

Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire

Further electoral review

May 2006

Translations and other formats

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version please contact the Boundary Committee for England:

Tel: 020 7271 0500

Email: publications@boundarycommittee.org.uk

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by the Electoral Commission 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 03114G

Contents

What is the Boundary Committee for England?	5
Executive summary	7
1 Introduction	13
2 Current electoral arrangements	17
3 Draft recommendations	21
4 Responses to consultation	23
5 Analysis and final recommendations	25
Electorate figures	25
Council size	26
Electoral equality	27
General analysis	28
Warding arrangements	29
Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards	29
Birchwood, Boutham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards	32
Conclusions	36
6 What happens next?	37
7 Mapping	39
Appendices	
A Glossary and abbreviations	41
B Code of practice on written consultation	45

What is the Boundary Committee for England?

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

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Robin Gray
Joan Jones CBE
Ann M. Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Director:

Archie Gall

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

Executive summary

The Boundary Committee for England is the body responsible for conducting electoral reviews of local authorities. A further electoral review of Lincoln is being undertaken to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the city. It aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each city councillor is approximately the same. The Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to undertake this review on 2 June 2004.

Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements, six wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the city average. The development that the City Council forecast during the last review for the five-year period between 1996 and 2001 was not realised. There has been some growth on the fringes of the city although the electorate has actually decreased since the last PER, particularly in Abbey ward which has resulted in it having a particularly poor variance, with 21% fewer electors per councillor than the city average. However, in Hartsholme ward, more development was undertaken than expected, which has resulted in it having 23% more electors than the city average.

Every review is conducted in four stages:

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	16 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	21 June 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	13 September 2005	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Draft recommendations

We based our draft recommendations primarily on our own proposals in order to secure an improved level of electoral equality in the city. We also sought to draw on the existing arrangements where we considered community identity was reflected and where we could secure good levels of electoral equality. We also adopted three of the City Council's proposed wards. Our proposals retained a pattern of three-member wards across the city.

Responses to consultation

At Stage Three we received three submissions from the City Council, the Lincoln Independent Alliance Party and a local resident. The City Council proposed revisions to all but two of our proposed wards. Lincoln Independent Alliance Party proposed a decrease in council size and the local resident objected to our proposals in the Hartsholme area.

Analysis and final recommendations

Electorate figures

The City Council forecast an increase of 1% between 2003 and 2008 across the city. At Stage Three we received no further comments as to the accuracy of these figures and are therefore satisfied that they are the best estimates that can be made at this time.

Council size

At Stage One we proposed the retention of the current council size of 33 members. At Stage Three the Lincoln Independent Alliance Party proposed that the current council size be reduced to 30 members representing 10 wards. However, we were not sufficiently persuaded by the arguments put forward to reduce the council size at this time.

General analysis

We noted that we received little community identity argument throughout the review and we therefore have looked to significantly improve upon the current levels of electoral equality. Following consultation we noted that the City Council's proposals in the north of the city secured improvements in the levels of electoral equality and we are therefore adopting them as part of our final recommendations. However, in the south of the city we note that its proposals would slightly worsen the levels of electoral equality and given that it provided no specific community identity arguments we do not propose adopting its proposals. We also note a local resident's proposal for a single-member ward covering the Hartsholme estate. However, we noted that the proposal did not provide for a good level of electoral equality and do not therefore propose adopting it as part of our final recommendations.

What happens next?

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be sent to the Electoral Commission through the contact details below. The Commission will not make an Order implementing them before 6 July 2006. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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

Fax: 020 7271 0667

Email: implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk

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

The full report is available to download at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk.

Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
1	Abbey	3	Part of the existing Abbey ward; part of the existing Glebe ward; part of the existing Park ward
2	Birchwood	3	Part of the existing Birchwood ward
3	Boultham	3	Part of the existing Boultham ward; part of the existing Hartsholme ward
4	Bracebridge	3	Part of the existing Bracebridge ward
5	Carholme	3	Part of the existing Abbey ward; part of Boultham ward; part of the existing Carholme ward
6	Castle	3	The existing Castle ward; part of the existing Carholme ward; part of the existing Minster ward
7	Glebe	3	Part of the existing Glebe ward
8	Hartsholme	3	Part of the existing Birchwood ward; part of the existing Hartsholme ward
9	Minster	3	Part of the existing Minster ward
10	Moorland	3	The existing Moorland ward
11	Park	3	Part of the existing Boultham ward; part of the existing Bracebridge ward; part of the existing Park ward

Notes

- 1 The whole city is unparished.
- 2 The maps accompanying this report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Table 2: Final recommendations for Lincoln

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2008)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abbey	3	5,399	1,800	-2	5,475	1,825	-1
2	Birchwood	3	5,403	1,801	-2	5,453	1,818	-2
3	Boultham	3	5,647	1,882	3	5,692	1,897	2
4	Bracebridge	3	5,722	1,907	4	5,786	1,929	4
5	Carholme	3	5,429	1,810	-1	5,505	1,835	-1
6	Castle	3	5,279	1,760	-4	5,338	1,779	-4
7	Glebe	3	5,399	1,800	-2	5,435	1,812	-2
8	Hartsholme	3	5,290	1,763	-4	5,348	1,783	-4
9	Minster	3	5,596	1,865	2	5,644	1,881	2

Table 2 (continued): Final recommendations for Lincoln

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2008)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
10 Moorland	3	5,730	1,910	4	5,788	1,929	4
11 Park	3	5,612	1,871	2	5,660	1,887	2
Totals	33	60,506	-	-	61,124	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,834	-	-	1,852	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lincoln City 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 city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1 Introduction

1 This report contains our final recommendations for the electoral arrangements for the city of Lincoln.

2 At its meeting on 12 February 2004 the Electoral Commission agreed that the Boundary Committee should make on-going assessments of electoral variances in all local authorities where the five-year forecast period following a periodic electoral review (PER) has elapsed. More specifically, it was agreed that there should be a closer scrutiny where either:

- 30% of wards in an authority had electoral variances of over 10% from the average, or
- any single ward had a variance of more than 30% from the average

3 The intention of such scrutiny was to establish the reasons behind the continuing imbalances, to consider likely future trends, and to assess what action, if any, was appropriate to rectify the situation.

4 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Lincoln. Lincoln's last review was carried out by the Local Government Commission for England (LGCE), which reported to the Secretary of State in March 1997. An electoral change Order implementing the new electoral arrangements was made on 21 September 1998 and the first elections on the new arrangements took place in May 1999.

5 In carrying out our work, the Boundary Committee has to work within a statutory framework.¹ This refers to the need to:

- reflect the identities and interests of local communities
- secure effective and convenient local government
- achieve equality of representation

In addition we are required to work within Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

6 Details of the legislation under which the review of Lincoln is being conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and procedural advice for periodic electoral reviews* (published by the Electoral Commission in July 2002). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review and will be helpful in both understanding the approach taken by the Boundary Committee for England and in informing comments interested groups and individuals may wish to make about our recommendations.

7 Our task is to make recommendations to the Electoral Commission on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We cannot consider changes to the external boundaries of the city as part of this review.

8 The broad objective of an electoral review is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the city as a whole, i.e. that all councillors in the local authority

¹ As set out in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3962).

represent similar numbers of electors. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

9 Electoral equality, 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. Accordingly, the objective of an electoral review is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor is, as near as is possible, the same across a district. In practice, each councillor cannot represent exactly the same number of electors given geographic and other constraints, including the make up and distribution of communities. However, our aim in any review is to recommend wards that are as close to the district average as possible in terms of the number of electors per councillor, while also taking account of evidence in relation to community identity and effective and convenient local government.

10 We are not prescriptive about council size and acknowledge that there are valid reasons for variations between local authorities. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction, or the retention of the existing size, should be supported by strong evidence and arguments. Indeed, we believe that consideration of the appropriate council size is the starting point for our reviews and whatever size of council is proposed to us should be developed and argued in the context of the authority's internal political management structures, put in place following the Local Government Act 2000. It should also reflect the changing role of councillors in the new structure.

11 As indicated in its *Guidance*, the Electoral Commission requires the decision on council size to be based on an overall view about what is right for the particular authority and not just by addressing any imbalances in small areas of the authority by simply adding or removing councillors from these areas. While we will consider ways of achieving the correct allocation of councillors between, say, a number of towns in an authority or between rural and urban areas, our starting point must always be that the recommended council size reflects the authority's optimum political management arrangements and best provides for convenient and effective local government and that there is evidence for this.

12 In addition, we do not accept that an increase or decrease in the electorate of the authority should automatically result in a consequent increase or decrease in the number of councillors. Similarly, we do not accept that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of neighbouring or similarly sized authorities; the circumstances of one authority may be very different from that of another. We will seek to ensure that our recommended council size recognises all the factors and achieves a good allocation of councillors across the district.

13 Where multi-member wards are proposed, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

14 The review is in four stages (see Table 3).

Table 3: Stages of the review

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	16 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	21 June 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	13 September 2005	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

15 Stage One began on 3 August 2004, when we wrote to Lincoln City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Lincolnshire Police Authority, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the city, Members of the European Parliament for the East Midlands Region and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Lincoln City Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 15 November 2004.

16 During Stage Two we considered all the submissions received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

17 Stage Three began on 21 June 2005 with the publication of the report *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire*, and ended on 12 September 2005.

18 During Stage Four we reconsidered the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decided whether to modify them, and now submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission. It is now for the Commission to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Electoral Commission accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, it will make an electoral changes Order. The Electoral Commission will determine when any changes come into effect.

Equal opportunities

19 In preparing this report the Boundary Committee has had regard to the general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Broads

20 The Boundary Committee has also had regard to:

- Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as inserted by section 62 of the Environment Act 1995). This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in a National Park, any relevant authority shall have regard to the Park's purposes. If there is a conflict between those purposes, a relevant authority shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park.
- Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of the AONB.
- Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act (as inserted by section 97 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). This states that, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the Broads, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purposes of the Broads.

2 Current electoral arrangements

21 The electorate of the city is 60,506 (December 2003). The Council presently has 33 members who are elected from 11 three-member wards. The city average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the city by the total number of councillors representing them on the council. At present, each councillor represents a city average of 1,834 electors (60,506 divided by 33), which the City Council forecasts will increase to 1,852 by the year 2008 if the present number of councillors is maintained (61,124 divided by 33).

22 During the last review of Lincoln City Council forecast there would be an increase of approximately 3,000 electors between 1996 and 2001. However, the electorate has decreased since 1996 and has resulted in a significant amount of electoral inequality between wards. To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward varies from the borough average in percentage terms.

23 Data from the December 2003 electoral register showed that under these arrangements, electoral equality across the city met the criteria that the Electoral Commission agreed would warrant further investigation. The number of electors per councillor in six of the 11 wards (55%) varies by more than 10% from the city average. The worst imbalance is in Hartsholme ward where the councillor represents 23% more electors than the city average. Having noted that this level of electoral inequality is unlikely to improve, the Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to undertake a review of the electoral arrangements of Lincoln City Council on 2 June 2004.

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements in Lincoln

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2008)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abbey	3	4,335	1,445	-21	4,379	1,460	-21
2	Birchwood	3	5,623	1,874	2	5,679	1,893	2
3	Boultham	3	5,594	1,865	2	5,650	1,883	2
4	Bracebridge	3	6,343	2,114	15	6,407	2,136	15
5	Carholme	3	4,784	1,595	-13	4,841	1,614	-13
6	Castle	3	4,761	1,587	-13	4,809	1,603	-13
7	Glebe	3	6,198	2,066	13	6,260	2,087	13
8	Hartsholme	3	6,739	2,246	23	6,807	2,269	23
9	Minster	3	5,317	1,772	-3	5,371	1,790	-3

Table 4 (continued): Existing electoral arrangements in Lincoln

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2008)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
10 Moorland	3	5,730	1,910	4	5,788	1,929	4
11 Park	3	5,082	1,694	-8	5,133	1,711	-8
Totals	33	60,506	-	-	61,124	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,834	-	-	1,852	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lincoln City Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2003, electors in Abbey ward had 21% fewer electors per councillor than the city average, while electors in Hartsholme ward had 23% more. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 Draft recommendations

24 During Stage One two submissions were received, including a city-wide scheme from the City Council. We also received a representation from a local advisory group. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire*.

25 Our draft recommendations were primarily based on our own proposals which achieved some improvement in the level of electoral equality. However, we proposed adopting three of the City Council's proposed wards. We proposed transferring electors from the southern part of the city to wards in the north of the city in order to secure the correct allocation of councillors between the north and south of the city and to help to secure a significant improvement in the levels of electoral equality across the city. We proposed that:

- Lincoln City Council should be served by 33 councillors, the same as at present, representing 11 wards, the same as at present.
- The boundaries of 10 of the existing wards should be modified, while one ward, Moorland, should retain its existing boundaries.

26 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all 11 wards varying by no more than 5% from the city average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to be retained, with no ward varying by more than 5% from the average by 2008.

4 Responses to consultation

27 We received three representations during Stage Three, all of which may be inspected at both our offices and those of the City Council. Representations may also be viewed on our website at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk.

Lincoln City Council

28 The City Council proposed amendments to all but two of our proposed wards and proposed the complete reconfiguration of our proposed Ermine and Cathedral wards. Its proposals, in general, would have achieved a slight increase in the levels of electoral equality secured under our draft recommendations but contained little community identity argument.

Political groups

29 The Lincoln Independent Alliance Party proposed a council size of 30 and proposed that we reduce the current 11 wards to 10 to address allocation between the north and south of the city.

Other representations

30 A local resident objected to our proposals in the Hartsholme area and proposed a single-member ward and two-member ward in the area.

5 Analysis and final recommendations

31 We have now finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Lincoln.

32 As described earlier, the prime aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Lincoln is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended), with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities
- secure the matters in respect of equality of representation referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972

33 Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being 'as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough'. In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place over the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing clearly identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

34 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral equality is unlikely to be attainable. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is to keep variances to a minimum.

35 If electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate should also be taken into account and we aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this period.

36 The recommendations do not affect county, district or parish external boundaries, local taxes, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that these recommendations will have an adverse effect on house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Electorate figures

37 As part of the previous review of Lincoln city, the City Council forecast an increase in the electorate of 4% between 1996 and 2001. However, between 1996 and the start of this review the electorate had decreased by 5%. There has been no substantial growth overall in any area. This has resulted in a knock-on effect across the city with many wards being substantially under-represented and over-represented. At Stage One the City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2008, projecting an increase in the electorate of 1% from 60,506 to 61,124 over the five-year period from 2003 to 2008. It expects most of the growth to be spread evenly across the city. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated

rates and locations of housing development with regard to local/Unitary development plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the City Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

38 We recognise that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the City Council's figures, accepted that they were the best estimates that could reasonably be made at that time.

39 We received no comments on the Council's electoral forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

Council size

40 Lincoln City Council presently has 33 members. At Stage One the City Council proposed to retain the current council size and made city-wide proposals based upon it. With regard to the argument provided in respect of council size, the City Council simply stated at Stage One that 'The Council from the start of its deliberations on future electoral arrangements resolved to retain membership at 33'. However, the Council did not argue for its proposed retention of council size in terms of the new political management structure. No further submissions regarding council size were received.

41 After considering the Council's Stage One proposal we did not consider that we had received any evidence on which to base a decision on council size for Lincoln. We did not consider that we had been provided with sufficient discussion of the ways in which the proposed council size would reflect the City Council's political management structures, taking into account the representational elements of councillors' work in order to secure effective and convenient local government. We were therefore in the position of having to reach our own conclusions on the most appropriate council size for Lincoln City Council. To assist us in reaching an informed decision we asked the City Council to provide us with more information regarding the Council's political management structure and councillors' representational work.

42 In response, the Council stated that it had adopted the Cabinet and Leader Model with effect from May 2002 and its submission contained a list of all committees, partnerships, forums, panels, stakeholders and advisory groups that its members are involved in. Additionally, it stipulated various outside bodies that councillors are involved with. It enclosed a copy of its March 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) report and a copy of its Democratic Renewal Report 2003/2004 undertaken by the Audit Commission. While the CPA report does not directly discuss council size, it does consider that Lincoln City Council is a 'fair' council. The latter submission and the CPA report did not demonstrate why the present council size is still applicable and why it should be retained. The Council did not state whether the workload of its members had increased or decreased during its modernisation process. It did not demonstrate that it had developed its proposed council size in the context of a review of its internal political management arrangements or the role of its councillors in the new structures.

43 Having considered the limited evidence available to us we were of the view that a very limited case had been made for a council size of 33. However, there was no

evidence that there should be either an increase or decrease in council size. Therefore, given the information available to us we recommended that Lincoln City Council be represented by 33 members, the same as at present. However, we welcomed further information at Stage Three as to the appropriate council size for Lincoln.

44 At Stage Three the Council reiterated that from the start of its deliberations it had resolved to retain a council size of 33 members. It made no specific comments. Lincoln Independent Alliance Party proposed a council size of 30 members representing 10 wards. It argued that a reduction in council size would better help to facilitate a balance between the northern and southern areas of the city and that The Brayford, River Witham and railway line form definite boundaries. It argued further that Lincoln is small in terms of electorate and was physically compact, comparing it with the County Council which it stated had only '77 members for the whole of a large, widespread, and diverse Lincolnshire.' It stated further that 'As a County Council it has much greater responsibilities and a far larger budget than a small District Council'. It stated that while there was a heavy workload on a small number of councillors that are heavily involved there were much lower workloads on the majority of councillors. It asked whether a reduction of three councillors would make any difference particularly since the change of management style.

45 We note the proposals of the Lincoln Independent Alliance Party. However, while it raises some interesting points we do not consider that it has provided adequate justification for a reduction in council size and has not provided details as to why a council size of 30 would function better than the current council size. We note that we have received very little evidence of how any of the proposed council sizes would reflect the internal political management arrangements or address the representational roles of councillors. We accept that we received limited evidence as to the appropriateness of retaining the council size, however, we do not consider that a case has been made for a reduction in the number of councillors on Lincoln City Council. Therefore we propose that Lincoln City Council be represented by 33 members, the same as at present.

Electoral equality

46 Electoral equality, 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. The Electoral Commission expects the Boundary Committee's recommendations to provide for high levels of electoral equality, with variances normally well below 10%. However, when making recommendations we will not simply aim for electoral variances of under 10%. Where no justification is provided for specific ward proposals we will look to improve electoral equality seeking to ensure that each councillor represents as close to the same number of electors as is possible, providing this can be achieved without compromising the reflection of the identities and interests of local communities and securing effective and convenient local government. We take the view that any proposals that would result in, or retain, electoral imbalances of over 10% from the average in any ward will have to be fully justified, and evidence provided which would justify such imbalances in terms of community identity or effective and convenient local government. We will rarely recommend wards with electoral variances of 20% or more, and any such variances proposed by local interested parties will require the strongest justification in terms of the other two statutory criteria.

47 The city average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the city 60,506 by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 33 under our final proposals. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 1,834.

48 At Stage One, in the absence of any strong community identity argument or evidence we sought to improve electoral equality in Lincoln. We received one city-wide proposal from the City Council, however had we adopted its proposals the level of electoral equality would not have fallen below the criteria that triggered the review in the first instance; 36% of wards would have variances above 10% by 2008. This was only a marginal improvement on the existing arrangements, where six out of 11 wards currently vary by more than 10%. It should be noted that Lincoln City Council is completely unparished and is a compact urban area, therefore it should be possible to establish excellent levels of electoral equality. Under the City Council's proposed scheme its proposed Abbey, Carholme, Castle and Hartsholme wards would have variances of -11%, -13%, -13% and 15% respectively by 2008. In light of this poor level of electoral equality we did not consider we could adopt its proposals in the majority of the city.

49 As we did not receive any substantive community identity evidence we looked to significantly improve upon the levels of electoral equality within the city. We also sought to draw on the existing arrangements where we considered that community identity was already well reflected and where we could secure a good level of electoral equality. However, we did not receive any substantial evidence to maintain the existing warding arrangements. Because of the lack of strong evidence, we looked to improve electoral equality even in those areas where the existing arrangements provide electoral variances below 10% of the city average.

50 At Stage Three we received little further evidence as to community identity in the city. We noted that the City Council's proposals in the north of the city slightly improved upon the levels of electoral equality secured under our draft recommendations, therefore we propose adopting them as part of our final recommendations.

General analysis

51 Our draft recommendations were a combination of our own proposals and the City Council's proposed wards. The City Council did not suggest any boundary amendments in the northern area under its scheme, with the exception of moving one polling district from Glebe ward to Abbey ward. It proposed retaining the existing arrangements with the exception of four wards in the southern area. We did not receive any substantial argument to maintain the existing warding arrangements. We therefore, in the most part, looked to improve on electoral equality within the city.

52 Given the evidence available to us we proposed that the city be represented by 11 three-member wards, as at present. While we looked at a mixed pattern of wards in the city we noted that we could achieve good levels of electoral equality under a three-member pattern. We also noted that there was little community identity argument for us to draw upon. Therefore, given that we considered that the statutory criteria could be reflected by a pattern of three-member wards and given that there was a lack of evidence available to us that single- or two-member wards would better reflect the statutory criteria we proposed a uniform pattern of three-member wards.

However, we stated that we would be prepared to move away from a uniform pattern of three-member wards where evidence could be provided at Stage Three that community identity would be reflected better by one- or two-member wards and where a good level of electoral equality could be achieved.

53 At Stage Three we received a proposal from a local resident to create a single-member Hartsholme ward based around the Hartsholme estate. However, we noted that his proposal would result in a ward with 9% fewer electors per councillor than the city average. Having considered this proposal and further options we were not convinced that amending our proposals in this area would provide the correct balance between the statutory criteria. While we note that he provided some community identity arguments, electoral equality would worsen and the proposal could affect the provision of convenient and effective local government as it would result in a move away from a pattern of three-member wards in the city.

54 At Stage Three we noted that the City Council's proposals in the north of the city secured improvements in the levels of electoral equality. Given that the City Council's proposals secure a slight improvement in the levels of electoral equality in the north of the city and that we have no community identity evidence to balance this against we are content to put forward its proposals as part of our final recommendations. In making our deliberations we considered whether a further period of consultation would be required, particularly given the changes we propose which see us adopting the City Council's proposed Castle and Minster wards. However, we have already invited comments at the start of this review and upon our draft recommendations and we have received very little evidence from interested parties. In addition, we cannot assume that our proposals in the city have been supported where we have received no or few comments. Therefore we are content to adopt the City Council's proposals in the north of the city as part of our final recommendations. In the south of the city we noted that the City Council's proposals would slightly worsen the levels of electoral equality and given that it provided no community identity arguments for these areas we do not propose adopting its proposals.

Warding arrangements

55 For city warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards (page 29)
- Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards (page 32)

56 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2 (on pages 9 and 10-11, respectively), and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards

57 Under the existing arrangements the northern area of Lincoln comprises the five wards of Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster. Table 4 (pages 18-19) outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008, if the existing arrangements were to remain in place.

58 At Stage One the City Council did not propose any changes to the electoral arrangements of the existing wards in the area with the exception of one boundary amendment between the current Abbey and Glebe wards. Under the City Council's proposed scheme Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards would have 11% fewer, 13% fewer, 13% fewer, 2% more and 3% fewer electors per councillor than the city average respectively (by 2008).

59 We noted that under a council size of 33 the wards in the north of Lincoln are entitled to 14 councillors, not 15 as under the current arrangements. Therefore, it was not possible to retain the existing arrangements and provide a good level of electoral equality for this area. We also noted that the City Council had provided no evidence or argument with regards to community identity for its proposals. Therefore, given the incorrect allocation of councillors, lack of argument or evidence and the continuing levels of electoral inequality under the City Council's scheme we largely proposed putting forward our own proposals in the north of the city.

60 In formulating our draft recommendations we attempted to divide the city between the north and south using the River Witham or railway line as a strong boundary. However, we noted that under a council size of 33 it was not possible to get a good allocation of councillors without breaching the river. In order to provide good electoral equality and maintain a three-member ward pattern in the city we aimed to take approximately 5,000 electors from the south of the city, from the wards of Park and Boultham, and include them in our proposed Abbey and Carholme wards. Given the lack of evidence available to us and having visited the area we utilised aspects of the existing arrangements where we considered that community identity was well reflected. However, we considered electoral equality could be significantly improved upon and therefore made significant amendments to the existing arrangements in some areas and proposed new wards in others.

61 On balance we considered that moving electors from the south to the north would be better as transferring electors from the north to the south would have divided a number of different communities and we did not consider that we could divide either the current Abbey or Carholme wards quite as cleanly as we could the Boultham and Park areas. We sought to use strong boundaries where possible. Therefore we proposed transferring electors from the current Boultham ward to our proposed Carholme ward and from the current Park ward to our proposed Abbey ward.

62 We proposed that the southern boundary of our proposed Abbey ward would encompass the transfer of electors from the existing Park ward, following Monson Street and Ripon Street, continuing south along Canwick Road and then to the boundary of the city. To further improve the level of electoral equality in our proposed Abbey ward we proposed to transfer electors from the existing Glebe ward to Abbey ward. As mentioned previously, we took into account the issues of community identity where possible and where we interpreted them from our visit to the city. However, due to the lack of substantive evidence of community identity our recommendations were primarily based on electoral equality.

63 We proposed creating a new three-member Cathedral ward in the centre of the northern area and centred around the Cathedral to improve electoral equality. This would encompass part of the existing Castle, Minster, Abbey and Carholme wards. We proposed these amendments to improve electoral equality and to secure good councillor allocation in the north of the city. Having visited the area we were of the

view that our proposals reflected local ties as far as was possible given our knowledge of the city.

64 We proposed adopting the City Council's proposed Glebe ward as it achieved good levels of electoral equality and utilised strong boundaries. Having visited the area we also noted that the area that made up the proposed Glebe ward appeared to reflect communities in the area. Having considered the City Council's proposals and noted the high levels of electoral inequality we proposed a different configuration in the centre and the north of the area. We proposed uniting the housing estates in the north of the city to form a new Ermine ward.

65 In order to provide for the correct allocation of councillors in the north of the city we proposed a modified Carholme ward. We proposed that the properties to the north of Boutham Avenue and Coulson Road in the current Boutham ward be transferred to the proposed Carholme Ward. We also proposed that the area to the north of Carline Road and east of the rear of the properties on Yarborough Crescent be transferred from the current Carholme ward to the new Cathedral ward and that properties on both sides of Burton Road, to the north of Yarborough Crescent be included in the new Carholme ward. We noted that these modifications would secure a good level of electoral equality and considered that community identity would be largely reflected.

66 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Abbey, Carholme, Cathedral, Ermine and Glebe wards would have 4% fewer, 5% fewer, 2% fewer, 4% more and 3% more electors per councillor than the city average by 2008.

67 At Stage Three the City Council proposed amendments to our proposals across the whole of the north of the city. It proposed that the general configuration of the current Castle and Minster wards be maintained subject to a number of amendments. It proposed that both sides of Burton Road to the north of Yarborough Road be included in its proposed Castle ward rather than our proposed Carholme ward. It also proposed that the existing boundary along Burton Road and Union Road remain with the area to the west being transferred to the proposed Carholme ward. In addition, it proposed that the area to the south of Eastgate and Greetwell Gate in the current Minster ward be transferred to its proposed Castle ward. It proposed that the existing Minster ward be maintained subject to the transfer of these electors.

68 The Council also proposed a number of amendments to our proposed Abbey ward. It proposed that the properties on Bunkers Hill, Sympson Close and Hawthorn Road be transferred to the proposed Glebe ward. It also proposed that the area to the east of the current boundary along Wragby Road that we proposed placing in the proposed Cathedral ward remain in Abbey ward. It also proposed transferring the area to the north of Silver Street from the proposed Abbey ward to the proposed Carholme. The Council also proposed to amend the boundary between the proposed Carholme and Boutham wards. It proposed that the boundary be amended to run to the north of the pond, south of the railway line. The Council provided no detailed community identity arguments for its proposed wards.

69 Under the Council's proposals its proposed Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards would have 1% fewer, 1% fewer, 4% fewer, 2% fewer and 1% more electors per councillor than the city average by 2008.

70 The Lincoln Independent Alliance Party stated that imbalances in the north of the city should be addressed without spreading to the south of the city.

71 Having considered the representations received we have decided to adopt all of the Council's proposed amendments in this area. We note that the Council provided no specific community identity arguments with which to persuade us to alter our draft recommendations but that its proposals secure some improvement in the levels of electoral equality. We have received very little detailed community arguments throughout the review and are therefore of the view that we should seek the best available levels of electoral equality available to us where possible. We note the comments of the Lincoln Independent Alliance, however, as stated in our draft recommendations, in order to provide for the correct allocation of councillors under a council size of 33 and therefore a good level of electoral equality it has been necessary to combine areas in the south of the city with areas in the north.

72 Under our final recommendations the proposed Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards would have 1% fewer, 1% fewer, 4% fewer, 2% fewer and 2% more electors per councillor than the city average by 2008.

73 Tables 1 and 2 (on pages 9 and 10-11, respectively) provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our final recommendations for Abbey, Carholme, Castle, Glebe and Minster wards. Our final recommendations are shown on Map 1 and Map 2 accompanying this report.

Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards

74 Under the existing arrangements, the south of Lincoln comprises Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards. Table 4 (on pages 18-19) outlines the existing electoral variances for 2003 and also the variances which the wards are forecast to have by 2008 if the existing arrangements remained in place.

75 At Stage One we received two submissions in relation to the wards in the south of Lincoln including one city-wide submission from the City Council. The Boultham Park Advisory Group requested we consider retaining Boultham Park within Boultham ward due to funding issues.

76 In relation to Birchwood ward, the City Council proposed to address the electoral imbalance in Hartsholme ward by transferring an area into Birchwood ward. In respect of Boultham ward, the City Council did not propose any change to the existing electoral arrangements. With regard to Bracebridge ward the Council proposed to transfer the area around Brant Road and Laurel Close into Park ward. It proposed no change to the current Moorland ward.

77 Under the City Council's proposed scheme Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards would vary from the city average by 9%, 2%, 4%, 15%, 4% and 4% respectively (by 2008).

78 We noted that under a council size of 33 the wards in the south of Lincoln are entitled to 19 councillors, not 18 as under the current arrangements. Therefore, it was not possible to retain the existing arrangements and provide for a good level of

electoral equality in the south of the city. Therefore, we proposed modifications in the area in order to provide for the correct allocation of councillors and in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality.

79 Given the lack of community argument provided by the Council and the poor level of electoral equality provided under parts of its scheme, we explored a number of different options for the area. However, having visited the area and given the reasonable level of electoral equality secured under the Council's proposed Bracebridge and Moorland wards we proposed adopting both of these wards as part of our draft recommendations.

80 We proposed modifications to the Council's proposed Hartsholme and Birchwood wards in order to provide for improved levels of electoral equality. We proposed that the housing estate in the north-east of the existing Hartsholme ward be transferred to the proposed Boultham ward in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality. We proposed that minor amendments be made to the boundary between Hartsholme and Birchwood wards, again, in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality. We noted that these amendments improved the level of electoral equality and having visited the area we were of the view that our proposals reflected local ties as far as was possible given our knowledge of the city.

81 We proposed modified Boultham and Park wards. As mentioned earlier in paragraphs 62 and 65, in order to secure the correct allocation of councillors between the north and south of the city it proved necessary to transfer electors from both the current Boultham and Park wards to wards in the north of the city. In order to maintain a pattern of all three-member wards in the city it was also necessary to combine electors on both sides of the River Witham in our proposed Boultham ward. However, we noted that areas on both sides of the river are contained in the current Boultham ward. We also noted that under our draft recommendations Boultham Park would remain in Boultham ward as proposed by The Boultham Park Advisory Group.

82 We proposed the transfer of a significant amount of electors from Park ward to Abbey ward to address the allocation of councillors in the north. It was necessary to move electors from the south of the city to the north of the city in order to provide good electoral equality and maintain a three-member pattern in the city. We also proposed transferring electors from the current Boultham ward in order to provide for a good level of electoral equality.

83 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards had 2% fewer, equal to the average, 4% more, 4% fewer, 4% more and 2% more electors per councillor than the city average. However, due to a minor miscalculation in electorate figures Boultham ward actually had 2% more electors.

84 At Stage Three the City Council proposed amendments to the proposed Birchwood, Boultham, Hartsholme and Park wards. It proposed that the boundary between the proposed Birchwood and Hartsholme wards run along the centre of Birchwood Avenue. It also proposed that the boundary between the proposed Boultham and Park wards be amended to run along Sincil Dyke as far as the High Street rather than behind the properties on Henley Street. It also proposed a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Boultham and Carholme wards

that would not affect any electors. It proposed that the boundary be amended to run along the railway line to the north of the pond in the area.

85 Under the City Council's proposals the proposed Boutham, Hartsholme and Park wards would have 4% more, 6% fewer and 1% more electors than the city average number of electors by 2008. Its proposed Birchwood ward would have equal to the city average number of electors by 2008.

86 A local resident objected to our proposals for Boutham ward and argued that the Hartsholme estate has no connection with the remainder of Boutham and that it is geographically isolated by Tritton Road, Skellingthorpe Road and the Lincoln to Newark railway line. He argued further that the estate did not share the same facilities as the rest of the ward and that officers of both the Hartsholme Association of Residents and Tenants and Hartsholme Community Contact Centre had worked hard to foster community involvement. As an alternative he proposed that the Hartsholme estate form a new single-member Hartsholme ward while the remainder of our proposed Hartsholme ward should form a two-member ward named either Doddington Park or Swanholme.

87 The local resident also stated that he considered our consultation to be flawed, arguing that advertising the review with a public notice and distributing posters is 'hardly the way to engage the public and get a response on the issue'. He added that neither the Hartsholme Community Contact Centre nor the Hartsholme Association of Residents and Tenants had been contacted by either the Committee or the City Council. At the start of all reviews the Committee identifies and contacts as many interested parties as possible. It is our experience that parish councils or community groups are a practical and cost effective way of establishing contact with local communities and indeed, letters were sent to both the Hartsholme Residents Association and Hartsholme Community Contact Centre dated 6 August 2004 informing each organisation about the start of the review.

88 Having considered the representations received we have decided to endorse the draft recommendation for Birchwood, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards as final. As mentioned previously in paragraphs 68 and 71 we propose a minor boundary amendment between our proposed Boutham and Carholme wards. We note the proposals of the City Council would result in a slight worsening in electoral equality in the area and therefore, given a lack of community identity argument we do not propose adopting these proposals.

89 We have considered the arguments put forward by the local resident and acknowledge that the Hartsholme estate forms a distinct community and that residents have worked hard to create a 'unique atmosphere'. Therefore we have considered a number of alternative options in the area. We note the local residents' proposal that the estate form a single-member ward of its own, however, we also note that a single-member Hartsholme ward consisting only of the Hartsholme estate would have 9% fewer electors per councillor than the city average by 2008. In addition the proposal does not take into account the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road including Hartsholme Drive and Almond Crescent which would remain isolated from the remainder of Boutham ward. In addition we note that the proposal would result in a two-member ward and single-member ward in a city with wholly three-member wards. We note that this would result in not every elector voting

every year and we have not been sufficiently persuaded by the arguments received that this would provide for effective and convenient local government in the city.

90 We note that given the compact nature of the city it has been possible to secure excellent levels of electoral equality and given the alternative warding options available to us we are not sufficiently persuaded that a single-member Hartsholme ward would provide for the best reflection of the statutory criteria. While we accept that the Hartsholme estate forms a distinct community we note that this has been achieved within the context of an existing three-member ward and that under our recommendations we are not proposing to divide the estate between different wards. We also have no reason to believe that community spirit in the Hartsholme estate could not be maintained in a three-member Boutham ward. In addition, we note that the proposal would leave the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road, which is in close proximity to the Hartsholme estate, isolated from the remainder of the proposed Boutham ward are therefore not sufficiently persuaded that this would provide for the best reflection of community identities in the area.

91 We also considered combining the estate with those areas in our proposed Moorland ward to the west of Tritton Road, north of Doddington Road and south of Skellingthorpe Road which we note would secure a good level of electoral equality, having 3% more electors per councillor than the city average by 2008. However, we note that in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality it would be necessary to transfer electors in our proposed Moorland ward to a proposed single-member Hartsholme ward and we are of the view that this proposal would unnecessarily divide the residential area to the east of the railway line from the remainder of Moorland ward to which it enjoys excellent links. We note further the poor links between this area and the Hartsholme estate.

92 Having considered both options we do not propose moving away from our draft recommendations.

93 Tables 1 and 2 (on pages 9 and 10-11, respectively) provide details of the constituent parts and electoral variances of our final recommendations for Birchwood, Boutham, Bracebridge, Hartsholme, Moorland and Park wards. Our final recommendations are shown on Map 1 and Map 2 accompanying this report.

Conclusions

94 Table 5 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements based on 2003 and 2008 electorate figures.

Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	Current arrangements		Final recommendations	
	2003	2008	2003	2008
Number of councillors	33	33	33	33
Number of wards	11	11	11	11
Average number of electors per councillor	1,834	1,852	1,834	1,852
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	6	6	0	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	2	0	0

95 As shown in Table 5, our final recommendations for Lincoln City Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from six to none. By 2008 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 6%. We propose to retain the existing council size.

Final recommendation
 Lincoln City Council should comprise 33 councillors serving 11 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

6 What happens next?

96 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Lincoln and submitted our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation.²

97 It is now up to the Electoral Commission to decide whether or not to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 6 July 2006, and the Electoral Commission will normally consider all written representation made to them by that date.

98 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

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

Fax: 020 7271 0667

Email: implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk

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

² Under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI No. 2001/3962).

7 Mapping

Final recommendations for Lincoln

99 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for Lincoln city.

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Lincoln city.
- **Sheet 2, Map 2** illustrates the proposed boundaries in Lincoln city.

Appendix A

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
Boundary Committee	The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, responsible for undertaking electoral reviews
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward, expressed in parishes or existing wards, or parts of either
Consultation	An opportunity for interested parties to comment and make proposals at key stages during the review
Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve a council
Order (or electoral change Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Electoral Commission	An independent body that was set up by the UK Parliament. Its mission is to foster public confidence and participation by promoting integrity, involvement and effectiveness in the democratic process
Electoral equality	A measure of ensuring that every person's vote is of equal worth

Electoral imbalance	Where there is a large difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the city
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in local government elections
FER (or further electoral review)	A further review of the electoral arrangements of a local authority following significant shifts in the electorate since the last periodic electoral review conducted between 1996 and 2004
Multi-member ward	A ward represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	<p>The 12 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and will soon be joined by the new designation of the South Downs. The definition of a National Park is:</p> <p>‘An extensive area of beautiful and relatively wild country in which, for the nation's benefit and by appropriate national decision and action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the characteristic landscape beauty is strictly preserved; – access and facilities for open-air enjoyment are amply provided; – wildlife and buildings and places of architectural and historic interest are suitably protected; – established farming use is effectively maintained’
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 than the average the electors can be described as being over-represented
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single 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 residents of the parish who are on the electoral register, which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries
Parish electoral arrangements	The total number of parish councillors; 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 Committee for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England

Political management arrangements	The Local Government Act 2000 enabled local authorities to modernise their decision making process. Councils could choose from three broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet, a cabinet with a leader, or a directly elected mayor and council manager. Whichever of the categories it adopted became the new political management structure for the council
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward than the average the electors can be described as being under-represented
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward varies in percentage terms from the city average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the city council

Appendix B

Code of practice on written consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation* (available at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/Code.htm), requires all Government Departments and Agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Public bodies, such as the Boundary Committee for England, are encouraged to follow the *Code*.

The *Code of Practice* applies to consultation documents published after 1 January 2001, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

Table B1: The Boundary Committee for England's compliance with Code criteria

Criteria	Compliance/departure
Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.	We comply with this requirement.
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.	We comply with this requirement.
A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.	We comply with this requirement.
Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.	We comply with this requirement.
Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.	We comply with this requirement.
Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.	We comply with this requirement.
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.	We comply with this requirement.