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## Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. The broad purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, and the names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions – for a specific local authority. We are conducting an electoral review of South Hams District Council to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the authority.

The review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same. The Commission commenced the review in July 2012.

This review is being conducted as follows:

<b>Stage starts</b>	<b>Description</b>
8 January 2013	Consultation on council size
26 March 2013	Invitation to submit proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
5 June 2013	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
20 August 2013	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
12 November 2013	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

## Draft recommendations

We proposed a council size of 31 members, comprising a pattern of 11 single-member wards, seven two-member wards and two three-member wards. The recommendations were broadly based on our own proposals, with reference to the submissions made by South Hams District Council and localised evidence. Our draft recommendations for South Hams sought to reflect the evidence of community identities received while ensuring good electoral equality and providing for effective and convenient local government. All submissions can be viewed on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Submissions received

During the consultation on our draft recommendations, the Commission received 58 submissions, covering our proposals in areas including Yealmpton, South Brent and Dartmouth. South Hams District Council supported our draft recommendations but proposed a number of alternative ward names. We also received 24 submissions from parish and town councils, 21 submissions from local residents, nine submissions from councillors and political groups and three submissions from local organisations. All submissions can be viewed on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

# Analysis and final recommendations

## Electorate figures

South Hams District Council ('the Council') submitted electorate forecasts for 2019. These forecasts projected a 10.3% level of growth. We requested further clarification from the Council concerning electorate growth in a number of polling districts. Following this request, the Council provided further detail regarding the location of future development. The Council also revised its forecast figures so that the total electorate increase was 8.4%. We are content that the forecasts are the most accurate available at this time and have used these figures as the basis of our final recommendations

## General analysis

Throughout the review process, the primary consideration has been to achieve good electoral equality, while seeking to reflect community identities and securing effective and convenient local government. Having considered the submissions received during consultation on our draft recommendations, we consider that there is insufficient evidence to move away from the ward boundaries proposed. We have therefore confirmed the ward boundaries contained in our draft recommendations as final. We received proposals to amend ward names in a number of areas and having considered this evidence, have changed six of our proposed ward names as part of our final recommendations.

Our final recommendations for South Hams are that the Council should have 31 members, with 11 single-member wards, seven two-member wards and two three-member wards. No ward would have an electoral variance of greater than 10% by 2019.

## What happens next?

We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for South Hams District Council. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament and will be implemented subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for South Hams District Council in 2015.

We are grateful to all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to the review through expressing their views and advice. The full report is available to download at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

**You can also view our final recommendations for South Hams on our interactive maps at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)**

# 1 Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review South Hams District Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 Submissions received from South Hams District Council and others during the initial stage of consultation of this review informed our *Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for South Hams District Council*, which were published on 20 August 2013. We then undertook a further period of consultation which ended on 11 November 2013.

## What is an electoral review?

3 The main aim of an electoral review is to try to ensure 'electoral equality', which means that all councillors in a single authority represent approximately the same number of electors. Our objective is to make recommendations that will improve electoral equality, while also trying to reflect communities in the area and provide for effective and convenient local government.

4 Our three main considerations – equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government – are set out in legislation<sup>1</sup> and 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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why are we conducting a review in South Hams?

5 We decided to conduct this review because, based on December 2012 electorate data, 33% of the district wards currently have a variance of more than 10%. Of these, four wards have an electoral variance of over 20%.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

6 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward and, in some instances, which parish council wards you vote in. Your ward name may also change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. The names or boundaries of parishes will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 2 to The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

7 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)  
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)  
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL  
Sir Tony Redmond  
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE  
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill  
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

## 2 Analysis and final recommendations

8 We have now finalised our recommendations for the electoral arrangements for South Hams District Council.

9 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for South Hams is to achieve a level of electoral fairness – that is, each elector’s vote being worth the same as another’s. In doing so we must have regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009<sup>2</sup> with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities, in particular
  - the desirability of arriving at boundaries that are easily identifiable
  - the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties

10 Legislation also requires that our recommendations are not based solely on the existing number of electors in an area, but reflect estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the end of the review. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward.

11 The achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum. In all our reviews we therefore recommend strongly that, in formulating proposals for us to consider, local authorities and other interested parties should also try to keep variances to a minimum, making adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. We aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral fairness over a five-year period.

12 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of South Hams or the external boundaries or names of parish or town councils, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that our recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

### Submissions received

13 Prior to, and during, the initial stages of the review, we visited South Hams District Council (‘the Council’) and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 54 submissions during the consultation on warding arrangements, including two district-wide schemes from the Council, and 58 submissions during our consultation on our draft recommendations. All of the submissions may be inspected at both our offices and those of the Council. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## Electorate figures

14 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2018, five years from the scheduled completion date for the review. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 10.3% over the six-year period 2012-18.

15 The figures were calculated with reference to future housing development in the district, with electors allocated to polling districts where development was considered likely to be complete by 2018. We requested further clarification from the District Council concerning electorate growth in a number of polling districts.

16 Following this request, the Council provided further detail on the location of specific developments and made downward revisions of its forecasts in a number of areas. As a consequence, the projected increase in electorate reduced to 8.4% over the six-year period to 2018.

17 Following the agreement of the forecast figures, the timetable for completion of the review changed, with the effect that it was completed in 2014 rather than 2013. This means that that the forecasts for a five-year period from the end of the review should apply to 2019, rather than 2018. South Hams District Council has confirmed that the forecasts continue to be broadly applicable to 2019. We are therefore content to use these forecasts as the basis of our final recommendations.

## Council size

18 South Hams District Council currently has 40 councillors elected from 30 district wards. During the preliminary stage of the review, we met with Group Leaders and Full Council. The Council subsequently made a proposal for a council size of 30, a reduction of 10 from the existing membership. Opposition members proposed an unchanged council size of 40.

19 The Council's principal arguments for a membership of 30 concerned the potential to reform the scrutiny function to enable the Council to run more efficiently. The Council argued that a streamlined scrutiny function would require fewer councillors.

20 The Council also argued that, as a consequence of new ways of working, future representational workload would be reduced and so would be sustainable under a reduced council size of 30 members. Evidence provided for this included the implementation of an e-casework system, greater use of digital engagement, housing stock transfer, a reduction in councillor positions on outside bodies, and an increase in shared service provision.

21 The Opposition members argued for an unchanged council size of 40 on the basis that a smaller council would increase workload and discourage people from standing for election. The Opposition submission also expressed concern that, if the size of the executive did not reduce under a smaller council, over half of members would be claiming special responsibility allowances, which would be detrimental to the scrutiny function.

22 We considered that the evidence received pointed most strongly to a council size of 30, as such a council size would reflect the proposed reform of the scrutiny function and the transfer of functions away from the council since the last review. We did not consider the evidence submitted by the opposition groups made a persuasive case to retain a council size of 40. We therefore carried out a public consultation on a council size of 30.

23 During this consultation we received 62 submissions, of which 37 supported a council size of 40, 23 supported a council size of 30 or smaller, and two supported a more modest reduction in council size.

24 Following the consultation we considered that insufficient evidence had been received to counter our view that a membership of 30 was most appropriate for the council. We therefore proceeded to consultation on warding arrangements based on a council size of 30.

25 We received further objections to our proposals to reduce council size during both the consultation on warding arrangements and during the consultation on our draft recommendations. These submissions raised concerns regarding the issue of effective community representation under a smaller council size. We do not consider that the evidence contained in these objections makes a persuasive case for a council size of 40.

26 In developing proposals for draft recommendations, we considered that a scheme based on 31 members provided for stronger boundaries and better electoral equality than a 30-member scheme. We did not receive any evidence against this consideration during the consultation on our draft recommendations. We have therefore based our final recommendations on a council size of 31.

## Electoral fairness

27 Electoral fairness, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. It is expected that our recommendations will provide for electoral fairness, reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

28 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The district average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the district (68,805 in 2012 and 74,585 by 2019) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 31 under our final recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 2,220 in 2012 and 2,406 by 2019.

29 Under our final recommendations, none of our proposed wards will have electoral variances of more than 10% from the average for the district by 2019. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral equality for South Hams.

## General analysis

30 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, we received 58 submissions including a submission from South Hams District Council which expressed support for our draft recommendations but proposed alternative names for a number of wards. The revised names were also supported in a submission made by the Conservative Group on South Hams District Council. We also received 24 submissions from parish and town councils, 21 submissions from local residents, eight other submissions from councillors and political groups and three submissions from local organisations.

31 The proposals which generated the most submissions were in the Newton, Yealmpton, South Brent and Dartington areas. In each of these areas, local residents and district councillors argued that the proposals did not reflect community identities. Concern was also expressed that two-member wards in rural areas may be difficult to represent. Alternative proposals were also made for the Yealmpton and South Brent areas.

32 Submissions were also received relating to our proposed Dartmouth & Kingswear ward as well as the proposed Ashprington & Cornworthy, Ermington & Ugborough and Stokenham wards. In addition, a number of submissions continued to raise objections to our proposed council size of 31.

33 Following analysis of the submissions received, we do not consider that a sufficient case has been made to revise our draft recommendations for ward boundaries in any part of the district. Where objections were made to our draft recommendations, many submissions did not propose specific alternatives. We did not consider that where alternatives were proposed they represented a better reflection of our statutory criteria. We therefore propose to confirm all of the ward boundaries proposed in our draft recommendations as final.

34 The proposals for alternative ward names made by South Hams District Council were not supported by evidence. However, in five cases we consider that the names proposed represent a better reflection of communities than the names we proposed in our draft recommendations. We therefore propose to rename these five wards in accordance with the proposals of South Hams District Council. We propose to rename one other ward following evidence received from a parish council.

35 Our final recommendations would result in 11 single-member wards, seven two-member wards and two three-member wards. We consider our recommendations provide for good levels of electoral equality while reflecting our understanding of community identities and interests in South Hams.

## Electoral arrangements

36 This section of the report details the proposals we have received, our consideration of them, and our final recommendations for each area of South Hams. The following areas of the authority are considered in turn:

- West (pages 9–12)
- North and east (pages 12–14)
- South (pages 14–15)

37 Details of the final recommendations are set out in Table A1 on pages 20–22 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

## West

38 The western half of the district borders Plymouth and includes the town of Ivybridge. It is largely rural in character, with some industrial and mining areas in the north-west around Dartmoor National Park.

39 In our draft recommendations, we proposed a pattern of four single-member and two two-member wards in the rural west of the district, and two two-member wards for the town of Ivybridge. Our recommendations for the rural area were based on proposals made by Councillor Holway for the areas of Bickleigh, Cornwood and Woolwell. We developed our own warding arrangements for the south and south-west of the district, with reference to the evidence received during our consultation on warding arrangements.

40 Councillor Baldry, Councillor Barber, Sparkwell Parish Council and Yealmpton Parish Council all opposed our proposed two-member Newton & Yealmpton ward, as did a Sparkwell parish councillor and two local residents. These submissions argued that the ward would be too large to be adequately represented, that Sparkwell had more in common with parishes to its north, and that there was poor connectivity across the A38 running through the centre of the ward.

41 Councillor Baldry and a local resident proposed an alternative scheme for this area. They proposed to amend our Bickleigh & Cornwood ward to include the northern part of Sparkwell parish (comprising Sparkwell village and surrounds). They also proposed that the southern part of Sparkwell parish should be included with Yealmpton parish in a single-member Yealmpton ward, and that there should be a single-member Newton & Holbeton ward comprising the parishes of Newton & Noss and Holbeton.

42 These proposals would result in the Bickleigh & Cornwood ward having 20% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. The proposed Newton & Holbeton ward would have 13% fewer electors per councillor than the district average. We do not consider that sufficient evidence of community ties has been provided to justify these electoral variances.

43 Given the evidence received concerning the stronger connections of Sparkwell parish with villages to its north, we considered whether it was possible to amend our proposals to provide for its inclusion in a ward with these villages. However, we were unable to find an alternative which provided for satisfactory electoral equality.

44 Similarly, noting the evidence regarding the geographical size of the proposed two-member Newton & Yealmpton ward, we considered whether it would be possible to amend the boundaries to provide for single-member wards. Again, however, we were unable to find alternative options which would better reflect our statutory criteria. We also note that there are road connections between Sparkwell and the remainder of the ward which provide for effective and convenient local government.

45 The Council and Conservative group proposed that the ward be named Yealm Valley rather than Newton & Yealmpton. No evidence was provided in support of this proposal.

46 We therefore confirm our proposed two-member Newton & Yealmpton ward as part of our final recommendations. This ward is forecast to have 6% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

47 Cornwood and Shaugh Prior parish councils supported the boundaries of the proposed Bickleigh & Cornwood ward. However, they expressed concern that the proposed ward name did not reflect all of the communities in the ward. They stated that South West Dartmoor may be a more appropriate name as it reflected the connection of the parishes with the Dartmoor National Park.

48 Bickleigh Parish Council did not support the proposed ward name of South West Dartmoor, arguing that it did not reflect the identity of the whole of the ward, which includes areas outside of the National Park towards the River Tamar.

49 On balance, we do not consider it appropriate to change the name of this ward from Bickleigh & Cornwood to South West Dartmoor. We note that the village of Bickleigh lies outside the National Park area and that it is the second largest settlement in the ward after Cornwood. We therefore consider that Bickleigh & Cornwood provides a more accurate reflection of settlements in the proposed ward.

50 Bickleigh Parish Council also expressed concern that some future development in Bickleigh parish had not been taken into account in calculating electorate forecasts for this area, though it stated that no firm applications were in place for such development. We do not consider that there is sufficient evidence to consider revising the electorate forecasts in this area given that any new development would appear to be in the early stages of the planning process.

51 No submissions were received concerning the proposed single-member Woolwell ward, although Bickleigh Parish Council expressed concern at the allocation of members to parish wards in Bickleigh parish, stating that it is 'not clear' why seven members had been allocated to Woolwell and only two to Bickleigh village.

52 Our allocation in this area reflects the respective electorates of the Woolwell and Bickleigh village areas, as around four-fifths of electors in Bickleigh parish live in the area covered by the proposed Woolwell parish ward.

53 We have therefore confirmed our proposed single-member Bickleigh & Cornwood and single-member Woolwell wards as final. We also do not propose to amend the allocation of councillors to parish wards in Bickleigh parish. The Bickleigh & Cornwood and Woolwell wards are forecast to have 5% fewer and 4% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

54 One submission was received from a local resident concerning our proposed single-member Bigbury & Modbury and Ermington & Ugborough wards. The resident argued that Ermington had strong ties with Modbury, particularly with regard to the use of local amenities, and that including the two parishes in separate wards may not therefore respect community ties. He argued that combining the two single-member wards into a two-member ward may be more appropriate.

55 We received a considerable amount of evidence prior to the publication of our draft recommendations concerning the strong connections between the parishes of Ermington and Ugborough. We consider that the evidence for single-member wards in this area is stronger than that for a larger and more disparate two-member ward. We therefore propose to confirm the boundaries of the proposed Bigbury & Modbury and Ermington & Ugborough wards as final.

56 The Council and Conservative Group proposed that Bigbury & Modbury should be renamed Charterlands, with Ermington & Ugborough being named Erme Valley. The former proposal was supported by a group of residents who noted that the name Charterlands has a historic resonance in the area.

57 We consider the evidence to rename Bigbury & Modbury as Charterlands to be persuasive, and have revised our recommendations to reflect this. However, we maintain the view that Ermington & Ugborough is the most appropriate name for the other ward in this area as it reflects the names of the only two parishes in the ward.

58 Our single-member Charterlands and single-member Ermington & Ugborough wards are forecast to have 5% more and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively.

59 Our proposals for two two-member wards for Ivybridge were supported by Ivybridge Town Council, Councillor Saltern and a representative of the Senior Council for Devon. They were opposed by a local resident, who considered that Ivybridge should continue to be represented by five district councillors.

60 Ivybridge Town Council stated that some further minor amendments should be made to the boundary between the Ivybridge wards and the Ermington & Ugborough ward, to include a future road link, the Lee Mill industrial estate and sports amenities which currently lie outside of the parish boundaries. Ugborough Parish Council also stated that the boundary between the proposed Ivybridge East and Ermington & Ugborough wards did not reflect the approved Ugborough Neighbourhood Plan area.

61 We consider that the boundary issues raised by Ugborough Parish Council and Ivybridge Town Council fall outside the remit of this review, as they affect no electors, have no impact in relation to our statutory criteria and may therefore be more appropriately dealt with in the context of a Community Governance Review. We therefore confirm the boundaries between Ivybridge East and West wards and Ermington & Ugborough ward as final.

62 Ivybridge Town Council and Councillor Saltern stated that it would be more appropriate for the two Ivybridge wards to be named Ivybridge East Erme and Ivybridge West Erme, reflecting the key geographical feature of the river which acts as the boundary between the two proposed wards. This proposal was also supported in the submissions of South Hams District Council and the Conservative Group.

63 On balance, we do not consider that it is necessary for the name of the River Erme to be reflected in the ward names, as the west and east suffixes provide an adequate reflection of the geography of the wards. We therefore confirm the ward names of Ivybridge East and Ivybridge West as final. These wards are forecast to have equal to and 6% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

64 Yealmpton Parish Council stated that it would be more appropriate for Wembury and Brixton parishes to form separate single-member wards, rather than a combined two-member ward. However, a single-member ward comprising the parish of Brixton would be forecast to have 13% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019, and we do not consider there is sufficient evidence to accept such an electoral variance. We therefore confirm our proposed two-member Wembury & Brixton ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 7% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

## North and east

65 The north and east of the district includes the towns of Dartmouth and Totnes and a number of rural villages, including part of Dartmoor National Park.

66 Our draft recommendations for the north and east of the district were based on our own proposals, with reference to the statutory criteria. We proposed a pattern of four single-member, one two-member and two three-member wards in this area.

67 Nine submissions were received objecting to our proposed two-member South Brent ward. South Brent Parish Council argued that the parish should form a ward on its own. Councillor Pannell and three local residents stated that the parishes included in the proposed ward had little in common and would suffer inadequate representation.

68 Another local resident suggested that it may be possible to divide the two-member ward into two single-member wards, one covering the village area of South Brent and the other comprising the remaining rural parishes in the proposed ward.

69 We do not consider that there is sufficient evidence to propose two single-member wards in this area or to otherwise amend the boundaries of the South Brent ward. We are not persuaded that separating South Brent from the villages in its surrounding area would provide a better reflection of community ties.

70 We note that there are road connections between all of the villages in the proposed ward and that the ward has satisfactory electoral equality. We do not consider that there is an alternative in this area which better reflects our criteria.

71 The Council and Conservative Group proposed that the ward be renamed Avon Valley, but did not provide evidence. We consider that South Brent reflects the most notable settlement in the ward and so is a more appropriate name.

72 We therefore confirm our two-member South Brent ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 7% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

73 Councillor Hodgson, Councillor Smerdon, Staverton Parish Council, two parish councillors and seven local residents objected to the proposed single-member Dartington & Staverton ward. The respondents argued that Staverton was of a very different character to Dartington and would be more appropriately combined with rural parishes to its south and west. It was also noted that the road connection between the two parishes was not strong, consisting of a single track road in one area. However, no specific alternative warding arrangements were proposed.

74 We note that this ward has good electoral equality and does not divide communities. Revising the warding arrangements in this area would have significant consequential effects in neighbouring wards and we do not consider that there is sufficient evidence to make substantial revisions to our draft recommendations in this area. We therefore confirm the single-member Dartington & Staverton ward as final. This ward is forecast to have an equal number of electors per councillor to the district average by 2019.

75 Objections were received to our proposed three-member Totnes ward from Councillor Hodgson and Totnes Town Council, both of whom argued that such a ward would be difficult to represent and that it may be more appropriate for the town to be represented by three single-member wards. However, the submissions did not propose where the boundaries of single-member wards may be drawn in the town.

76 We consider that a three-member ward covering Totnes town provides for a clear reflection of the town community. In the absence of a specific proposal, we do not consider that there is persuasive evidence that single-member wards would better reflect our criteria than one three-member ward. We therefore confirm the three-member Totnes ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 2% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

77 No objections were received to our proposed single-member Marldon & Littlehempston ward, other than from the Council and the Conservative Group which supported its boundaries but considered that it should simply be named Marldon. We consider that including the name of Littlehempston provides for a more inclusive reflection of localities in the ward, and so do not propose to adopt the proposal of the Council. We therefore confirm the Marldon & Littlehempston ward as final. This ward is forecast to have an equal number of electors per councillor to the district average by 2019.

78 Ashprington & Tuckenhay Parish Council expressed support for the proposed Ashprington & Cornworthy ward. No objections were received to our proposed single-member Halwell & Stoke Fleming ward other than from Blackawton Parish Council which stated that Blackawton parish was larger than Halwell and so should be included in the ward name. The Council and the Conservative Group stated that Halwell & Stoke Fleming should be named Skerries, with Ashprington & Cornworthy being named West Dart. Again, no supporting evidence was received for these proposals.

79 We accept that Blackawton is a notable settlement, with a substantially larger population than Halwell. We therefore propose to rename our Halwell & Stoke Fleming ward as Blackawton & Stoke Fleming. While evidence was not supplied for the Council's proposed West Dart name, we consider that there is a persuasive case for the name as it reflects the identifiable geographical feature which comprises the eastern boundary of the ward. We therefore propose that Ashprington & Cornworthy ward be renamed West Dart.

80 Our proposed Blackawton & Stoke Fleming and West Dart wards are forecast to have 3% fewer and 9% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

81 Councillor Barber and three local residents opposed our proposed three-member Dartmouth & Kingswear ward. It was argued in particular that the ward would be too large to be adequately represented and that the area of Townstal, which currently forms a separate ward, would lose its identity. One resident also noted that Stoke Gabriel had poor connections to the remainder of the proposed ward, with stronger connections to the north.

82 The proposed ward was supported by Councillor Bastone and the Kingswear branch of the Totnes Conservative Association. They argued that the strong community ties between Dartmouth and Kingswear meant that the two communities should be included in the same ward.

83 While we recognise that Stoke Gabriel has poor road connections to the remainder of the ward – with the main access lying outside the district boundary – we did not receive any specific alternative options for Stoke Gabriel which better reflected road links while also reflecting our other statutory criteria. We therefore maintain the view that the three-member Dartmouth & Kingswear ward is most appropriate for this area, and have confirmed its boundaries as part of our final recommendations.

84 The Council and Conservative Group proposed that the ward should be renamed Dartmouth & East Dart. We consider that this is a more representative ward name as it reflects both communities within the ward east of the River Dart, rather than Kingswear alone. We therefore propose to rename the ward Dartmouth & East Dart. This ward is forecast to have 4% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

## South

85 The south of the district comprises rural villages, coastal communities and the town of Kingsbridge.

86 Our draft recommendations in this area were for three single-member and two two-member wards. These recommendations were again based on our own proposals as we did not consider that the Council's proposals provided for a satisfactory reflection of our statutory criteria.

87 Kingsbridge Town Council expressed support for our proposed two-member Kingsbridge ward which would be coterminous with the town council boundary. We did not receive any objections to this proposed ward. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Kingsbridge ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 8% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

88 Thurlestone Parish Council supported our proposed two-member Salcombe & Thurlestone ward, stating that it was the most sensible option in geographical terms. We did not receive any objections to this proposed ward, and so have confirmed it as part of our final recommendations. Salcombe & Thurlestone ward is forecast to have 6% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

89 East Allington Parish Council expressed support for the boundaries of the proposed East Allington ward. Slapton Parish Council stated that Coleridge may be a

more appropriate name, while the Council and Conservative Group stated that it should be named Allington & Strete.

90 Noting that Strete is a notable settlement with a weaker connection to East Allington than the remainder of the parishes in the proposed ward, we accept the proposal of the Council that it should be reflected in the ward name. We therefore propose to change the ward name to Allington & Strete. Otherwise we confirm the ward as final. Allington & Strete is forecast to have 1% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

91 No objections were received to our proposed Aveton Gifford ward, although Loddiswell Parish Council stated that the name was inappropriate as Aveton Gifford is a smaller parish than Loddiswell. The Council and Conservative Group stated that the ward should be named Aune Valley, again without supporting evidence.

92 To reflect the names of the two largest parishes in the ward, we propose to rename the ward Loddiswell & Aveton Gifford. Otherwise, we propose to confirm the ward as final. Loddiswell & Aveton Gifford is forecast to have 8% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

93 No objections were received to the boundaries of the proposed single-member Stokenham ward, although Chivelstone Parish Council stated that it should be named Saltstone & Stokenham. The Council, the Conservative Group and East Portlemouth Parish Council preferred the name Saltstone.

94 We maintain the view that Stokenham is the most appropriate name for this ward as it reflects the identity of the largest parish where a majority of electors reside. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Stokenham ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 6% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019.

## Conclusions

95 Table 1 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2012 and 2019 electorate figures.

**Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements**

	Final recommendations	
	2012	2019
Number of councillors	31	31
Number of electoral wards/divisions	20	20
Average number of electors per councillor	2,220	2,406
Number of wards/divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	0
Number of wards/divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

**Final recommendation**

South Hams District Council should comprise 31 councillors serving 20 wards as detailed and named in Table A1 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

## Parish electoral arrangements

96 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.

97 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, South Hams 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.

98 As a result of our proposed electoral ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Berry Pomeroy parish.

**Final recommendation**

Berry Pomeroy Parish Council should return seven parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Bridgetown (returning four members) and Village (returning three members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

99 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for Bickleigh parish.

**Final recommendation**

Bickleigh Parish Council should return nine parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Bickleigh (returning two members) and Woolwell (returning seven members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

100 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for Ivybridge parish.

**Final recommendation**

Ivybridge Town Council should return 16 town councillors, one more than present, representing two wards: Ivybridge East (returning eight members) and Ivybridge West (returning eight members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

101 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for Ugborough parish.

**Final recommendation**

Ugborough Parish Council should return 11 parish councillors, the same as at present, representing two wards: Ugborough East (returning 10 members) and Ugborough West (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

### 3 What happens next?

102 We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for South Hams. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for South Hams District Council in 2015.

#### Equalities

103 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.

## 4 Mapping

### Final recommendations for South Hams

104 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for South Hams:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for South Hams District Council.

You can also view our final recommendations for South Hams on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

## Appendix A

**Table A1: Final recommendations for South Hams District Council**

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (2012)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2019)</b>	<b>Number of electors per councillor</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
1	Allington & Strete	1	2,342	2,342	6%	2,429	2,429	1%
2	Bickleigh & Cornwood	1	2,220	2,220	0%	2,296	2,296	-5%
3	Blackawton & Stoke Fleming	1	1,863	1,863	-16%	2,329	2,329	-3%
4	Charterlands	1	2,391	2,391	8%	2,536	2,536	5%
5	Dartington & Staverton	1	2,082	2,082	-6%	2,394	2,394	0%
6	Dartmouth & East Dart	3	6,555	2,185	-2%	6,916	2,305	-4%
7	Ermington & Ugborough	1	2,200	2,200	-1%	2,393	2,393	-1%
8	Ivybridge East	2	4,543	2,272	2%	4,811	2,406	0%
9	Ivybridge West	2	4,943	2,472	11%	5,078	2,539	6%
10	Kingsbridge	2	4,729	2,365	7%	5,199	2,600	8%

**Table A1 (cont.): Final recommendations for South Hams District Council**

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2012)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11	Loddiswell & Aveton Gifford	1	2,033	2,033	-8%	2,214	2,214	-8%
12	Marldon & Littlehempston	1	2,380	2,380	7%	2,417	2,417	0%
13	Newton & Yealmpton	2	4,788	2,394	8%	5,088	2,544	6%
14	Salcombe & Thurlestone	2	4,346	2,173	-2%	4,545	2,273	-6%
15	South Brent	2	4,164	2,082	-6%	4,454	2,227	-7%
16	Stokenham	1	2,139	2,139	-4%	2,264	2,264	-6%
17	Totnes	3	6,737	2,246	1%	7,372	2,457	2%
18	Wembury & Brixton	2	3,777	1,889	-15%	5,164	2,582	7%
19	West Dart	1	2,124	2,124	-4%	2,187	2,187	-9%
20	Woolwell	1	2,449	2,449	10%	2,499	2,499	4%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>68,805</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>74,585</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,220</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,406</b>	<b>-</b>

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

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

### Glossary and abbreviations

AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	A landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward or division, expressed in parishes or existing wards or divisions, or parts of either
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 imbalance	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

Local Government Boundary Commission for England or LGBCE	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England assumed the functions of the Boundary Committee for England in April 2010
Multi-member ward or division	A ward or division represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	The 13 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and can be found at <a href="http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk">www.nationalparks.gov.uk</a>
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
PER (or periodic electoral review)	A review of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England, undertaken periodically. The last programme of PERs was undertaken between 1996 and 2004 by the Boundary Commission for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England
Political management arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enabled local authorities in England to modernise their decision making process. Councils could choose from two broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet or a cabinet with a leader
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
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

