Town	2	4,912	2,456	-8%	5,302	5,302	-8%
38	Uckfield North	1	2,618	2,618	-2%	2,650	2,650	-8%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2015)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
39 Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted	1	2,012	2,012	-24%	2,596	2,596	-10%
40 Upper Willingdon	1	2,791	2,791	5%	2,913	2,913	1%
41 Withyham	1	2,415	2,415	-9%	2,629	2,629	-9%
Totals	45	119,688	-	-	130,228	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,660	-	-	2,894	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Wealden District Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward 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.

Appendix B

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/east-sussex/wealden>

District council

- Wealden District Council

Political groups

- Willingdon & Jevington Liberal Democrats

Councillors

- Councillor B. Bowdler (Wealden District Council)
- Councillor P. Doodes (Wealden District Council)
- Councillor R. Galley (Wealden District Council)
- Councillor R. Thomas (Wealden District Council)

Local organisations

- Arlington Road West, The Glade & Robin Post Lane Residents' Association
- Coopers Green Road Neighbourhood Watch
- Governors of Fletching C of E Primary School
- Jevington & Filching Residents' Association
- Parish Church of St Oswald's Hooe
- Piltown Residents' Association (including petition)
- Willingdon Residents' Association

Parish and town councils

- Arlington Parish Council
- Berwick Parish Council
- Buxted Parish Council
- Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council
- Fletching Parish Council
- Forest Row Parish Council
- Hellingly Parish Council
- Herstmonceux Parish Council
- Hooe Parish Council
- Horam Parish Council
- Isfield Parish Council
- Little Horsted Parish Meeting (two submissions)
- Mayfield & Five Ashes Parish Council (two submissions)
- Pevensey Parish Council (two submissions)
- Rotherfield Parish Council
- Uckfield Town Council
- Warbleton Parish Council
- Wartling Parish Council
- Westham Parish Council
- Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council

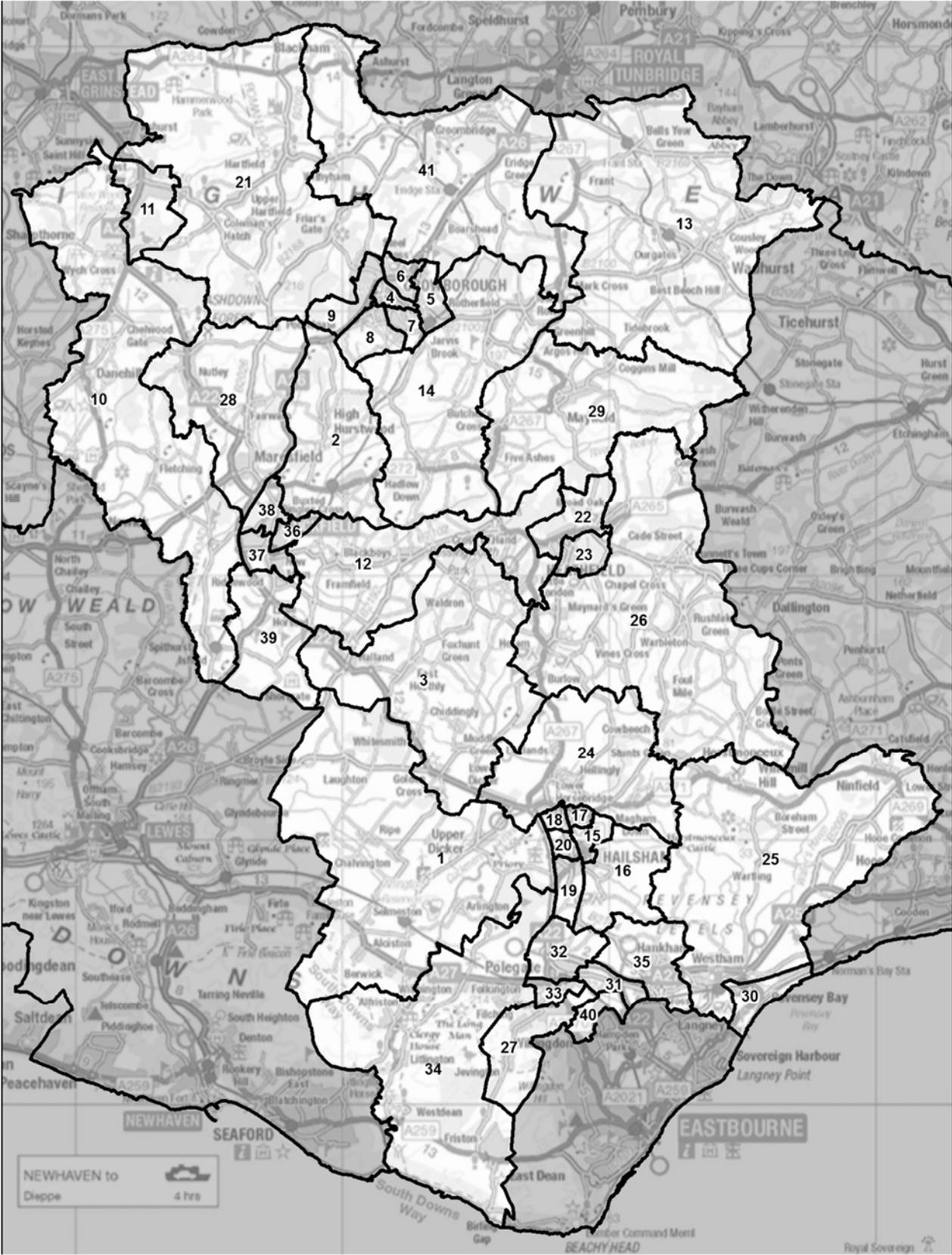
- Withyham Parish Council

Residents

- 179 local residents

Appendix C

Outline map



Ward Name Key:

1	Arlington	16	Hailsham East	31	Polegate Central
2	Buxted	17	Hailsham North	32	Polegate North
3	Chiddingly, East Hoathly & Waldron	18	Hailsham North West	33	Polegate South & Willingdon Watermill
4	Crowborough Central	19	Hailsham South	34	South Downs
5	Crowborough Jarvis Brook	20	Hailsham West	35	Stone Cross
6	Crowborough North	21	Hartfield	36	Uckfield East
7	Crowborough South East	22	Heathfield North	37	Uckfield New Town
8	Crowborough South West	23	Heathfield South	38	Uckfield North
9	Crowborough St Johns	24	Hellingly	39	Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted
10	Danehill & Fletching	25	Herstmonceux & Pevensey Levels	40	Upper Willingdon
11	Forest Row	26	Horam & Punnetts Town	41	Withyham
12	Framfield & Cross-in-Hand	27	Lower Willingdon		
13	Frant & Wadhurst	28	Maresfield		
14	Hadlow Down & Rotherfield	29	Mayfield & Five Ashes		
15	Hailsham Central	30	Pevensey Bay		

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the A1 sheet accompanying this report, or on our website <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/east-sussex/wealden>

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average

Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average

Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council
------	--