

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL

*Report to the Secretary of State for the  
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

*November 1999*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations to the Government on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government, the boundaries of individual local authority areas, and their electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of electoral divisions, or wards – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective 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 division boundaries, and the number of councillors and division names.

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council.

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## Local Government Commission for England

2 November 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 22 September 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Lincolnshire County Council under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in May 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 140) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to the electoral arrangements of Lincolnshire County Council.

We recommend that Lincolnshire County Council should be served by 77 councillors representing 77 divisions, and that changes should be made to division boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

We note that you have set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO) legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the County Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Lincolnshire County Council on 22 September 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 11 May 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Lincolnshire:

- **In 43 of the 76 divisions, each of which is represented by a single councillor, the number of electors varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the county, and it varies by more than 20 per cent in 22 divisions.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate further by 2003, with the number of electors varying by more than 10 per cent from the average in 43 divisions and by more than 20 per cent in 27 divisions.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 140-141) are that:

- **Lincolnshire County Council should have 77 councillors, one more than at present, representing 77 divisions;**
- **as the divisions are based on district wards which have themselves changed as a result of the recent district reviews, the boundaries of all except five divisions will be subject to change.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each county councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 21 of the proposed 77 divisions the number of electors would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the county average, with only four divisions varying by more than 20 per cent.**
- **This improved electoral equality is forecast to largely continue, with the number of electors in 26 divisions expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the county in 2003, and only three divisions expected to vary by more than 20 per cent.**

Recommendations are also made for change to town council electoral arrangements which provide for:

- **new warding arrangements for Gainsborough Town Council.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 14 December 1999:

**The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Sponsorship Division  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU**

Figure 1:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
<b>BOSTON BOROUGH</b>	
1 Boston Coastal	Coastal ward; Old Leake & Wrangle ward
2 Boston East	Central ward; Pilgrim ward; Skirbeck ward
3 Boston Fen	Fenside ward; Witham ward; Swineshead & Holland Fen ward (part – the parishes of Amber Hill and Holland Fen with Brothertoft)
4 Boston Fishtoft	Fishtoft ward; North ward
5 Boston Rural	Five Village ward; Kirton ward; Swineshead & Holland Fen ward (part – Swineshead parish)
6 Boston South	Frampton & Holme ward; South ward; Wyberton ward
7 Boston West	Staniland North ward; Staniland South ward; West ward
<b>EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>	
8 Alford & Sutton	Alford ward; Sutton on Sea North ward; Sutton on Sea South ward
9 Horncastle & Tetford	Horncastle ward; Tetford ward; Hundleby ward (part – the parishes of Aswardby, Brinkhill, Harrington, Haugh, Hundleby, Langton by Spilsby, Mavis Enderby, Raithby, Sausthorpe, South Ormsby cum Ketsby, South Thoresby and Swaby)
10 Ingoldmells Rural	Chapel St Leonards ward; Ingoldmells ward; Willoughby with Sloothby ward; Hundleby ward (part – Ashby with Scremby, Dalby, Partney, Skendleby and Ulceby with Fordington)
11 Louth Marsh	Grimoldby ward; Marsh Chapel ward; North Somercotes ward; Skidbrooke with Saltfleet Haven ward
12 Louth North	North Holme ward; St James' ward; St Margaret's ward
13 Louth Rural North	Holton le Clay ward; North Thoresby ward; Tetney ward
14 Louth South	Priory ward; St Mary's ward; St Michael's ward; Trinity ward
15 Louth Wolds	Binbrook ward; Legbourne ward; Ludford ward; Withern with Stain ward
16 Mablethorpe	Mablethorpe Central ward; Mablethorpe East ward; Mablethorpe North ward; Trusthorpe and Mablethorpe South ward

Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
17 Skegness North	St Clement's ward; Winthorpe ward
18 Skegness South	Scarborough ward; Seacroft ward
19 Spilsby Fen	Halton Hologate ward; Sibsey ward; Spilsby ward; Stickney ward
20 Tattershall Castle	Coningsby & Tattershall ward; Frithville ward; Mareham le Fen ward
21 Wainfleet & Burgh	Burgh le Marsh ward; Croft ward; Wainfleet & Friskney ward
22 Woodhall Spa & Wragby	Roughton ward; Woodhall Spa ward; Wragby ward
<b>LINCOLN CITY</b>	
23 Lincoln Birchwood	Birchwood ward
24 Lincoln Boultham	Boultham ward
25 Lincoln Bracebridge	Bracebridge ward
26 Lincoln East	Abbey ward; Minster ward (part)
27 Lincoln Glebe	Glebe ward
28 Lincoln Hartsholme	Hartsholme ward
29 Lincoln Moorland	Moorland ward
30 Lincoln North	Castle ward (part); Minster ward (part)
31 Lincoln Park	Park ward
32 Lincoln West	Carholme ward; Castle ward (part)
<b>NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>	
33 Bassingham Rural	Bassingham ward; Brant Broughton ward; Cliff Villages ward (part – the parishes of Leadenham, Welbourn and Wellingore); Eagle & North Scarle ward (part – the parishes of Eagle & Swinethorpe, North Scarle and Thorpe on the Hill)
34 Branston & Navenby	Branston & Mere ward; Cliff Villages ward (part – the parishes of Boothby Graffoe, Coleby, Harmston and Navenby); Metheringham ward (part – the parishes of Dunston and Nocton)

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Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
35 Heighington & Washingborough	Heighington & Washingborough ward
36 Hykeham Forum	North Hykeham Forum ward; North Hykeham Moor ward; North Hykeham Witham ward
37 Metheringham	Billinghay ward; Martin ward; Metheringham ward (part – Metheringham parish)
38 Ruskington & Cranwell	Ashby de la Launde ward; Cranwell & Byard's Leap ward; Ruskington ward
39 Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South	North Hykeham Memorial ward; North Hykeham Mill ward; Skellingthorpe ward; Eagle & North Scarle ward (part – Doddington & Whisby parish)
40 Sleaford	Sleaford Holdingham ward; Sleaford Mareham ward; Sleaford Navigation ward; Sleaford Westholme ward
41 Sleaford Rural South	Heckington ward; Kyme ward; Osbournby ward
42 Sleaford West & Leasingham	Leasingham & Roxholm ward; Sleaford Castle ward; Sleaford Quarrington ward
43 Waddington Heath	Bracebridge & Waddington East ward; Waddington West ward
<b>SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT</b>	
44 Crowland & Whaplode	Crowland ward; Holbeach St John's ward; Whaplode ward
45 Donington Rural	Donington ward; Gosberton Village ward; Surfleet ward
46 Holbeach	Holbeach Hurn ward; Holbeach Town ward
47 Holbeach Rural	Fleet ward; Gedney ward; The Saints ward; Long Sutton ward (part – the parishes of Lutton and Tydd St Mary)
48 Spalding East & Moulton	Spalding St Paul's ward; Weston & Moulton ward
49 Spalding Elloe	Deeping St Nicholas ward; Pinchbeck ward; Spalding Castle ward
50 Spalding South	Spalding St John's ward; Spalding St Mary's ward
51 Spalding West	Spalding Monkshouse ward; Spalding Wygate ward
52 Sutton Elloe	Sutton Bridge ward; Long Sutton ward (part – the parishes of Little Sutton and Long Sutton)

Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
<b>SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>	
53 Bourne Abbey	Bourne East ward; Ringstone ward
54 Bourne Castle	Bourne West ward; Thurlby ward
55 Colsterworth Rural	Forest ward; Isaac Newton ward; Morkery ward
56 Deeping St James	Deeping St James ward
57 Folkingham Rural	Aveland ward; Glen Eden ward; Lincrest ward; Toller ward
58 Grantham Barrowby	Barrowby ward; Earlesfield ward
59 Grantham East	Belmont ward; Harrowby ward
60 Grantham North	Ermine ward; Peascliffe ward; St Wulfram's ward
61 Grantham North West	Green Hill ward; Greyfriars ward
62 Grantham South	Grantham St John's ward; St Anne's ward
63 Hough	Heath ward; Loveden ward; Saxonwell ward; Witham Valley ward
64 Market & West Deeping	Market & West Deeping ward; Truesdale ward (part – Langtoft parish)
65 Stamford North	All Saints ward; St George's ward
66 Stamford Rural	Hillsides ward; St Mary's ward; Truesdale ward (part – parishes of Barholm & Stowe, Baston, Tallington and Uffington)
67 Stamford West	Stamford St John's ward
<b>WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>	
68 Ancholme Cliff	Hemswell ward; Middle Rasen ward; Waddingham & Spital ward
69 Bardney & Cherry Willingham	Bardney ward; Cherry Willingham ward; Fiskerton ward
70 Gainsborough Hill	Gainsborough East ward; Gainsborough North ward (part – Gainsborough North East ward of Gainsborough parish, as proposed)
71 Gainsborough Rural South	Lea ward; Scampton ward; Stow ward; Torksey ward

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*Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
72 Gainsborough Trent	Gainsborough South West ward; Gainsborough North ward (part – Gainsborough North West ward of Gainsborough parish, as proposed)
73 Market Rasen Wolds	Market Rasen ward; Wold View ward
74 Nettleham & Saxilby	Nettleham ward; Saxilby ward
75 North Wolds	Caistor ward; Kelsey ward; Yarborough ward
76 Scotter Rural	Scotter ward; Thonock ward
77 Welton Rural	Dunholme ward; Sudbrooke ward; Welton ward

*Notes: 1 The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the seven Lincolnshire districts which were completed in 1997. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.*

*2 The large map inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed divisions outlined above. The maps in Appendix A illustrate some of the proposed boundaries in more detail.*

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincolnshire

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>BOSTON BOROUGH</b>					
1 Boston Coastal	1	5,345	-16	5,424	-17
2 Boston East	1	6,461	2	6,651	1
3 Boston Fen	1	6,179	-3	6,118	-7
4 Boston Fishtoft	1	6,824	8	7,238	10
5 Boston Rural	1	7,210	14	7,327	12
6 Boston South	1	5,727	-10	5,902	-10
7 Boston West	1	5,482	-14	5,514	-16
<b>EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>					
8 Alford & Sutton	1	6,434	1	6,725	3
9 Horncastle & Tetford	1	7,475	18	7,869	20
10 Ingoldmells Rural	1	7,326	16	7,445	14
11 Louth Marsh	1	6,425	1	6,547	0
12 Louth North	1	5,367	-15	5,503	-16
13 Louth Rural North	1	6,602	4	6,677	2
14 Louth South	1	6,629	5	6,995	7
15 Louth Wolds	1	6,143	-3	6,236	-5
16 Mablethorpe	1	5,929	-6	6,074	-7
17 Skegness North	1	7,516	19	7,571	16
18 Skegness South	1	7,022	11	7,382	13
19 Spilsby Fen	1	6,634	5	7,009	7
20 Tattershall Castle	1	6,452	2	6,596	1
21 Wainfleet & Burgh	1	6,624	4	6,865	5
22 Woodhall Spa & Wragby	1	6,189	-2	6,486	-1

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Figure 2 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincolnshire

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>LINCOLN CITY</b>					
23 Lincoln Birchwood	1	5,513	-13	5,608	-14
24 Lincoln Boultham	1	5,818	-8	6,548	0
25 Lincoln Bracebridge	1	6,086	-4	6,174	-6
26 Lincoln East	1	6,576	4	6,613	1
27 Lincoln Glebe	1	6,055	-4	6,112	-7
28 Lincoln Hartsholme	1	6,691	6	6,832	4
29 Lincoln Moorland	1	5,848	-8	5,761	-12
30 Lincoln North	1	7,737	22	7,773	19
31 Lincoln Park	1	5,752	-9	5,720	-13
32 Lincoln West	1	7,707	22	7,695	17
<b>NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
33 Basingham Rural	1	6,296	-1	6,453	-2
34 Branston & Navenby	1	6,535	3	7,059	8
35 Heighington & Washingborough	1	5,281	-17	5,481	-16
36 Hykeham Forum	1	5,722	-10	5,679	-13
37 Metheringham	1	5,745	-9	6,182	-6
38 Ruskington & Cranwell	1	6,839	8	7,337	12
39 Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South	1	6,213	-2	6,910	5
40 Sleaford	1	6,417	1	7,002	7
41 Sleaford Rural South	1	6,864	8	7,284	11
42 Sleaford West & Leasingham	1	5,043	-20	6,005	-8
43 Waddington Heath	1	6,538	3	7,616	16

Figure 2 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincolnshire

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT</b>					
44 Crowland & Whaplode	1	6,054	-5	6,118	-7
45 Donington Rural	1	6,243	-2	6,245	-5
46 Holbeach	1	6,509	3	6,786	4
47 Holbeach Rural	1	6,577	4	6,779	3
48 Spalding East & Moulton	1	7,376	16	7,344	12
49 Spalding Elloe	1	6,754	-1	7,018	-3
50 Spalding South	1	6,559	3	6,557	0
51 Spalding West	1	6,237	-2	7,039	7
52 Sutton Elloe	1	6,462	2	6,845	4
<b>SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
53 Bourne Abbey	1	6,369	0	6,913	5
54 Bourne Castle	1	6,158	-3	6,233	-5
55 Colsterworth Rural	1	5,018	-21	5,068	-23
56 Deeping St James	1	5,405	-15	5,326	-19
57 Folkingham Rural	1	6,367	0	6,619	1
58 Grantham Barrowby	1	6,770	7	6,607	1
59 Grantham East	1	7,588	20	7,842	20
60 Grantham North	1	6,738	6	6,935	6
61 Grantham North West	1	5,724	-10	6,179	-6
62 Grantham South	1	6,968	10	6,795	4
63 Hough	1	6,627	5	6,803	4
64 Market & West Deeping	1	6,123	-3	6,464	-1
65 Stamford North	1	6,929	9	6,748	3

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Figure 2 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincolnshire

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
66 Stamford Rural	1	6,848	8	7,012	7
67 Stamford West	1	4,798	-24	4,890	-25
<b>WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>					
68 Ancholme Cliff	1	5,316	-16	5,359	-18
69 Bardney & Cherry Willingham	1	6,127	-3	6,274	-4
70 Gainsborough Hill	1	6,435	1	6,452	-2
71 Gainsborough Rural South 1		6,888	9	7,219	10
72 Gainsborough Trent	1	6,591	4	6,764	3
73 Market Rasen Wolds	1	5,425	-21	5,677	-21
74 Nettleham & Saxilby	1	6,418	1	6,725	3
75 North Wolds	1	6,453	2	6,542	0
76 Scotter Rural	1	5,206	-18	5,240	-20
77 Welton Rural	1	6,853	8	7,202	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>488,184</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>504,617</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>6,340</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>6,553</b>	<b>—</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lincolnshire County Council.

Note: The electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor as each division is represented by a single councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. 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 on the electoral arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council. Our review of the county is part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 In each two-tier county, our approach is first to complete the PERs of all the constituent districts and, when Orders for the resulting changes in those areas have been made by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, then to commence a PER of the county council's electoral arrangements. The Secretary of State made Orders for new electoral arrangements in the districts in Lincolnshire, which we reviewed at the start of the PER programme in 1996/97, in October 1998.

## Our Approach to County Reviews

3 In undertaking all our PERs we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, i.e. the need to:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (second edition published in March 1998), which we supplemented in October 1998 on our approach to county reviews.

5 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the County Council, and the number, boundaries and names of electoral

divisions. Current legislation requires that county council electoral divisions should each return one councillor. In addition, the statutory Rules set out in the 1972 Act provide that each division should be wholly contained within a single district and that division boundaries should not split unwarded parishes or parish wards.

6 In considering the approach we should take to county reviews we valued the responses to the consultation we undertook in 1995 prior to the start of our PER programme, and the more recent discussions we have had with county council officers and the Local Government Association. We have also welcomed the opportunity to brief chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members of individual county councils, about our policies and procedures.

7 In October 1998 we wrote to all county councils setting out further advice on our approach to county reviews which supplemented our March 1998 *Guidance*. First, as with all our reviews, we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and configuration is most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

8 Second, the broad objective of PERs is then to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the county as a whole. For example, we will continue to require justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any division. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in exceptional circumstances, and will require strong justification.

9 Similarly, we will seek to ensure that the number of county councillors representing each district area within the county is commensurate with the district's proportion of the county's electorate.

10 Third, the Rules provide that, in considering county council electoral arrangements, we should have regard to the boundaries of district wards. We attach considerable importance to achieving coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards. Where wards or groups of wards are not coterminous with county divisions, this can cause confusion for the electorate at local elections, lead to increased election costs and, in our view, may not be conducive to effective and convenient local government.

11 We recognise, however, that we are unlikely to achieve optimum electoral equality and complete coterminosity throughout a county area. Our objective will be to achieve the best balance between the two, taking into account our statutory criteria. While the proportion of electoral divisions that will be coterminous with the boundaries of district wards is likely to vary between counties, we would normally expect coterminosity to be achieved in a significant majority of divisions.

12 Where coterminosity is not possible in parished areas, and a district ward is to be split between electoral divisions, we would normally expect this to be achieved without dividing (or further dividing) a parish between divisions. There are likely to be exceptions to this, however, particularly where larger parishes are involved.

13 Fourth, we are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that county but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified; in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a county's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, or that changes should be made to the size of a county council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other counties.

14 Fifth, a further area of difference between county and district reviews is that we recognise it will not be possible to avoid the creation of some county divisions which contain diverse communities, for example, combining urban and rural areas. We have generally sought to avoid this in district

reviews, in order to reflect the identities and interests of local communities. Some of the existing county council electoral divisions comprise a number of distinct communities, which is inevitable given the larger number of electors represented by each councillor, and we would expect that similar situations will continue under our recommendations in seeking the best balance between electoral equality, coterminosity and the statutory criteria.

15 Finally, before we started our county reviews, the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, in July 1998, setting out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. The Government's proposals provided for elections by halves in alternate years for all two-tier authorities. This would mean that district and county councils would each move to a cycle of elections by halves, with elections for district councils and county councils taking place in alternate years. The White Paper also refers to local accountability being maximised where the whole electorate in a council's area is involved in elections each time they take place, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member divisions in county councils to reflect a system of elections by halves.

16 In October 1998 we wrote to all local authorities, setting out our understanding of the White Paper proposals, following discussions with the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Local Government Association and the Association of London Government. In brief, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, and our present *Guidance*, until such time as the legislation changes. We have power only to recommend single-member divisions in county council areas.

17 As part of this review we may also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the county. However, we made some recommendations for new parish electoral arrangements as part of our district reviews. Furthermore, this is now a power that is open to district and unitary councils. We therefore only expect to put forward such recommendations during county reviews on an exceptional basis. In any event, we are not able to review the administrative boundaries between local authorities or parishes, or consider the establishment of new parish areas, as part of this review.

## The Review of Lincolnshire

18 We completed the reviews of the seven district council areas in Lincolnshire in March 1997, and the Secretary of State has since made the Orders for the new electoral arrangements. This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Lincolnshire County Council. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in September 1980 (Report No. 396).

19 Stage One of this review began on 22 September 1998, when we wrote to Lincolnshire County Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the seven district councils in the county, the Lincolnshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the county, Members of Parliament and the Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the county, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the County Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was extended by three weeks to 5 January 1999 at the request of the County Council, to enable them to complete their consultation with the parishes. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

20 Stage Three began on 11 May 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council*, and ended on 5 July 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.



## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

21 Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England, with a population of approximately 584,000, covering some 592,000 hectares. It comprises the seven districts of Boston, East Lindsey, Lincoln, North Kesteven, South Holland, South Kesteven and West Lindsey. The county lies on the east coast of England, and borders Cambridgeshire to the south, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire to the west and the new unitary authorities of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire to the north.

22 To compare levels of electoral inequality between divisions, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors represented by the councillor for each division varies from the county average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

23 The electorate of the county is 488,184 (February 1998). The Council presently has 76 members, with one member elected from each division (Figure 3).

24 Since the last electoral review of the County Council there has been an increase in the electorate in Lincolnshire, with around 10 per cent more electors than two decades ago. The most significant growth in the county has occurred in East Lindsey, North Kesteven, South Holland and South Kesteven, with nearly 20 per cent more electors than 20 years ago.

25 At present, each councillor represents an average of 6,423 electors, which the County Council forecasts will increase to 6,635 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors in 43 of the 76 divisions varies by more than 10 per cent from the county average and in 22 divisions by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalances are in Birchwood and The Deepings divisions, where the respective councillors represent 60 per cent more electors than the county average.

26 As mentioned previously, in considering the County Council's electoral arrangements, we must have regard to the boundaries of district wards. Following the completion of the reviews of district warding arrangements in Lincolnshire, we are therefore faced with a new "starting point" for considering electoral divisions. Our proposals for county divisions will be based on the new district wards as opposed to those which existed prior to the recent reviews. In view of the effect of these new district wards and changes in the electorate over the past 20 years which have resulted in electoral imbalances across the county, changes to the existing county electoral divisions are inevitable.

27 In considering county council electoral arrangements, we have regard to the boundaries of district wards. The term 'coterminosity' is used throughout the report and refers to situations where the boundaries of county electoral divisions and district wards are the same, that is to say, where county divisions comprise either one or more whole district wards.

Figure 3:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>BOSTON BOROUGH</b>					
1 Boston Rural South	1	7,507	17	7,626	15
2 Boston West	1	5,901	-8	6,172	-7
3 Coastal	1	6,162	-4	6,238	-6
4 Fenside	1	5,035	-22	5,018	-24
5 Skirbeck	1	5,442	-15	5,682	-14
6 Witham	1	6,139	-4	6,009	-9
7 Wyberton	1	7,042	10	7,429	12
<b>EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>					
8 Alford & Spilsby	1	6,967	8	7,115	7
9 Alford Coast	1	7,255	13	7,379	11
10 Bolingbroke Castle	1	6,538	2	6,827	3
11 Horncastle & Tetford	1	6,140	-4	6,157	-7
12 Louth Marsh	1	6,547	2	6,668	0
13 Louth North	1	5,663	-12	5,800	-13
14 Louth Rural North	1	6,602	3	6,677	1
15 Louth South	1	6,333	-1	6,698	1
16 Louth Wolds	1	5,220	-19	5,308	-20
17 Mablethorpe	1	9,113	42	9,537	44
18 Skegness North	1	7,658	19	7,711	16
19 Skegness South	1	6,880	7	7,242	9
20 Tattershall Castle	1	6,299	-2	6,446	-3
21 Wainfleet & Burgh	1	5,545	-14	5,753	-13
22 Woodhall Spa & Wragby	1	6,007	-6	6,302	-5

Figure 3 (continued):  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>LINCOLN CITY</b>					
23 Birchwood	1	10,256	60	10,474	58
24 Boutham	1	5,435	-15	6,210	-6
25 Bracebridge	1	6,086	-5	6,174	-7
26 Carholme	1	5,465	-15	5,497	-17
27 Lincoln Abbey	1	5,264	-18	5,241	-21
28 Lincoln Castle	1	5,303	-17	5,199	-22
29 Lincoln Moorland	1	4,908	-24	4,834	-27
30 Lincoln Park	1	4,754	-26	4,703	-29
31 Longdales	1	4,667	-27	4,796	-28
32 Minster	1	7,376	15	7,460	12
33 Tritton	1	4,269	-34	4,248	-36
<b>NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
34 Bassingham Rural	1	6,296	-2	6,453	-3
35 Billingham & Cranwell	1	6,198	-4	6,387	-4
36 Cliff	1	6,760	5	7,908	19
37 Hykeham Forum	1	5,673	-12	5,629	-15
38 Metheringham	1	5,649	-12	6,170	-7
39 North East Kesteven	1	8,460	32	8,861	34
40 Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South	1	6,262	-3	6,960	5
41 Sleaford	1	9,665	50	11,217	69
42 Sleaford Rural North	1	5,984	-7	6,458	-3
43 Sleaford Rural South	1	6,546	2	6,965	5

*continued overleaf*

Figure 3 (continued):  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT</b>					
44 Crowland Rural	1	7,135	11	7,221	9
45 Donington Rural	1	6,243	-3	6,245	-6
46 East Elloe	1	7,943	24	8,339	26
47 Holbeach	1	6,461	1	6,739	2
48 Holbeach Fen	1	6,532	2	6,721	1
49 Spalding Abbey	1	5,262	-18	5,243	-21
50 Spalding East & Weston	1	5,750	-10	5,680	-14
51 Spalding North West	1	8,280	29	9,322	40
52 West Elloe	1	5,165	-20	5,221	-21
<b>SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
53 Bourne Abbey	1	6,528	2	6,672	1
54 Bourne Castle	1	8,960	39	9,842	48
55 Devon & St Johns	1	4,933	-23	4,812	-27
56 Earlesfield	1	3,760	-41	3,665	-45
57 Folkingham Rural	1	7,313	14	7,850	18
58 Grantham North	1	6,964	8	7,078	7
59 Grantham South	1	5,113	-20	5,013	-24
60 Grantham West	1	8,332	30	8,730	32
61 Grimsthorpe	1	6,534	2	6,783	2
62 Harrowby	1	4,054	-37	3,960	-40
63 Hough	1	6,528	2	6,773	2
64 Stamford North	1	6,042	-6	5,886	-11
65 Stamford South	1	9,121	42	9,243	39
66 The Deepings	1	10,248	60	10,127	53

Figure 3 (continued):  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Variance from average %
<b>WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT</b>					
67 Bardney & Cherry Willingham	1	5,978	-7	6,120	-8
68 Caenby	1	8,363	30	8,747	32
69 Gainsborough East	1	4,467	-30	4,452	-33
70 Gainsborough North	1	4,668	-27	4,863	-27
71 Gainsborough Rural North	1	7,205	12	7,263	9
72 Gainsborough Rural South	1	6,608	3	6,941	5
73 Gainsborough South	1	3,891	-39	3,901	-41
74 Nettleham & Saxilby	1	6,418	0	6,725	1
75 North Wolds	1	7,536	17	7,624	15
76 Rasen Wolds	1	6,578	2	6,818	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>488,184</b>	—	<b>504,257</b>	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	<b>6,423</b>	—	<b>6,635</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lincolnshire County Council.

Notes: 1 Due to inaccuracies in the information provided, the total electorate figures for East Lindsey district differ marginally from the totals in Figures 2 and B2; however, we would expect this to have a marginal impact on variances.

2 Each division is represented by a single councillor; hence the electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Gainsborough South division in West Lindsey were relatively over-represented by 39 per cent, while electors in The Deepings division in South Kesteven were significantly under-represented by 60 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

28 During Stage One we received 12 representations, including county-wide proposals from Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats. Representations were also received from Lincolnshire County Labour Group, Lincolnshire County Liberal Democrat Group, three district and borough councils, Edward Leigh MP, two parish councils, the Gainsborough Constituency Conservative Association and one resident. In the light of these representations and the evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council*.

29 Our draft recommendations reflected elements from the two county-wide schemes received, together with other submissions, although we formulated our own proposals in those areas where, in our judgement, locally generated schemes would not provide the best possible balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We proposed that:

- (a) Lincolnshire County Council should be served by 77 councillors;
- (b) there should be 77 electoral divisions, involving changes to the boundaries of all but five of the existing divisions.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Lincolnshire County Council should comprise 77 councillors serving the same number of divisions.

30 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors in 21 of the proposed 77 electoral divisions varying by no more than 10 per cent from the county average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to deteriorate marginally over the next five years.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

<sup>31</sup> During the consultation on our draft recommendations report we received 48 representations, including those from Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats, Lincolnshire County Labour Group, Lincoln City Council, West Lindsey District Council, five political groups and associations, 32 parish and town councils, three councillors and two residents. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of the County Council and the Commission, by appointment.

### **Lincolnshire County Council**

<sup>32</sup> The County Council supported most of our draft recommendations. Its main concern was the proposed reduction in the number of county councillors representing Lincoln city which, it argued, would result in worse electoral equality and “goes against the outcome of the recent electoral review of the City Council wards”. It also proposed boundary modifications between Sleaford and Sleaford West & Leasingham divisions, in North Kesteven district, and a reconfiguration of parishes in the south of South Kesteven district. In addition, the County Council proposed alternative names for six divisions to better reflect the constituent areas.

### **Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats**

<sup>33</sup> The Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats supported increasing the number of county councillors by one, to 77, and the allocation of county councillors to districts. They supported our draft recommendations for 67 of the proposed 77 county divisions and, in particular, supported our proposals for the districts of Boston, South Holland, South Kesteven and West Lindsey. They supported our proposed warding arrangements for 11 of the 15 divisions in East Lindsey, six of the 10 divisions in Lincoln, and nine of the 11 divisions in North Kesteven. In addition, the Liberal Democrats proposed modifying the names of 17 divisions to better reflect the constituent areas.

### **Lincolnshire County Labour Group**

<sup>34</sup> Lincolnshire County Labour Group made a number of observations following consultation with the Lincolnshire County Labour Party and constituency Labour parties. It supported our draft recommendations in Boston. However, it argued that Lincoln city should be represented by 11 county councillors, and expressed reservations about proposed boundaries in the Sleaford area (in North Kesteven) and the Grantham area (in South Kesteven).

### **District and Borough Councils**

<sup>35</sup> Lincoln City Council opposed the reduction in the number of divisions currently allocated to Lincoln city. In addition, it opposed the proposal for division names which would not refer to city ward names. West Lindsey District Council welcomed the proposal to retain 10 county councillors for West Lindsey district. It also argued that Gainsborough Town Council should continue to be represented by 18 town councillors.

### **Parish and Town Councils**

<sup>36</sup> We received representations from 32 parish and town councils in Lincolnshire. In Boston, Old Leake and Wrangle parish councils supported our draft recommendations, while Wyberton Parish Council raised no objections. In East Lindsey, Louth Town Council supported our proposals for the new divisions covering Louth Town, and opposed the County Council’s Stage One proposal to combine Louth with adjoining rural areas. Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council expressed concern that our draft recommendations would not afford satisfactory representation for the coastal and immediate inland areas of the district, and proposed that the number of county councillors for East Lindsey should be increased by one. Theddlethorpe Parish Council approved our draft recommendations.

37 We received seven representations from parish and town councils in North Kesteven. Branston & Mere Parish Council objected to being combined with areas which are situated “across the Heath”. Coleby Parish Council objected to the proposed break-up of Cliff Villages ward. Canwick, Heighington and Washingborough parish councils supported the proposed new Washingborough & Heighington ward, although Canwick Parish Council expressed concern at losing its name, and Heighington Parish Council argued that this division should be named Heighington & Washingborough. North Hykeham Town Council argued that, due to future projected growth in parts of North Hykeham division, two of the wards contained within it should be combined with South Hykeham parish. Wilsford Parish Council opposed our draft recommendations on the grounds that it wished to retain its link with Leasingham and Rauceby wards.

38 We received eight representations from parish and town councils in South Kesteven. Baston Parish Council agreed in principle with our draft recommendations, although it expressed some concern at the proposed combination of its parish with Stamford. Braceborough & Wilsthorpe Parish Council opposed being included in the proposed Colsterworth Rural ward. Folkingham Parish Council objected to the size of the proposed Folkingham Rural division. Castle Bytham Parish Council argued that it would prefer to be combined with Little Bytham and Carey rather than villages to the west of the A1. Deeping St James and Market Deeping parish and town councils supported our draft recommendations. Heydour Parish Council supported increasing the number of county councillors representing South Kesteven, although it expressed concern at the size of rural divisions in the west of the county. Thurlby Parish Council had no comment to make.

39 We received 11 representations from parish and town councils in West Lindsey. Faldingworth and Scothern parish councils supported the proposed Welton Rural division, although both expressed concern in relation to the division name. Fiskerton Parish Council supported West Lindsey district being covered by 10 county divisions and, in particular, supported the proposed Bardney division. Gainsborough Town Council supported Gainsborough town being represented by two county councillors, and argued that the Town Council should continue to be represented by 18 town councillors. Glentham and Hemswell parish councils supported our draft recommendations,

while Glentworth Parish Council agreed that Lincolnshire should be represented by 77 county councillors, and supported our proposals in this area in preference to those of the Liberal Democrats. Kirkby-cum-Osgodby Parish Council reiterated its opposition to being included in a ward that would comprise distinct parishes. Middle Rasen Parish Council objected to our proposals, and proposed that its parish be included in the proposed Market Rasen Wolds division. Nettleham Parish Council objected to the proposal to retain the existing arrangements for Nettleham and Saxilby, and preferred to be linked with closer villages such as Welton, Cherry Willingham or Sudbrooke. Torksey Parish Council argued that there should be no change to the existing arrangements.

## Other Representations

40 We received 10 further representations from local political parties, councillors and residents. Boston District Council Labour Group fully supported our proposals in Boston. Lincoln Conservative Association and Lincoln Labour Party opposed our proposal to reduce the number of county councillors representing Lincoln city. However, Lincoln Labour Group argued that, if the Commission endorses its proposal for 10 county councillors in Lincoln, our proposals for divisions in the north of the city would be “one of the least worst options”.

41 Grantham & Stamford Conservative Association supported the majority of our draft recommendations for South Kesteven, although it supported the County Council’s proposed modifications in the south of the district.

42 Two councillors expressed concern in relation to our draft recommendations in East Lindsey, and argued that the Liberal Democrats’ proposals would offer a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. One councillor supported the County Council’s proposed modifications to divisions in South Kesteven, and proposed a further minor boundary modification.

43 Two residents from West Lindsey submitted views. One resident objected to our draft recommendations in so far as they affected Middle Rasen parish, while one resident supported our proposals combining the parishes of Cherry Willingham and Fiskerton in Bardney & Cherry Willingham division.

44 As with our reviews of districts, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every division of the county”.

45 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. We must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken, and to the boundaries of district wards.

46 We have discussed in Chapter One the additional parameters which apply to reviews of county council electoral arrangements and the need to have regard to the boundaries of district wards and coterminosity. We will also seek to ensure that the number of county councillors representing each district council area within the county is commensurate with the district’s proportion of the county’s electorate.

47 It is impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors in every division of a county. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our *second* in *Chapter* must the number of c of fler 95.47

However, we would expect this discrepancy to have a marginal impact on variances. We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science, but having reconsidered electoral forecasts in the light of evidence received at Stage One, and following further advice from the County Council, we were content that the County Council's electoral forecasts represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at that time.

52 During Stage Three we received a representation from Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats, which continued to express concerns that the projected electorate figures were neither "rigorous nor consistent". Nevertheless, no further evidence was provided in support of this view, and they indicated that they would be content to allow the County Council's figures to stand, providing that the Commission does not move away from its conclusion that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council size of 77.

53 Having given careful consideration to representations received at Stage Three, we remain satisfied that the electorate projections used in our draft recommendations report provide the best estimates presently available, and are content to endorse them as the basis of our final recommendations.

## Council Size

54 As explained earlier in this report, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government, although we are willing to carefully look at arguments why this might not be the case.

55 Lincolnshire County Council presently has 76 members. At Stage One the County Council and the Liberal Democrats proposed that the council size should be increased by one, to 77. The County Council proposed that the number of county councillors representing North Kesteven and South Kesteven be increased by one, to 11 and 15 respectively, while the number of county councillors representing West Lindsey be reduced by one, to nine. The Liberal Democrats shared the view that the number of county councillors representing North Kesteven and South Kesteven should be increased, although they considered that Lincoln city, rather than West Lindsey, should have its current representation reduced by one, to 10.

56 Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 77 members. We noted that there was consensus that the districts of North Kesteven and South Kesteven should each be granted an additional county councillor, and we concurred with this view. As indicated in our supplementary *Guidance*, we are clear that the number of county councillors representing each district or borough area should be commensurate with its proportion of the county electorate. On this basis the correct entitlement for Lincoln and West Lindsey is 10 county councillors each. There was, however, a divergence of views among respondents relating to whether Lincoln or West Lindsey should have a reduced level of representation. We carefully considered the competing views and we proposed that the number of county councillors representing Lincoln city should be reduced by one, to 10, with West Lindsey continuing to be represented by 10 county councillors, as at present.

57 During Stage Three our draft recommendation in respect of council size was supported by Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats, but opposed by Lincolnshire County Council, Lincoln City Council, Lincoln Conservative Association and Lincoln Labour Party, all of which argued that Lincoln city should retain 11 county councillors, resulting in the council size being increased to 78. It was argued that the new divisions in Lincoln city should be aligned with the new city wards, and that our proposals to reduce Lincoln city's representation by one failed to meet our statutory criteria. However, having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we remain persuaded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 77 members. As indicated in our draft recommendations report, we note that Lincoln city currently has a greater level of representation than the city's electorate merits. The city merits 10.1 councillors at present, and 9.9 councillors under the projected electorate. We have carefully considered the arguments put to us as to why Lincoln warrants a greater number of councillors than that to which it is entitled, but we have not been persuaded that a satisfactory case has been made to justify continued over-representation in

the city. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 77.

## Electoral Arrangements

58 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the county-wide schemes from the County Council and the Liberal Democrats. From these some considerations emerged which helped us when preparing our draft recommendations. As indicated above, there was consensus that the council size be increased to 77, and we concurred with this view. We also agreed that the number of county councillors representing the districts of North Kesteven and South Kesteven should be increased by one, to 11 and 15 respectively, and that the number of county councillors representing Lincoln city should be reduced by one, to 10. This would ensure that each district has a level of representation commensurate with its share of the county's electorate.

59 We acknowledged the difficulties faced in seeking to address the current electoral inequalities among existing county divisions, and we were grateful for the positive approach taken by the County Council and the Liberal Democrats in submitting county-wide schemes. In our draft recommendations report we sought to build on these proposals and other submissions received, in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve further improvements in equality of representation throughout the county, better reflect the interests and identities of communities in the county, and result in a greater level of coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards. Where it existed, we sought to reflect the consensus among representations for the boundaries of divisions. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all the respondents in our draft recommendations. Our proposals therefore reflected elements from the two county-wide schemes and other submissions, together with some further modifications.

60 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three, and judge that modifications should be made to a number of our proposed boundaries and to the names of divisions.

61 Our proposals would involve the re-warding of Gainsborough parish, in order to meet the

requirements of Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. These parishing proposals are detailed later in this chapter. For the purposes of county electoral divisions, the seven districts in Lincolnshire are considered in turn:

- (a) Boston borough;
- (b) East Lindsey district;
- (c) Lincoln city;
- (d) North Kesteven district;
- (e) South Holland district;
- (f) South Kesteven district;
- (g) West Lindsey district.

62 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures B1 and B2.

### Boston borough

63 Under current arrangements Boston borough is represented by seven county councillors serving seven county divisions: Boston Rural South, Boston West, Coastal, Fenside, Skirbeck, Witham and Wyberton. Currently, the number of electors varies by more than 10 per cent from the county average in three of the seven divisions, and by more than 20 per cent from the average in one division. This level of electoral inequality is projected to remain relatively constant over the next five years.

64 At Stage One we received proposals from the County Council, Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats and Lincolnshire Labour Group. In our draft recommendations report we noted that there was agreement that Boston borough should continue to be represented by seven county councillors, and we concurred with this view. We also noted that all three schemes proposed combining Central, Pilgrim and Skirbeck wards (in Boston town) and Coastal and Old Leake & Wrangle wards, and we concurred with these proposals, which we considered would represent the best balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. There was also agreement between Lincolnshire Labour Group and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats that North ward (in Boston town) should be combined with Fishtoft ward, and we were content to endorse this proposal, with the proposed division being named Boston Fishtoft. In particular, we noted that Hillydye parish ward of Fishtoft parish is currently combined with North ward (in Boston town) for borough warding

purposes, and that there was merit in combining the remainder of Fishtoft parish with North ward for county division purposes.

65 In the remainder of the borough, we considered that the Labour Group's proposals would represent the best possible balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. While this proposal would result in Swineshead & Holland Fen ward being divided between two county divisions, we noted that there are community ties between Swineshead parish and other parishes to its south, and that this would reflect the present configuration of parishes in Boston Rural South and Fenside divisions.

66 At Stage Three our draft recommendations were supported by the County Council, the Labour Group and Boston Labour Group. Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats also supported our proposals, although they proposed renaming the proposed Boston Fen division as Boston North West division, the proposed Boston Rural division as Boston Rural South division and the proposed Boston South division as Boston Wyberton division. Old Leake and Wrangle parish councils supported our draft recommendations, while Wyberton Parish Council raised no objections.

67 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three we are content to endorse our draft recommendations in Boston as final. We have considered the issue of the names of divisions, and note that our draft recommendations have achieved broad support and there is no evidence to suggest that alternative division names would command greater local support. We therefore endorse our proposed division names as final.

68 Under our final recommendations, which would result in five of the seven divisions being coterminous with whole district wards, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in three divisions, both initially and by 2003.

### **East Lindsey district**

69 Under current arrangements East Lindsey district is represented by 15 county councillors serving 15 divisions: Alford & Spilsby, Alford Coast, Bolingbroke Castle, Horncastle & Tetford, Louth Marsh, Louth North, Louth Rural North, Louth South, Louth Wolds, Mablethorpe, Skegness North, Skegness South, Tattershall

Castle, Wainfleet & Burgh and Woodhall Spa & Wragby. Currently, there is a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance in the district, with the number of electors varying by more than 10 per cent from the county average in six divisions, with a variance of 42 per cent in Mablethorpe division. This level of electoral inequality is projected to remain relatively constant over the five-year period to 2003.

70 At Stage One the County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats agreed that East Lindsey should continue to be represented by 15 county councillors, and we concurred with this view. There was also considerable agreement in relation to proposed boundaries for county divisions, with identical proposals put forward for 11 of the 15 divisions, and we were content to endorse this consensus for all 11 divisions, which we considered would represent the best possible balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity.

71 The two electoral schemes differed in relation to proposed electoral arrangements for Louth North division and its surrounding rural area. On balance, we endorsed the County Council's proposals, which we considered would provide the best balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. While this proposal would result in Hundley ward being split between the proposed Horncastle & Tetford and Ingoldmells Rural divisions, we considered that these two divisions would continue to group together areas sharing similar characteristics, and would offer a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than combining Louth with outlying rural areas. While we noted that Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals would provide better electoral equality, and would achieve complete coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards, we had reservations regarding the extent to which they would achieve satisfactory community representation in this area. In particular, we were not persuaded by the proposal to combine Binbrook ward, comprising rural parishes, with part of Louth town, nor by the proposal to combine Hundley, Legbourne, Ludford and Withern with Stain wards.

72 At Stage Three the County Council accepted our draft recommendations. Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats supported our proposed electoral arrangements for 11 of the 15 divisions in East

Lindsey, and proposed alternative county divisions for the proposed Horncastle & Tetford, Ingoldmells Rural, Louth North and Louth Wolds divisions. As at Stage One, they proposed combining Hundleby, Legbourne, Ludford and Withern with Stain in a Bluestone Heath division, Chapel St Leonards, Ingoldmells and Willoughby & Slooth wards in a Chapel St Leonards Rural division, Horncastle and Tetford wards in a Horncastle & Tetford division, with Binbrook, North Holme, St James' and St Margaret's wards forming a Louth North & Binbrook division. They argued that their proposals would provide a better balance between electoral equality and reflecting the interests and identities of communities in the area. In particular, they indicated that under our proposals Horncastle & Tetford would have an electoral imbalance of 20 per cent, and that there is no exceptional justification for this. They also proposed renaming Ingoldmells Rural division as Chapel St Leonards Rural; Louth Rural North division as Holton le Clay Rural division; Louth Wolds division as Louth Rural division; and Spilsby Fen division as Spilsby & Sipseby division.

<sup>73</sup> Louth Town Council supported our proposals for the new divisions covering Louth town. It indicated that it would be opposed to being combined with adjoining rural areas, such as Binbrook. Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council expressed concern that our draft recommendations would not afford satisfactory representation for this part of the county, and proposed that East Lindsey should be represented by 16 county councillors. Theddlethorpe parish approved our draft recommendations.

<sup>74</sup> We also received submissions from two councillors in East Lindsey. One councillor objected to our proposed Louth Wolds division, and expressed support for Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals. He argued that Withern and neighbouring parishes have very little in common with places such as Binbrook and Fotherby, and that Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals would have the merit of retaining links with parishes in Hundleby ward. Another councillor supported Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals for the Horncastle & Tetford division, and argued that the constituent parishes within Hundleby ward have very little association with Horncastle.

<sup>75</sup> Having carefully considered the representations received, we note that our proposals for the

divisions of Alford & Sutton, Louth Marsh, Louth Rural North, Louth South, Mablethorpe, Skegness North, Skegness South, Spilsby Fen, Tattershall Castle, Wainfleet & Burgh and Woodhall & Spa divisions have been broadly supported, and we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. While we have considered the views of Mablethorpe & Sutton Parish Council regarding this area warranting additional representation, we have not been persuaded by the evidence put forward supporting this argument.

<sup>76</sup> In the remainder of the district, we note that two local councillors have opposed our draft recommendations, and have endorsed Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals. While we accept that there is merit to Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals, which would achieve better electoral equality than our draft recommendations and provide complete coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards in the district, we continue to have reservations regarding the extent to which these proposals would achieve satisfactory community representation in this area. We have noted the arguments put to us, but we have not been persuaded that their proposals would command local support. In particular, we note that Louth Town Council would oppose being combined with outlying rural areas, such as Binbrook. Accordingly, in the light of the evidence submitted during Stage Three of the review, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for Horncastle & Tetford, Ingoldmells Rural, Louth North and Louth Wolds as final, since we consider they would provide the best balance between electoral equality, coterminosity and the statutory criteria in this area.

<sup>77</sup> We have considered the issue of the names of divisions, and note that Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats have proposed alternative division names for four divisions in the district. However, once again, we have no evidence that the proposed new division names would necessarily command local support and, in the absence of any further opposition, are confirming our draft recommendations for the names of divisions in East Lindsey as final.

<sup>78</sup> Under our final recommendations, which would result in 13 of the 15 divisions being coterminous with whole district wards, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in five divisions, both now and by 2003.

## Lincoln city

79 At present Lincoln city is represented by 11 county councillors serving 11 divisions: Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge, Carholme, Lincoln Abbey, Lincoln Castle, Lincoln Moorland, Lincoln Park, Longdales, Minster and Tritton. Currently there is a high level of electoral imbalance, with the number of electors varying by more than 10 per cent from the county average in 10 divisions, five of which vary by more than 20 per cent. In particular, there are 60 per cent more electors than the county average in Birchwood division. This level of electoral inequality is expected to deteriorate marginally by 2003.

80 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining 11 county councillors for the city, with all 11 divisions being coterminous with the boundaries of city wards. It argued that during the Commission's review of city warding arrangements the city was divided into 11 wards, and that retaining 11 divisions would therefore ensure complete coterminosity. We also received a representation from Lincolnshire Labour Group which supported the County Council's proposals, and argued that county divisions should continue to be aligned with city wards, otherwise it would be "confusing to the electorate". Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats opposed the County Council's proposals which, they argued, were "defective" because they failed to achieve "equality of representation across the county as a whole", since the electorate in Lincoln city would only merit 11 county councillors under a council size of 80. Accordingly, they proposed alternative electoral arrangements based on 10 county divisions.

81 In our draft recommendations report we noted that the key consideration in Lincoln relates to the number of county councillors to which the city should be entitled. As already indicated, we consider that each district area should have a level of representation on the County Council that is commensurate with its proportion of the county's electorate. Lincoln merits 10.1 councillors at present, and 9.9 under the projected electorate, therefore we did not adopt the County Council's proposals. We were also not persuaded by Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals, which we considered would have significant disadvantages in relation to the low number of divisions that would be coterminous with city wards, and would not satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities

of communities in the city. We therefore formulated our own proposals for Lincoln city, which provided 10 county councillors and retained the Fosdyke Navigation Canal and the River Witham as boundaries between divisions.

82 At Stage Three the County Council opposed our draft recommendation to reduce the number of county councillors representing Lincoln city to 10 on the grounds that this proposal "reduces coterminosity and electoral equality and goes against the outcome of the recent electoral review of the city council wards". This view was supported by Lincoln City Council, Lincolnshire Labour Group, Lincoln Conservative Association and Lincoln Labour Party. It was argued that our draft recommendation would result in three divisions having electoral imbalances greater than 10 per cent, with two of those divisions varying by more than 20 per cent, and that no evidence was put forward of this being an "exceptional set of circumstances". It was also argued that there has always been coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards, and that to change long-lasting arrangements based on coterminosity would "cause confusion for the electorate at local elections". In the event of 10 county councillors in Lincoln being confirmed, Lincoln Labour Party argued that our draft recommendations would offer one of the "least worst options", and supported the view that there should be no cross-river division and minimal disruption to existing coterminous arrangements. It also proposed that Lincoln East, Lincoln North and Lincoln West divisions be named Ermine, Lindum and Yarborough respectively.

83 Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for 10 county councillors representing Lincoln city, and the boundaries of six electoral divisions, with alternative arrangements proposed for Lincoln East, Lincoln North, Lincoln Park and Lincoln West divisions. They proposed combining the majority of Abbey ward and part of Minster ward to form a Lincoln East division; Castle ward and the majority of Minster ward to form a Lincoln North division; Park ward and part of Abbey ward to form a Lincoln South East division; and Carholme ward and part of Castle ward to form a Lincoln West division. They also commented on the proposed names of divisions under our draft recommendations, and proposed that in the interests of consistency all divisions should be prefixed by Lincoln.

84 Under Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals, which would result in six coterminous divisions, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in three divisions, both now and by 2003.

85 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are still of the view that the central consideration in Lincoln is the number of county councillors that should represent the city. We have noted the arguments put forward as to why Lincoln city warrants a level of representation greater than its proportion of the county's electorate, but we have not been persuaded by the evidence put forward at Stage Three. While we continue to place considerable importance on coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards, as indicated in our draft recommendations report, we consider that each district area should have a level of representation on the County Council that is commensurate with its proportion of the county's electorate. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendation that there should be 10 county councillors representing Lincoln city. While this would result in marginally worse electoral equality and a degree of non-coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards, we do not consider that there is compelling evidence supporting Lincoln having a higher number of county councillors than its proportion of the county's electorate merits.

86 We have considered Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' revised proposals. While these would result in a better standard of electoral representation in Lincoln city, they would result in four divisions being non-coterminous with the boundaries of district wards, and in the proposed Lincoln South East division breaching the Fosdyke Navigation Canal and the River Witham which, as indicated in our draft recommendations report, we consider provide strong community barriers. We have not been persuaded that this proposal would command local support, and note that Lincoln Labour Party has expressed opposition to divisions that straddle the river.

87 Accordingly, on balance, in the light of evidence received at Stage Three, we remain persuaded that our draft recommendations would provide the best balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final, subject to modifying the names of divisions to reflect views received at Stage Three. We have been

persuaded that there is merit to all divisions in the city being prefixed by 'Lincoln', as proposed by Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats. While we have considered the alternative division names proposed by Lincoln Labour Party, we note that these would represent a significant departure from our draft recommendations, and we have not been persuaded that they would necessarily command widespread local support.

88 Under our final recommendations the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in three divisions, and by more than 20 per cent from the average in two divisions. Seven divisions would be coterminous with city wards, with only the proposed Lincoln East, Lincoln North and Lincoln West divisions comprising parts of city wards.

### **North Kesteven district**

89 Under current arrangements, North Kesteven district is represented by 10 county councillors serving 10 divisions: Basingham Rural, Billingham & Cranwell, Cliff, Hykeham Forum, Metheringham, North East Kesteven, Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South, Sleaford, Sleaford Rural North and Sleaford Rural South. Currently the number of electors varies by more than 10 per cent from the county average in four divisions. In particular, North East Kesteven and Sleaford divisions have 32 per cent and 50 per cent more electors than the county average respectively. This level of electoral inequality is not projected to improve over the five-year period.

90 At Stage One the County Council proposed increasing the number of county councillors for the district to 11 which, it argued, was its correct entitlement under a council size of 77. It proposed that there should be two divisions covering Sleaford town, with Sleaford Castle, Sleaford Holdingham, Sleaford Navigation and Sleaford Westholme wards being combined in a new Sleaford North division, and Sleaford Mareham and Sleaford Quarrington wards being combined with Leasingham & Roxholme ward and part of Osbournby ward in a new Sleaford Rural West division. It also proposed that the remainder of Osbournby ward should be combined with Heckington and Kyme wards to form a new Sleaford Rural East division.

91 The County Council proposed that North Hykeham should be served by two divisions, with

North Hykeham Forum, North Hykeham Moor and North Hykeham Witham wards forming a revised Hykeham Forum division, and North Hykeham Memorial and North Hykeham Mill wards being combined with Skellingthorpe ward and part of Eagle & North Scarle ward to form a revised Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South division. It also proposed that Waddington West ward should be combined with Bracebridge Heath & Waddington East ward in a new Waddington Heath division, with Washingborough & Heighington ward forming a division in its own right.

92 In the remainder of the district the County Council proposed combining Bassingham and Brant Broughton wards with parts of Cliff Villages and Eagle & North Scarle wards in a new Bassingham Rural division; combining Cranwell & Byard's Leap and Ruskington wards with part of Ashby de la Launde ward in a new Ruskington & Cranwell division; combining Billingham and Martin wards with parts of Metheringham and Ashby de la Launde wards in a revised Metheringham division; and combining Branston & Mere ward with parts of Cliff Villages and Metheringham wards to form a revised Branston & Navenby division.

93 Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats also proposed increasing the number of county councillors for the district to 11. They proposed that there should be three divisions covering Sleaford town, with all three divisions comprising parts of Sleaford town and adjoining rural areas. They proposed combining Sleaford Castle, Sleaford Mareham and Sleaford Quarrington wards with Osbornby ward in a new Sleaford South & Wilsford division; combining Sleaford Holdingham and Sleaford Westholme wards with Leasingham & Roxholm ward in a new Sleaford North & Leasingham division; and combining Sleaford Navigation, Heckington and Kyme wards in a new Heckington & Sleaford East division.

94 Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed that there should be three divisions covering North Hykeham, with North Hykeham Forum, North Hykeham Moor and North Hykeham Witham wards forming a modified Hykeham East division; North Hykeham Memorial and Eagle & North Scarle and Skellingthorpe wards forming a new Skellingthorpe & Hykeham West division; and North Hykeham Mill, Bassingham and Brant Broughton wards forming a new Hykeham South & Brant Broughton division. They also proposed

that Waddington West ward should be combined with Bracebridge Heath & Waddington East ward in a revised Waddington Heath division, and that Washingborough & Heighington ward should form a division in its own right.

95 In the remainder of the district Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed combining Cliff Villages, Cranwell & Byard's Leap and Martin wards to form a new Navenby & Martin division, combining Ashby de la Launde, Billingham and Ruskington wards to form a new Ruskington & Billingham division, and combining Branston & Mere and Metheringham wards to form a new Metheringham & Branston division.

96 We also received submissions from Lincolnshire Labour Group, North Kesteven District Council and Silk Willoughby Parish Council.

97 In our draft recommendations report we explained that we were not persuaded by either of the two proposals affecting the south of the district, and proposed two divisions covering Sleaford town, with Sleaford Castle, Sleaford Holdingham, Sleaford Mareham and Sleaford Navigation wards being combined in a revised Sleaford division, and Sleaford Quarrington and Sleaford Westholme wards being combined with Leasingham & Roxholm ward to form a new Sleaford West & Leasingham division. We also proposed that Heckington, Kyme and Osbornby wards be combined to form a new Sleaford Rural South division. These proposals would provide coterminosity in all three divisions and would achieve comparable levels of electoral equality.

98 In the north of the district we noted that there was agreement in relation to proposed boundaries for Hykeham Forum, Waddington Heath and Washingborough & Heighington divisions, and we endorsed these proposals, which we considered would achieve a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and the reflection of the interests and identities of communities in the area. In the remainder of the district we considered that the balance of evidence supported the County Council's proposals, which we substantially endorsed. However, in the interests of seeking to achieve a higher level of coterminosity, we proposed departing from the County Council's scheme to include the whole of Ashby de la Launde ward in Ruskington & Cranwell division.

99 At Stage Three the County Council accepted our draft recommendations, although it proposed

modifying ward boundaries in the Sleaford area in the interests of providing better electoral equality and a “more straightforward and comprehensible boundary”. It proposed that Sleaford Castle ward should be transferred from Sleaford division to Sleaford West & Leasingham division, while Sleaford Westholme ward should be transferred from Sleaford West & Leasingham division to Sleaford division. It also proposed renaming the proposed Metheringham division as Billingham & Metheringham, the proposed Waddington Heath division as Bracebridge Heath & Waddington Heath and the proposed Washingborough & Heighington division as Heighington & Washingborough.

<sup>100</sup> Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats also supported our draft recommendations, although they endorsed the County Council’s proposed boundary modification between the proposed Sleaford and Sleaford West & Leasingham divisions. They proposed renaming the proposed Hykeham Forum division as Hykeham East division and the proposed Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South division as Hykeham West & Skellingthorpe. Lincolnshire Labour Group concurred with the majority of our draft recommendations in the district, but expressed concern about divisions in the Sleaford area. It proposed transferring Sleaford Mareham ward from Sleaford division to a new Leasingham & Sleaford South division, with Sleaford Westholme being transferred from the proposed Sleaford West & Leasingham division to Sleaford division.

<sup>101</sup> We also received seven representations from parish and town councils in North Kesteven. Branston & Mere Parish Council objected to being combined with areas which are situated “across the Heath”, separated from Branston by predominantly undeveloped land between the A607 and the B1188. Coleby Parish Council objected to our draft recommendations to include parts of Cliff Villages ward in Branston & Navenby division, and argued that the parishes in this area have no common interests or common identity with either Branston or Metheringham. Canwick, Heighington and Washingborough parish councils supported the proposed new Washingborough & Heighington ward, although Canwick Parish Council expressed concern at losing its name, and Heighington Parish Council argued that this division should be named Heighington & Washingborough to reflect the district ward with which it is coterminous. North Hykeham Town Council argued that, due to future projected growth in parts of North Hykeham, two

of North Hykeham wards should be combined with South Hykeham parish. Wilsford Parish Council opposed our draft recommendations on the grounds that it wished to retain its link with Leasingham and Rauceby wards.

<sup>102</sup> Having given careful consideration to the representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations have achieved broad support, and are confirming the proposed boundaries of Bassingham Rural, Branston & Navenby, Hykeham Forum, Metheringham, Ruskington & Cranwell, Skellingthorpe & Hykeham South, Sleaford Rural South, Waddington Heath and Washingborough & Heighington divisions. We have noted the concerns of Branston & Mere and Coleby parish councils regarding the proposed Branston & Navenby division, and sympathise with the views expressed. However, no alternative electoral arrangements have been put forward in this area which would reflect these concerns, and we have not been persuaded that alternative electoral arrangements would provide a better balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. We have also noted the views of North Hykeham Town Council, but note that their proposals are based on projected future growth outside the five-year period, which we cannot take into account.

<sup>103</sup> We note that there has been concern expressed in relation to proposed new county divisions in the Sleaford area, with the County Council, Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats and Lincolnshire Labour Group proposing alternative electoral arrangements. We accept that our proposed boundary between Sleaford and Sleaford West & Leasingham divisions would not follow a logical boundary, and agree that there is merit in modifying the boundary of this division. On balance, we consider that the County Council’s and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats’ proposals would achieve the best balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity, and propose endorsing this modification to our draft recommendations. We have considered Wilsford Parish Council’s proposal, but note that this would result in two further divisions not being coterminous with ward boundaries and, on balance, have not been persuaded by the evidence put forward.

<sup>104</sup> In addition, we have considered alternative division names. We consider that the proposal that Washingborough & Heighington division be renamed Heighington and Washingborough has

merit as the division is fully coterminous with the district ward of the same name. However, having considered other proposals for alternative division names, we have not been persuaded that they would better reflect the constituent communities of the divisions.

105 Under our final recommendations, which would result in seven of the 11 divisions being coterminous with whole district wards, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in only two divisions. However, as a result of future projected growth, electoral equality is projected to deteriorate by 2003, with five divisions expected to have electoral variances greater than 10 per cent. While electoral equality will deteriorate over the five-year period, we consider that this is unavoidable given projected future growth in the Sleaford and Hykeham areas.

### **South Holland district**

106 Under current arrangements South Holland district is represented by nine county councillors serving nine county divisions: Crowland Rural, Donington Rural, East Elloe, Holbeach, Holbeach Fen, Spalding Abbey, Spalding East & Weston, Spalding North West and West Elloe. Currently, the number of electors varies by more than 10 per cent from the county average in five divisions, two of which have electoral variances greater than 20 per cent. This level of electoral inequality is projected to deteriorate by 2003, with four divisions projected to have electoral variances greater than 20 per cent by 2003.

107 At Stage One the County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed that South Holland should continue to be represented by nine county councillors, and we concurred with this view. We also noted that both schemes combined Donington, Gosberton Village and Surfleet wards, Holbeach Hurn and Holbeach town wards, Spalding St John's and Spalding St Mary's wards, and Spalding Monkshouse and Spalding Wygate wards, and we concurred with these proposals, which we considered would represent the best balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity.

108 In the area surrounding Spalding we noted that there was broad similarity between the two schemes but, on balance, we were persuaded to endorse Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals for Crowland & Whaplode, Spalding East & Moulton and Pinchbeck & Spalding North

divisions on the grounds that these proposals would provide better electoral equality and coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards.

109 We expressed reservations regarding the County Council's and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals in the east of the district, and we therefore proposed our own electoral arrangements. We proposed combining Sutton Bridge ward with the parishes of Long Sutton and Little Sutton to form a new Sutton Elloe division, with Fleet, Gedney and The Saints wards being combined with the parishes of Tydd St Mary and Lutton to form a new Holbeach Rural division. While we noted that Long Sutton ward would be split between two divisions, we considered that this was unavoidable if we were to achieve the best possible balance between electoral equality and reflecting the interests and identities of local communities in the area.

110 At Stage Three our draft recommendations were supported by the County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats. However, the County Council proposed renaming the proposed Holbeach Rural division as Gedney Rural and the proposed Spalding Elloe division as Pinchbeck & Deeping St Nicholas, while Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed renaming the proposed Holbeach Rural division as Gedney Fen, the proposed Spalding Elloe division as Spalding Pinchbeck and the proposed Sutton Elloe division as Long Sutton Bridge. No other submissions were received.

111 Having given careful consideration to representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations have received strong local support and, in the absence of opposing views, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations in this area as final. While we have considered the issue of the names of divisions, we note that there is no evidence of significant opposition to our draft recommendations or that proposed new division names would necessarily command local support. We therefore confirm our proposed new division names as final.

112 Under our final recommendations, which would result in seven of the nine divisions being coterminous with whole district wards, the number of electors would only vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in one division, both initially and in 2003.

## South Kesteven district

113 Under current arrangements South Kesteven district is represented by 14 county councillors serving 14 divisions: Bourne Abbey, Bourne Castle, Devon & St Johns, Earlesfield, Folkingham Rural, Grantham North, Grantham South, Grantham West, Grimsthorpe, Harrowby, Hough, Stamford North, Stamford South and The Deepings. Currently there is a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance in the district, with the number of electors varying by more than 10 per cent from the county average in nine divisions, and by more than 20 per cent in seven divisions. Five divisions have electoral variances greater than 30 per cent. This level of electoral inequality is not projected to improve over the five-year period.

114 At Stage One the County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed that the number of county councillors representing South Kesteven should be increased to 15, and, as this would be commensurate with its proportion of the county's electorate, we concurred with this view. There was also considerable agreement in relation to the boundaries of divisions, with identical arrangements proposed in seven of the 15 divisions. In the north of the district there was agreement in relation to four of the proposed divisions, albeit using different names, with both schemes combining Barrowby and Earlesfield wards, Belmont and Harrowby wards, Grantham St John's and St Anne's wards and Heath, Lovedon, Saxonwell and Witham Valley wards. We concurred with this consensus which, in our judgement, achieved the best possible balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity.

115 The difference between the two schemes in Grantham and its surrounding area related to which of the Grantham town wards should be combined with the adjoining Ermine and Peascliffe wards. The County Council proposed that St Wulfram's ward should be combined with these two wards, to be named Grantham North division, with Green Hill and Greyfriars wards forming a new Grantham North West division, while Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed that Green Hill ward should be combined with these two wards, to be named Grantham West & Great Gonnerby division, with St Wulfram's and Greyfriars wards forming a revised Grantham North division. While Lincolnshire Liberal

Democrats' proposals would have provided a better level of electoral equality in this area, we expressed reservations about the extent to which Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposed urban and rural combination would satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area. In particular, we noted that Green Hill ward is situated in the west of Grantham, and would not appear to be easily linked with rural parishes to the north. Accordingly, we endorsed the County Council's proposals for this area which, in our judgement, while providing marginally worse electoral equality, better reflected the interests and identities of communities in the area.

116 In the south of the district there was agreement in relation to three divisions, albeit using different division names, with both proposals combining Bourne West and Thurlby wards and proposing that Deeping St James and Stamford North wards should each form a county division on its existing ward boundaries. We proposed reflecting this consensus, which we considered achieved the best possible balance between securing electoral equality and the statutory criteria and coterminosity in this area, and would result in all three divisions being coterminous with the boundaries of wards.

117 In the remainder of the district we noted that both proposals would retain a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance: under the County Council's proposals there would be 22 per cent more electors in the proposed Grimsthorpe division and 30 per cent more electors than the average in the proposed Stamford South division while under Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals the proposed Market & West Deeping and Stamford West divisions would each have 24 per cent more electors than the average. We considered the possibility of alternative warding arrangements in this area, but concluded that the only way to avoid this level of electoral inequality would be through further warding of parishes in this area which, we decided, would lead to unnecessary confusion, and would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government.

118 On balance, we decided to endorse Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats' proposals for the remaining divisions in the district which, we considered, would provide the better level of electoral equality of the two proposals, and would result in coterminosity in all six remaining divisions, in contrast with the County Council's proposals

which would result in five divisions comprising parts of wards.

<sup>119</sup> At Stage Three the County Council accepted the majority of our draft recommendations and, in particular, noted that the proposed Stamford West division is the only alternative to the large Stamford South division. However, it argued that our proposals in the south of the district would result in the proposed Market & West Deeping division having a significantly lower electorate than the county average, and the proposed Colsterworth Rural division having a significantly larger electorate than the county average, with an “exceedingly elongated geographical area”. It therefore proposed transferring Langtoft parish from Truesdale ward to the proposed Market & West Deeping division, with the remainder of Truesdale ward being combined with St Mary’s and Hillside wards to form a new Stamford Rural division. Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations, although they proposed renaming the proposed Grantham Barrowby division as Grantham West. Lincolnshire Labour Group expressed concern regarding the grouping of Barrowby and Earlesfield wards to form Grantham Barrowby division. It argued that the area is split by the A1. Grantham and Stamford Conservative Association supported the increased number of councillors for South Kesteven district, and, in principle, accepted proposals for Grantham and Bourne wards, and Deeping St James, Hough, and Stamford North and West divisions. It noted that two large rural divisions and one small urban division were proposed in the south of the district, with poor electoral variances. It therefore supported the County Council’s proposals for Market & West Deeping and Stamford Rural wards.

<sup>120</sup> We received eight representations from parish and town councils in South Kesteven. Baston Parish Council agreed in principle with our draft recommendations, although it expressed concern at the proposed combination of its parish with Stamford. Braceborough & Wilsthorpe Parish Council expressed concern at being included in the proposed Colsterworth Rural ward. It argued that parishes in the south of the district have very little in common with parishes in the north of the district, and that it would prefer to be combined with the parishes of Greatford, Barholm with Stowe, West Deeping, Uffington and Tallington. Folkingham Parish Council objected to the size of the proposed Folkingham Rural division. Castle Bytham Parish Council argued that it would prefer to be combined with Little Bytham and Carey

rather than villages to the west of the A1. Deeping St James and Market Deeping parish and town councils supported our draft recommendations. Heydour Parish Council supported the proposed increase in the number of county councillors representing South Kesteven, although it expressed concern at the size of rural divisions in the west of the county. Thurlby Parish Council had no comment to make.

<sup>121</sup> A local councillor expressed concern about the size of Folkingham Rural and Colsterworth Rural divisions. He supported the County Council’s proposals for Market & West Deeping and Stamford Rural divisions. He also suggested dividing Glen Eden district ward between Colsterworth Rural and Folkingham Rural divisions.

<sup>122</sup> Having carefully considered representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations have been broadly supported, subject to concern in relation to the size of the proposed Colsterworth Rural and Folkingham Rural divisions. On balance, we propose endorsing our draft recommendations, subject to adopting the modification proposed by the County Council for changes in the south of the district. While this proposal would result in two divisions not being coterminous with the boundaries of wards, we have been persuaded that this proposal would provide a better balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. In particular, we note that our draft recommendations would result in two rural divisions covering large geographical areas, while there would be a small urban division (Market & West Deeping) which would have 30 per cent fewer electors than the county average. We also note that this proposal would address a number of concerns expressed at Stage Three, including those of a local councillor, Grantham & Stamford Conservative Association and Braceborough & Wilsthorpe Parish Council.

<sup>123</sup> We have carefully considered concerns relating to the proposed Folkingham Rural division, but we have not been persuaded that alternative county divisions would provide a better balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. Similarly, while we note that concern has been expressed in relation to proposed new county divisions in the Grantham area, no alternative county divisions have been proposed at Stage Three, and we have not been persuaded that alternative arrangements are available which would provide a better balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity.

<sup>124</sup> Under our final recommendations, which would result in coterminosity in 13 of the 15 divisions, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in four divisions, two of which, as already indicated, would have electoral imbalances greater than 20 per cent. This level of electoral equality would remain relatively constant over the five-year period.

## **West Lindsey district**

<sup>125</sup> Under current arrangements West Lindsey is represented by 10 county councillors serving 10 divisions: Bardney & Cherry Willingham, Caenby, Gainsborough East, Gainsborough North, Gainsborough Rural North, Gainsborough Rural South, Gainsborough South, Nettleham & Saxilby, North Wolds and Rasen Wolds. Currently there is a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance in the district, with the number of electors varying by more than 10 per cent from the county average in six divisions, four of which have electoral variances greater than 20 per cent.

<sup>126</sup> At Stage One the County Council proposed reducing the number of county councillors for the district to nine, although it provided no evidence to support its proposals. It proposed separate representation for Gainsborough town, with Gainsborough Hill division comprising Gainsborough East ward and that part of Gainsborough North ward lying east of the railway line to Grimsby, and Gainsborough Trent division comprising Gainsborough South ward and that part of Gainsborough North ward lying west of the railway line. In the remainder of the district the County Council proposed combining rural wards.

<sup>127</sup> Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats proposed retaining 10 county councillors for the district. They proposed that there should be three divisions covering Gainsborough town, with Gainsborough North ward forming a division on its own right, Gainsborough East ward being combined with Hemswell ward to form a new Gainsborough East & Hemswell division, and Gainsborough South West ward being combined with Lea and Torksey wards to form a new Gainsborough South West & Torksey division. They also proposed combining Scotter and Thonock wards to form a revised Scotter Rural division. In the remainder of the district they proposed combining rural wards to form new divisions.

<sup>128</sup> The Labour Group argued that there was “strong opinion locally” that people in

Gainsborough town would be best served by the town being divided into two divisions. While it noted that this would result in at least one of the three wards being split, it indicated that it would support an “arrangement which would satisfy local feelings”. The Liberal Democrat Group opposed Gainsborough town being combined with neighbouring “dissimilar rural wards”, and proposed that it should be divided into two divisions, with the boundary following either the Retford to Barnetby railway line or the A156 and A159 roads. Gainsborough Conservatives proposed identical warding arrangements to the County Council’s proposals. West Lindsey District Council expressed concern at the County Council’s initial consultation proposals on the grounds that “insufficient attention” had been given to achieving coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards. Also, as indicated earlier, it expressed “some concern” about the projected electorate figures for the district.

<sup>129</sup> We also received a submission from Kirkby-cum-Osgodby Parish Council, which proposed remaining in the same county division as Market Rasen town, arguing that the River Ancholme forms a natural barrier to the west. This view was endorsed by Edward Leigh, MP for Gainsborough.

<sup>130</sup> In our draft recommendations report we noted that the key consideration related to the number of county councillors to which West Lindsey should be entitled. As already indicated, we concluded that each district area should have a level of representation on the County Council that is commensurate with the district’s proportion of the county electorate, which in the case of West Lindsey is 10. On the evidence received at Stage One we were not persuaded that West Lindsey warranted a reduction in its current level of representation, and we therefore did not propose adopting the County Council’s proposals in the district. We considered Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats’ proposals, but we noted that their proposals would result in Gainsborough town being combined with outlying areas, and we were not persuaded that this proposal would command local support.

<sup>131</sup> Accordingly, in the absence of an electoral scheme that retained 10 county councillors and separate representation for Gainsborough town, we proposed our own electoral scheme. However, in all but three divisions we reflected proposals for the boundaries of county divisions put forward at Stage One. As already indicated, we consider that

Gainsborough town should be separately represented from neighbouring areas, and endorsed the proposal to split Gainsborough town between two divisions – Gainsborough Hill and Gainsborough Trent – with the boundary following the railway line to Grimsby.

132 In the area surrounding Gainsborough town we proposed combining Scotter and Thonock wards, as proposed by Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats, to be named Scotter Rural division. We also proposed combining Lea, Scampton, Stow and Torksey wards to form a revised Gainsborough Rural South division, and combining Nettleham and Saxilby wards to form a Nettleham & Saxilby division, as proposed by the County Council. In the east of the district we proposed combining Caistor, Kelsey and Yarborough wards to form a revised North Wolds division, as proposed by the County Council and Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats, and combining Market Rasen and Wold View wards to form a revised Market Rasen Wolds division, as proposed by Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats.

133 In the remainder of the district we proposed our own electoral arrangements: combining Hemswell, Waddingham & Spital and Middle Rasen wards to form a new Ancholme Cliff division; combining Dunholme, Sudbrooke and Welton wards to form a new Welton Rural division; and combining Bardney, Cherry Willingham and Fiskerton wards to form a revised Bardney & Cherry Willingham division. While we accepted that the proposal to combine Hemswell, Waddingham & Spital and Middle Rasen wards would prove contentious, since the proposed division would be bisected by the A15, we did not receive evidence persuading us that alternative warding arrangements would satisfactorily achieve the correct level of representation in the district and retain separate representation for Gainsborough town.

134 At Stage Three the County Council accepted our draft recommendations, subject to renaming the proposed Gainsborough Rural South division as West Lindsey South, while Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats and West Lindsey District Council supported our draft recommendations. The District Council also argued that Gainsborough Town Council should be represented by 18 town councillors.

135 We received 11 representations from parish and town councils in West Lindsey. Faldingworth and Scothern parish councils supported the proposed

Welton Rural division, although both expressed concern in relation to the division name. Fiskerton Parish Council supported West Lindsey district being covered by 10 county divisions and, in particular, supported the proposed Bardney division. Gainsborough Town Council supported Gainsborough town being represented by two county councillors, and argued that the Town Council should continue to be represented by 18 town councillors. Glentham and Hemswell parish councils supported our draft recommendations, while Glentworth Parish Council agreed that Lincolnshire should be represented by 77 county councillors, with Lincoln and West Lindsey being represented by an equal number of councillors. It also supported our proposals in this area in preference to those of Lincolnshire Liberal Democrats. Kirkby-cum-Osgodby Parish Council reiterated its opposition to being included in a ward that would comprise distinct parishes. Middle Rasen Parish Council objected to our proposals, and proposed that the parish be included in the proposed Market Rasen Wolds division. Nettleham Parish Council objected to the proposal to retain the existing arrangements for Nettleham and Saxilby, and preferred to be linked with closer villages such as Welton, Cherry Willingham or Sudbrooke. Torksey Parish Council argued that there should be no change to the existing arrangements. It also considered that we should have regard to projected future growth over a 10-year period rather than only five years.

136 We also received proposals from two residents. One resident objected to our draft recommendations in so far as they affected Middle Rasen parish on the grounds that Middle Rasen and West Rasen are tied “in terms of population, social and economic community” with other villages to the west of the Wolds. Another resident supported our proposals combining the parishes of Cherry Willingham and Fiskerton.

137 Having given careful consideration to representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations have been broadly supported, and we are content to endorse them as final. While concern has been expressed in relation to the proposed Ancholme Cliff division, we note that no alternative scheme has been put forward, and we remain of the opinion that alternative county divisions would neither satisfactorily achieve the correct level of representation in the district nor retain separate representation for Gainsborough town. Similarly, while we have considered the concerns expressed by Nettleham

and Torksey parish councils, we note that no alternative arrangements have been put forward.

138 While we have considered the issue of the names of divisions, we do not consider that there is sufficient evidence to justify any departure from the division names put forward in our draft recommendations report.

139 Under our final recommendations, which would result in eight of the 10 divisions being coterminous with whole district wards, the number of electors would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in three divisions, both initially and in 2003.

## Conclusions

140 Having considered all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we propose that:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 76 to 77, serving 77 divisions;
- (b) changes should be made to the boundaries of 71 of the existing divisions.

141 We have decided to substantially endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) In North Kesteven district, Sleaford Castle ward should be transferred from Sleaford division to

Sleaford West & Leasingham division. Sleaford Westholme ward should be transferred from Sleaford West & Leasingham division to Sleaford division. Washingborough & Heighington division should be renamed Heighington & Washingborough.

- (b) In South Kesteven district, Langtoft parish should be transferred from Stamford Rural division to Market & West Deeping division. The remainder of Truesdale ward (without Langtoft parish) should be combined with St Mary's ward and Hillsides ward to form a new Stamford Rural division. Further to amendments to Stamford Rural division, a new Colsterworth Rural division should comprise Forest ward, Isaac Newton ward and Morkery ward.
- (c) In Lincoln city, the names of the proposed Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge and Hartsholme divisions should all be prefixed by Lincoln.

142 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2003.

143 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Lincolnshire County Council would result in a reduction in the number of divisions with an electoral variance of more than 20 per cent from the county average from 22 to five. By 2003 only three divisions are forecast to vary by more than 20

Figure 4 :  
*Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors/divisions	76	77	76	77
Average number of electors	6,423	6,340	6,635	6,553
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	43	21	43	26
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	22	5	27	3

per cent from the average. Our final recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2 and the large map inserted at the back of this report.

### **Final Recommendation**

Lincolnshire County Council should comprise 77 councillors serving the same number of divisions, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2 and illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of the report.

## **Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

<sup>144</sup> In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Local Government Act. The Schedule provides that, if a parish is to be divided between different county divisions, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division of the county. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for Gainsborough parish to reflect the proposed county divisions in the town.

<sup>145</sup> Gainsborough Town Council is currently represented by 18 town councillors covering three town wards, with Gainsborough East ward being represented by six councillors, Gainsborough North ward being represented by seven councillors and Gainsborough South West being represented by five councillors. However, in our draft recommendations report, in order to reflect broad local agreement that Gainsborough town should continue to be separately represented on the County Council, we further divided Gainsborough North district and town ward between two divisions, Gainsborough North East and Gainsborough North West town wards. We therefore proposed that Gainsborough Town Council should comprise 12 town councillors, representing four town wards, with Gainsborough East and Gainsborough South West wards each being represented by four town councillors and Gainsborough North East and Gainsborough North West wards each being represented by two town councillors.

<sup>146</sup> At Stage Three we received representations from West Lindsey District Council and Gainsborough Town Council. They argued that

Gainsborough Town Council should retain 18 town councillors, with Gainsborough East ward returning six town councillors, Gainsborough North-East ward returning two town councillors, Gainsborough South-West and Gainsborough North-West wards returning five town councillors. No other representations were received.

<sup>147</sup> Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to endorse the views of West Lindsey District Council and Gainsborough Town Council.

### **Final Recommendation**

Gainsborough Town Council should comprise 18 town councillors, representing four town wards, with Gainsborough East ward returning six councillors, Gainsborough North-East ward returning two councillors,

## 6. NEXT STEPS

148 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements for Lincolnshire County Council and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

149 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

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

The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Sponsorship Division  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU



# APPENDIX A

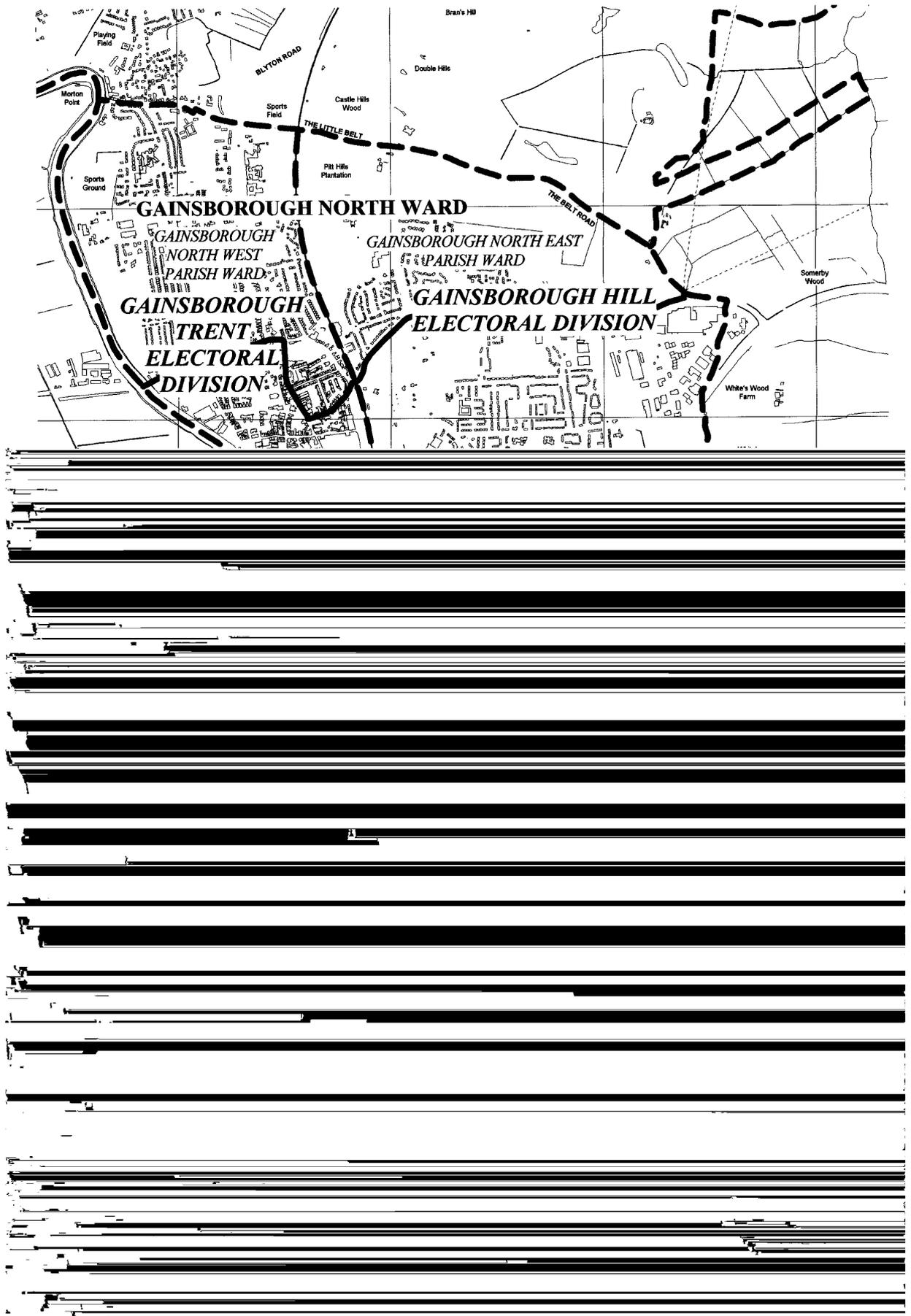
## Final Recommendations for Lincolnshire: Mapping

**Map A1** illustrates the proposed warding arrangements in the north of Lincoln.

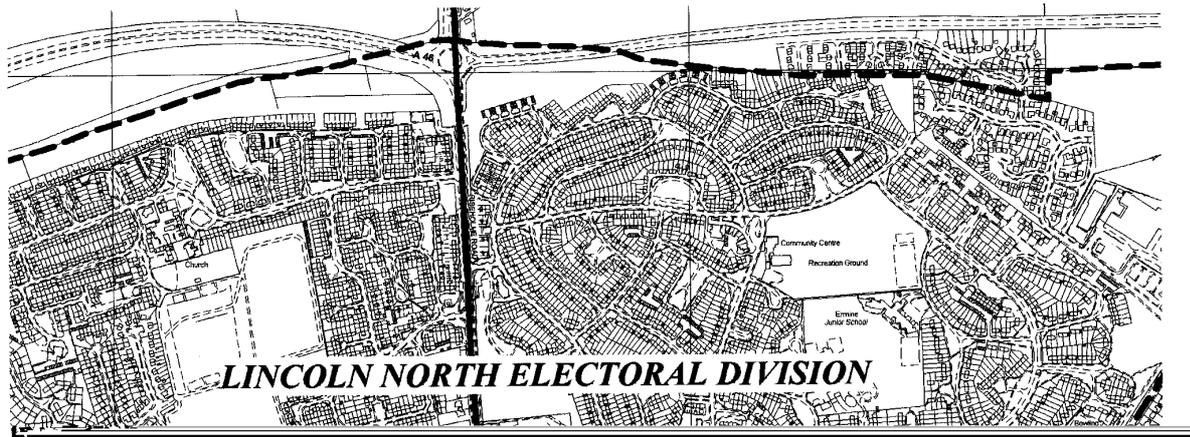
**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding arrangements in Gainsborough town.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates, in outline form, the Commission's proposed divisions for Lincolnshire, including constituent district wards and parishes.

Map A1:  
*Proposed Warding Arrangements in the North of Lincoln*



Map A2:  
*Proposed Warding Arrangements in Gainsborough Town*





# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Lincolnshire

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of a number of divisions, where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other changes from draft to final recommendations, which are not included in Figure B1, are that we propose that Washingborough & Heighington division should be renamed Heighington & Washingborough, and the names of the proposed Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge and Hartsholme divisions should be prefixed by Lincoln.

*Figure B1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Constituent district wards</b>
<b>NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>	
39 Sleaford	Sleaford Castle ward; Sleaford Holdingham ward; Sleaford Mareham ward; Sleaford Navigation ward
41 Sleaford West & Leasingham	Leasingham & Roxholm ward; Sleaford Quarrington ward; Sleaford Westholme ward
<b>SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>	
55 Colsterworth Rural	Forest ward; Hillsides ward; Isaac Newton ward; Morkery ward
64 Market & West Deeping	Market & West Deeping ward
66 Stamford Rural	St Mary's ward; Truesdale ward

*Note: The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the seven Lincolnshire districts and boroughs which were completed in 1997. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.*

Figure B2:

*The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward*

<b>Division name (by district council area)</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Electorate (1998)</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>	<b>Electorate (2003)</b>	<b>Variance from average %</b>
<b>NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
39 Sleaford	1	6,331	0	7,248	11
41 Sleaford West & Leasingham	1	5,129	-19	5,759	-12
<b>SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT</b>					
55 Colsterworth Rural	1	6,520	3	6,647	1
64 Market & West Deeping	1	4,843	-24	4,801	-27
66 Stamford Rural	1	6,626	5	7,096	8

*Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lincolnshire County Council.*

*Note: The electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor as each division is represented by a single councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*



