

# Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Barnsley

*February 2003*

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# What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to The Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to The Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

We are required by law to review the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England. Our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils.



# Summary

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Barnsley on 8 May 2002.

- **This report summarises the submissions we received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.**

We found that the current arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Barnsley:

- **in 11 of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the borough average and five wards vary by more than 20% from the average;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 11 wards and by more than 20% in six wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 107-108) are that:

- **Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council should have 63 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, instead of 22 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 22 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one, and no ward should retain its existing boundaries.**

The purpose of these proposals is to ensure that, in future, each borough councillor represents approximately the same number of electors, bearing in mind local circumstances.

- **In all of the proposed 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to continue with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

Recommendations are also made for changes to parish and town council electoral arrangements which provide for:

- **revised warding arrangements for Penistone Parish;**
- **new warding arrangements for Tankersley parish.**

This report sets out our draft recommendations on which comments are invited.

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 11 February 2003. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission that will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**

- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 8 April 2003:

**Team Leader  
Barnsley Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large Map reference
1	Central	3	Part of Ardsley ward, part of Central ward, part of North West ward, part of South West ward	4 and 5
2	Cudworth	3	Part of Cudworth ward, part of Monk Bretton ward	4 and 7
3	Darfield	3	The parishes of Billingley and Little Houghton, part of Darfield ward, part of Wombwell North ward, part of Wombwell South ward	4, 5 and 7
4	Darton East	3	Part of Darton ward, part of Dodworth ward	4
5	Darton West	3	Part of Darton ward, part of Dodworth ward, part of North West ward	2 and 4
6	Dearne North	3	Part of Dearne South ward, part of Dearne Thurnscoe ward	7
7	Dearne South	3	Part of Dearne South ward, part of Dearne Thurnscoe ward	7
8	Dodworth	3	Part of Dodworth ward, part of South West ward, part of Park ward	4 and 5
9	Kingstone	3	Part of Central ward, part of Park ward, part of South West ward	5
10	Hoyland Milton	3	Part of Hoyland East ward, part of Hoyland West ward, part of Wombwell South ward	5 and 6
11	Monk Bretton	3	Part of Athersley ward, part of Monk Bretton, part of Royston ward	4 and 5
12	North East	3	The parishes of Brierley, Great Houghton and Shafton	4 and 7
13	Old Town	3	Part of North West ward, part of Monk Bretton ward, part of South West ward	4 and 5
14	Penistone East	3	The parishes of Cawthorne, High Hoyland, Hunshef, Oxspring, Thurgoland, Silkstone, Stainborough, Wortley, part of Penistone parish; the proposed parish ward of Hoylandswaine, part of Tankersley parish; the proposed West parish ward	2,3,4,5 and 6
15	Penistone West	3	The parishes of Dunford, Gunthwaite & Ingbirchworth Langsett, part of Penistone parish; the proposed parish wards of Cubley, Penistone Town, Spring Vale & Green Road, Thurlstone & Millhouse and Wentworth & Wellhouse	1,2 and 3
16	Rockingham	3	Part Hoyland West ward, part Hoyland East ward, part of Tankersley parish; the proposed East parish ward	5 and 6
17	Royston	3	Part of Royston ward	4
18	St Helen's	3	Part of Athersley ward, part of Monk Bretton ward, part of Darton ward, part of North West ward, part of Royston ward	4
19	Stairfoot	3	Part of Ardsley ward, part of Darfield ward, part of Park ward, part of Worsbrough ward, part of Wombwell North ward, part of Wombwell South ward	5

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large Map reference</b>
20	Wombwell	3	Part of Wombwell North ward, part of Wombwell South ward	5 and 7
21	Worsbrough	3	Part of Hoyland West ward, part of Wombwell South ward, part of Worsbrough ward, part of Park ward	5

*Notes:*

- 1) *The east and west of the borough are parished.*
- 2) *The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*

Table 2: Draft recommendations for Barnsley

	Ward name	No. of councillors	Electorate 2001	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate 2006	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Central	3	7,873	2,624	-4	7,913	2,638	-5
2	Cudworth	3	7,892	2,631	-4	8,104	2,701	-2
3	Darfield	3	7,543	2,514	-8	7,485	2,495	-10
4	Darton East	3	8,452	2,817	3	8,387	2,796	1
5	Darton West	3	8,080	2,693	-1	8,008	2,669	-3
6	Dearne North	3	8,259	2,753	1	8,812	2,937	6
7	Dearne South	3	8,372	2,791	2	8,908	2,969	7
8	Dodworth	3	7,922	2,641	-3	7,836	2,682	-3
9	Kingstone	3	8,165	2,722	0	8,047	2,682	-3
10	Hoyland Milton	3	8,625	2,875	5	8,925	2,975	8
11	Monk Bretton	3	8,290	2,763	1	8,166	2,722	-1
12	North East	3	8,453	2,818	3	8,919	2,973	8
13	Old Town	3	7,776	2,592	-5	8,200	2,733	-1
14	Penistone East	3	8,751	2,917	7	8,902	2,967	7
15	Penistone West	3	8,252	2,751	1	8,437	2,812	2
16	Rockingham	3	8,485	2,828	4	8,638	2,879	4
17	Royston	3	8,189	2,730	0	8,107	2,702	-2
18	St Helen's	3	8,089	2,696	-1	8,115	2,705	-2
19	Stairfoot	3	8,372	2,791	2	7,920	2,640	-4
20	Wombwell	3	8,386	2,795	2	8,387	2,796	1
21	Worsbrough	3	7,764	2,588	-5	7,622	2,541	-8
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>171,990</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>173,838</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,730</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,759</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Barnsley Borough Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. 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 proposals for the electoral arrangements for the metropolitan borough of Barnsley, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the four metropolitan boroughs in South Yorkshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. The programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Barnsley. Barnsley's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in November 1977 (Report no. 264).

3 In carrying out these metropolitan reviews we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
  - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
  - secure effective and convenient local government; and
  - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Barnsley is being conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews* (published by the Electoral Commission in July 2002). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

5 Our task is to make recommendations to The Electoral Commission on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish councils in the borough.

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole. Schemes that would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. 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 electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit on the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution

of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

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

*Table 3: Stages of the review*

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>
One	Submission of proposals to us
Two	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to The Electoral Commission

10 Stage One began on 8 May 2002, when we wrote to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified South Yorkshire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, National Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 28 August 2002.

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

12 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 11 February 2003 and will end on 7 April 2003, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

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

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

14 The metropolitan borough of Barnsley is a thriving market town that is served by good transport access to all parts of the country.

15 The borough contains 18 parishes, but Barnsley town itself is unparished. Barnsley town comprises 24% of the borough total electorate.

16 The electorate of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough is presently 171,958 (December 2001) and is projected to increase to 173,807 by 2006. The Council currently has 66 members who are elected from 22 wards.

17 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,605 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,633 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 11 of the 22 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average, five wards by more than 20% and four wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in Darton ward where the councillor represents 40% more electors than the borough average.

18 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the borough average in percentage terms. In the text that follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

*Map 1: Existing wards in Barnsley*

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements

	Ward name	No. of councillors	Electorate 2001	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate 2006	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Ardsley	3	6,661	2,220	-15	6,343	2,114	-20
2	Arthersley	3	6,188	2,063	-21	6,096	2,032	-23
3	Brierley	3	6,696	2,232	-14	7,003	2,334	-11
4	Central	3	8,336	2,779	7	8,223	2,741	4
5	Cudworth	3	7,847	2,616	0	8,060	2,687	2
6	Darfield	3	7,987	2,662	2	8,046	2,682	2
7	Darton	3	10,946	3,649	40	10,840	3,613	37
8	Dearne South	3	8,807	2,936	13	9,841	3,280	25
9	Dearne Thurnscoe	3	7,824	2,608	0	7,879	2,626	0
10	Dodworth	3	10,749	3,583	38	10,686	3,562	35
11	Hoyland East	3	8,117	2,706	4	8,382	2,794	6
12	Hoyland West	3	6,609	2,203	-15	6,759	2,253	-14
13	Monk Bretton	3	8,260	2,753	6	8,699	2,900	10
14	North West	3	7,079	2,360	-9	7,100	2,367	-10
15	Park	3	5,407	1,802	-31	5,404	1,801	-32
16	Penistone East	3	8,133	2,711	4	8,235	2,745	4
17	Penistone West	3	9,054	3,018	16	9,283	3,094	18
18	Royston	3	9,204	3,068	18	9,106	3,035	15
19	South West	3	7,335	2,445	-6	7,231	2,410	-8
20	Wombwell North	3	5,020	1,673	-36	4,924	1,641	-38
21	Wombwell South	3	8,160	2,720	4	8,266	2,755	5
22	Worsbrough	3	7,539	2,513	-4	7,401	2,467	-6
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>171,958</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>173,807</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,605</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.*

Note: *The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Wombwell North ward were relatively over-represented by -36%, while electors in Darton ward were relatively under-represented by 40%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*



### 3 Submissions received

19 At the start of the review members of the public and other interested parties were invited to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

20 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the BCFE visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 37 representations during Stage One, including four borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrat Group, the Independent councillors and one local resident, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council.

#### Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

21 The Borough Council proposed a council size of 63 members, three less than at present, representing 21 wards, as compared to the existing 22 wards.

#### The Liberal Democrats

22 The Liberal Democrat Group on the council submitted a scheme proposing 60 members representing 20 wards.

#### The Independent Group

23 The Independent Borough Councillors Group on the council proposed a similar scheme of 60 members representing 20 wards.

#### Parish and town councils

24 Penistone Parish Council expressed support for the Borough Council's proposed ward warding of the parish. Tankersley Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposed warding of the parish. Wortley Parish Council proposed amendments to its present parish boundaries. Cawthorne Parish Council stated it was satisfied with existing arrangements.

#### Other representations

25 A local resident proposed a borough wide scheme based on 60 members. A Stainborough parish councillor objected to the Borough Council's proposals to place the Hood Green settlement in the proposed Dodworth ward. A Penistone Town Councillor objected to the Borough Council's proposals and particularly the transfer of the Hoylandswaine settlement from Penistone West ward. One resident supported the Borough Council's proposals.

26 Nine residents objected to the Borough Council's proposals to divide the present South West ward. Four residents objected to the Borough Council's proposed transfer of Stainborough parish incorporating the Hood Green settlement into the proposed Dodworth ward. One resident submitted 227 proforma letters objecting to the Borough Council's proposal to place Stainborough parish in the proposed Dodworth ward. Two residents objected the proposed ward name of Monk Bretton.

27 One resident objected to the Borough Council's proposals to ward Tankersley parish, and expressed a preference for a 20-ward scheme retaining the present South West ward.

One resident proposed Brierley Town Council be abolished. Two residents supported the Independent Councillors' scheme. Three residents objected to the Borough Council's proposals for Great Houghton parish.

28 Another resident opposed the Borough Council's proposed North West ward. Two residents objected to the Borough Council's proposal to amend the boundaries between the wards of Wombwell North and Wombwell South.

## 4 Analysis and draft recommendations

**29 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Barnsley and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, ward names, and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.**

30 As described earlier, the prime aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Barnsley is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended): the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being 'as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough'.

31 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place over the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

32 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme that results in exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

33 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for an authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be considered and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

### Electorate forecasts

34 Since 1975 there has been a 5% increase in the electorate of Barnsley. However, between 1994 and 2001 there has been no substantial growth overall. Development arising from regeneration initiatives has resulted in a shift of electors towards the regenerated areas, with the knock-on effect of many wards being substantially under-represented. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 2% from 171,958 to 173,807 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006.

35 In order to prepare these forecasts, the Borough Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

36 The three remaining borough-wide schemes each provided slightly different electorate forecasts for 2006. However, the Borough Council advised that due to the detailed computation of electorates below polling district level, and the use of enumeration district data derived from General Practitioner registers, there would be a small increase of 32 members for both 2001 and 2006 from its original forecast. However, it further stated that it continued to support its

overall electorate forecast increase for 2006. The Borough Council projected that most growth in the borough will occur in the present Dearne South ward.

37 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the Borough Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

## Council size

38 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council presently has 66 members representing 22 wards. The Borough Council proposed a council size of 63 members representing 21 wards. The three separate schemes submitted by the Liberal Democrats, the independent councillors and one local resident, each proposed 60 members representing 20 wards.

39 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council adopted a new political management system in February 1999 and stated that its decision making process was more efficient and streamlined as a result. This modernised system includes a nine-member cabinet, including the Leader of the Borough Council, that operates the executive functions within the borough council. Members not in the Cabinet retain a representative function on nine Area Forums. These each cover two or three of the present 22 wards and provide forums for discourse between the public and Borough Council.

40 The Borough Council retains six scrutiny commissions that give councillors the opportunity to hold decisions and practices of the Cabinet and other agencies to account. The Borough Council stated that the scrutiny process has been recognised as very successful. The Borough Council also retains four regulatory boards that exercise quasi-judicial functions. It stated that although these boards do not meet as frequently as other elements of the modernised political management structure, they still placed significant demands on councillors' time.

41 The full Borough Council meets once a month combining the roles of decision-making, representation and scrutiny. As the sovereign policy making and budget setting body, it sets the parameters within which the Cabinet must operate. Finally the Borough Council stated councillors are involved in quasi-official structures that take up significant demands on the time of elected members. These include ward surgeries, school governing bodies and inter agency partnerships.

42 The Borough Council stated there was no evidence that the modernised political management structure had given councillors a lighter workload. It argued that councillors collectively now made a more meaningful contribution to the governance of Barnsley. It further stated that councillors spent in excess of 21 hours per week on borough council/community related work. The Borough Council stated if the numbers of councillors fell below the range of 60–66, the ability to represent their constituents and properly hold the executive to account would be impaired.

43 For example, it stated that the scrutiny commissions are currently served by 22 elected members and 11 co-opted members each. The Borough Council stated the elected members are drawn from the non-executive councillors, and in those wards where one of the councillors is in the cabinet the remaining non-cabinet members would have to serve on three or four commissions in lieu of their executive councillor colleagues. It further stated that a significant reduction in council size would either increase the workload or alternatively reduce the size of the commissions, which since modernisation have proved to be very effective. Further to this, it stated that the number of co-optees would decrease in order to maintain the current member/co-optee ratio, thereby reducing the opportunities for community involvement in the process.

44 The Borough Council further argued that a significant reduction in councillors would have a detrimental effect on the representational workload of councillors, as the demand arising from ward related activities would not diminish in proportion to the decrease in councillors. It stated that with non-executive members covering for cabinet members, there would have to be a reduction in the number of cabinet members to reduce the workload. It argued that the net effect would be the diminution of decision-making capacity and reduced engagement with constituents.

45 In relation to ward surgeries, the Borough Council argued that with fewer wards and councillors the present frequency of one surgery a week would be insufficient. It argued that larger wards with fewer councillors would need a higher frequency of surgeries to allow the varied communities sufficient access to their representatives. It also stated that the Area Forums would be difficult to operate under wards that covered even greater geographical areas, due to cultural resistance of different communities being subsumed into larger entities. Again it argued that such disengagement would only be offset by the increase in the frequency of Area Forum meetings, however this would also place a heavy burden on the remaining councillors.

46 The Borough Council stated that given the present substantial workload of the councillors, the optimal size for the council should be within the range of 60–66 members. However, it further commented that any significant reduction in council size would not reflect the views expressed by the public during the Borough Council's consultation exercise, and that due to the geographical configuration of Barnsley a radical reduction in the number of wards could not be justified.

47 The Borough Council's starting point was to agree that it operated effectively under the current council size of 66 members. However, having explored a range of options from 66, 63 and 60 members and giving consideration to the new internal political management structure, electoral equality and community identity it concluded that the Borough Council would operate most effectively under a council size of 63 members.

48 The Borough Council therefore proposed a minor reduction to 63 members representing 21 wards. It argued that this option would ensure the continuity of modernised political management arrangements, provide better levels of electoral equality and ensure ward boundaries that reflected community identity. It concluded that proposed 63 member scheme provided better levels of electoral equality and resulted in fewer ward boundary changes. Under this proposal the arrangements for the cabinet and area forums would remain the same. However, with 21 wards the Borough Council proposed the reduction of one less three-ward forum. It proposed the scrutiny commissions consist of one councillor from each ward with the number of co-optees remaining the same. The number of regulatory boards would remain at four with one councillor per ward, therefore there would be a reduction to 21 councillors. The full council would therefore sit with the proposed 63 members.

49 The independent councillors proposed a council size of 60 members representing 20 wards. They argued that a reduction to eight Area Forums and 60 elected members would be adequate to ensure the provision of local services. They also asserted that with two fewer wards and the consequential increase in ward size, public attendance at Area Forums would be higher. They stated that the only implication of this reduction would be 20 councillors attending the scrutiny commissions, and 20 councillors on the regulatory boards, as opposed to 22 councillors respectively as at present. They argued that there was no reason why a Labour councillor from each ward should be on each board. They also stated that it was a councillor's own prerogative as to whether to sit on external bodies. However, also they stated that opposition councillors had not been given proportional representation on outside bodies.

50 One local resident proposed a council size of 60 members, representing 20 wards. He argued that a reduction in council size would not affect the operation of the Borough Council and proposed a reduction in the number of councillors on scrutiny commissions and regulatory

boards. He also proposed a change in the cycle of meetings for the scrutiny commissions and regulatory boards to once every four weeks, and the increase of Area Forums by one to ten. He further proposed the redistribution of councillors on outside bodies, stating that more appointments should be filled by non-cabinet and opposition members.

51 The Liberal Democrats did not provide any evidence as to why they proposed a council size of 60 members.

52 We have given careful consideration to all the evidence and representations received. In evaluating the appropriate council size on which to base our draft recommendations, we give more weight to argumentation and evidence that establishes how the Borough Council will operate effectively on a proposed size, whatever that size may be.

53 We have little doubt that the councils could operate effectively and conveniently under a council size of either 60 or 63 members, albeit with a number of adjustments to the membership of scrutiny commissions and regulatory boards. However, it appears to us that the balance of argumentation and evidence points in favour of the Borough Council's proposal, which had addressed both the political management and representative roles of councillors in a more persuasive manner than those submitted by the Independent group of councillors, the Liberal Democrat Group or the local resident. Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the statutory criteria would best be met by a council size of 63 members as proposed by the Borough Council.

## Electoral arrangements

54 As mentioned above, having reviewed the submissions received at Stage One, we propose adopting the council size as proposed by the Borough Council as the basis of our draft recommendations. This would provide for 63 members based on a 21-ward pattern.

55 At Stage One we also received a response from one local resident that included 227 proforma letters objecting to the Borough Council's initial proposals for the transfer of Stainborough parish to the proposed Dodworth ward. However, in response to these objections the Borough Council amended its proposals prior to their submission to us and proposed that Stainborough parish remain in the proposed Penistone East ward.

56 In support of their scheme, the independent councillors submitted 532 proforma letters proposing the retention of South West ward. They further argued that the Borough Council's proposals were deliberately designed to split the present South West ward due to political considerations. Within their alternative 20-ward scheme they proposed the retention of a ward similar to the present South West as a primary consideration of the borough-wide ward pattern they proposed. In total they proposed making 18 boundary amendments without any additional warding of parishes, and the retention of these parishes within their present wards. They further proposed that Wombwell North and Park wards should be dissolved within their proposed ward pattern.

57 The main issue of contention between this scheme and the Borough Council proposals was that of council size. This made the ward patterns developed on these different council sizes mutually exclusive. We noted the good levels of electoral equality provide by these proposals. However, we have not been convinced by the argumentation provided for a reduction of six councillors. We noted the extensive public consultation undertaken by the independent councillors and the substantial support they received in the form of 532 proforma letters that they forwarded to us. However, the retention or division of one particular ward does not provide the evidence we require to establish the most appropriate council size. As stated above we are

therefore persuaded that the council size of 63 members represents the most appropriate size for the basis of the draft recommendations.

58 The two remaining borough wide schemes each also proposed ward patterns based on a council size of 60 members. As mentioned above, the scheme proposed by the local resident provided a similar ward pattern to that of the independent councillors, providing good levels of electoral equality by 2006.

59 The Liberal Democrat scheme also provided good levels of electoral equality. However, they provided no evidence of public consultation or detailed argumentation as to how their proposed ward pattern met the statutory criteria.

60 All four borough wide schemes received provided good levels of electoral equality. However, in view of our recommendations on council size and the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Borough Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise that it undertook with interested parties, we have based our recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. We also consider that the Borough Council have provided more persuasive evidence with regard to the most appropriate council size.

61 However, to further improve electoral equality and having regard to local community identities and interests, we have decided to move away from the Borough Council's proposals in the proposed Central, Darton West, Dodworth and Kingstone wards.

62 The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a) Darton, Dodworth, Penistone East and Penistone West;
- b) Brierley, Cudworth, Darfield, Dearne South, Dearne Thurscoe, Hoyland East, Hoyland West, Wombwell North, Wombwell South and Worsbrough;
- c) Ardsley, Athersley, Central, Monk Bretton, North West, Park, Royston and South West.

63 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large maps.

## Darton, Dodworth, Penistone East and Penistone West wards

64 These wards, located in the west of the borough, are each represented by three councillors. Darton and Dodworth wards are unparished. Penistone East ward comprises the parishes of Cawthorne, High Hoyland, Hunshelf, Oxspring, Tankersley, Thurgoland, Silkstone, Stainborough and Wortley. Penistone West ward comprises the parishes of Dunford, Gunthwaite & Ingbirchworth, Langsett and Penistone. The number of electors per councillor is 40% above the borough average in Darton ward (37% above by 2006), 38% above the borough average in Dodworth ward (35% above by 2006), 4% above the borough average in Penistone East ward (4% above by 2006) and 16% above the borough average in Penistone West ward (18% above by 2006).

65 At Stage One the Borough Council stated it expected new house building to increase the electorate in the present Penistone West ward. It therefore proposed a ward pattern in the east of the borough that accommodated this planned new development. It stated the only sizeable settlement within the present Penistone West ward suitable for transfer into the neighbouring Penistone East ward was the Hoylandswaine settlement, which lies north west of Penistone town. It argued that this option was preferred to any division of the continuous urban area of Penistone. As a consequence the Borough Council further proposed re-warding Penistone parish, with the new Hoylandswaine parish ward being placed in the proposed Penistone East

ward. The proposed Penistone West ward would therefore comprise the parishes of Dunford, Gunthwaite & Ingbirchworth and Langsett. It would also comprise the proposed parish wards of Cubley, Thurlstone & Millhouse, Springvale & Green Road, Penistone Town and Wentworth & Wellhouse.

66 Towards the south the Borough Council stated that the parish of Tankersley was closely associated in terms of community identity with the Hoyland area. It therefore proposed that Tankersley parish be warded and that the proposed West parish ward, that is situated west of the M1 motorway, be transferred to Penistone East ward. Penistone East ward would comprise the parishes of Cawthorne, High Hoyland, Hunshelf, Oxspring, Thurgoland, Silkstone, Stainborough, Wortley and the proposed Hoylandswaine and West parish wards.

67 The Borough Council proposed that the new East parish ward, which is east of the M1 motorway be placed within the proposed Rockingham ward. It proposed that Rockingham ward also comprise the settlements of Hoyland Common, Birdwell and the south-west part of the present Hoyland East ward generally east of Skiers View Road.

68 Towards the north of the borough the Borough Council considered warding arrangements for the present Darton and Dodworth wards which are both forecast to increase in electorate size owing to new house building. Under the proposed 21-ward pattern it argued that there were insufficient electors for three wards, but too many electors for the present configuration of two wards in the area. It therefore proposed transferring electors from the urban area of central Barnsley to enable a three ward pattern for this area. The proposed Darton East ward would comprise the Staincross and Mapplewell areas to the north of the Barnsley to Wakefield railway along with the eastern part of the Darton area itself. A new Darton West ward would comprise the remainder of the present Darton ward and include the Barugh Green, Redbrook and Gawber settlements. The Borough Council also proposed transferring parts of the present North West and South West wards into the new Darton East ward.

69 The Borough Council had initially considered a new Dodworth ward comprising the south of the present Dodworth ward and the parish of Stainborough. However, after considering the objections it received from its public consultation exercise, it proposed an alternative option. It proposed Dodworth ward should comprise the remainder of Dodworth, the Higham settlement, the Broadway area and the western part of the Pogmoor area. Although the Broadway and Pogmoor areas lie on the opposite side of the M1 motorway, they have good access links to the rest of the proposed ward via the A628 Barnsley/Dodworth Road.

70 At Stage One Penistone Town Council, expressed support for the Borough Council proposals for this area. Tankersley Parish Council stated that it preferred to remain totally within Penistone East ward. Cawthorne Parish Council stated it was satisfied with current ward arrangements. Wortley Parish Council proposed an amendment to its parish boundaries, however this is a matter that we cannot address as part of this review.

71 Councillor Harrison, of Penistone Town Council, objected to the Borough Council's proposals for a 21-ward pattern and stated a preference for the retention of Hoylandswaine within Penistone West ward. Two local residents objected to parts of the Pogmoor area being placed in the proposed Dodworth ward. Stainborough Parish councillor Poppleton, expressed objections to the transfer of Hood Green village to the proposed Dodworth ward. As mentioned above we also received one submission from a local resident containing a further 227 proforma letters opposed to the transfer of Stainborough parish into the proposed Dodworth ward. Four residents objected to the transfer of Stainborough parish, which includes Hood Green village, from the present Penistone East ward to the proposed Dodworth ward. Two residents objected to the transfer of Hoylandswaine settlement to the Borough Council's proposed Penistone East ward.

72 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received. As mentioned above we received three other borough-wide schemes for this area, and noted that there was some merit in each of them. However, due our adoption of the council size of 63 members we were unable to adopt any of the proposals within their schemes.

73 We noted the objections to the transfer of the Hoylandswaine settlement to the proposed Penistone East ward. However, due to the need to provide a viable ward pattern in the west of the borough, under a 21-ward scheme, we are persuaded the Borough Council's proposals provide the best balance between the statutory criteria. We noted the support of Penistone Town Council for these proposals. We further noted Tankersley Parish Council's objection to being warded. However, we believe that in order to facilitate a ward pattern in the west of the borough the Borough Council's proposals provides the most acceptable option for this area.

74 We further note that in light of objections from local residents, the Borough Council modified its proposals, and retained Stainborough parish within the proposed Penistone East ward. We consider the Borough Council's proposals provide ward boundaries that better reflect community identity and are content to adopt them as part of our draft recommendations. As part of this review we are unable to consider proposals for the amendment of parish boundaries, therefore we are unable to consider the proposals of Wortley Parish Council.

75 However, to improve levels of electoral equality we propose amending the boundaries between the proposed Darton West and Dodworth wards. We propose all those properties south of Church Street and along to no. 35 Wharfdale Road, be transferred to the proposed Dodworth ward.

76 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 3% above the borough average in Darton East ward (1% above by 2006), 1% below the borough average in Darton West ward (3% below by 2006), 3% below the borough average in Dodworth ward (3% below by 2006), 7% above the borough average in Penistone East ward (8% above by 2006), 1% above the borough average in Penistone West ward (2% above by 2006) and 4% above the borough average in Rockingham ward (4% above by 2006).

## **Brierley, Cudworth, Darfield, Dearne South, Dearne Thurscoe, Hoyland East, Hoyland West, Wombwell North, Wombwell South and Worsbrough wards**

77 These wards are located towards the east of the borough and are each represented by three councillors. The wards of Cudworth, Dearne South, Dearne Thurscoe, Hoyland East, Hoyland West, Wombwell North, Wombwell South and Worsbrough are all unparished. Brierley ward comprises the parishes of Brierley and Shafton. Darfield ward comprises the unparished area of Darfield and the parishes of Billingley, Great Houghton and Little Houghton. The number of electors per councillor is 14% below the borough average in Brierley ward (11% below by 2006), equal to the borough average in Cudworth ward (2% above by 2006), 2% above the borough average in Darfield ward (2% above by 2006), 13% above the borough average in Dearne South ward (25% above by 2006), equal to the borough average in Dearne Thurscoe ward (equal to the average by 2006), 4% above the borough average in Hoyland East ward (6% above by 2006), 15% below the borough average in Hoyland West ward (14% below by 2006), 36% below the borough average in Wombwell North ward (38% below by 2006), 4% above the borough average in Wombwell South (5% above by 2006) and 4% below the borough average in Worsbrough ward (6% below by 2006).

78 At Stage One the Borough Council stated that due to demolitions the existing Brierley ward is forecast to decrease in terms of electorate. It considered transferring electors from the northern part of Cudworth ward, but considered that this option could not be justified in terms of community identity. It therefore proposed a new Cudworth ward similar in composition to the

present ward. However, to improve electoral equality it proposed the inclusion of 45 electors on Fish Dam Lane and also the inclusion of the Rexam Glassworks area to provide a more defined ward boundary.

79 It further proposed a new North East ward comprising the parishes of Brierley and Shafton. To secure better levels of electoral equality it also proposed the inclusion of Great Houghton parish from the current Darfield ward. The Borough Council stated the transfer of this parish would place it in a ward with similar former mining villages with which it could identify.

80 As a consequence of this transfer the Borough Council noted the reduction in the electorate this would cause for the proposed Darfield ward. It considered transferring part of the Wombwell area into the proposed ward. However, it decided that the railway line and bypass provided a natural geographical and community boundary. It stated that any attempt to propose a ward that crossed the Parkway and bypass would not be supported locally. It therefore proposed the transfer of the Low Valley and Broomhill areas into the proposed Darfield ward. The Borough Council considered this to be the best option available given that the Darfield urban area is isolated from other areas in the borough.

81 Towards the eastern boundary of the borough lie the two wards of Dearne North and Dearne Thurnscoe. These are isolated urban unparished areas, and the Borough Council proposed amending of the boundary between these wards to achieve better electoral equality. The Dearne wards are currently divided by the A635 Barnsley/Doncaster Road; however, the Borough Council forecast significant growth within Dearne South ward. It therefore proposed that the boundary between these wards be amended to follow along the railway line, then along Thurnscoe Dike, with the whole of Goldthorpe town centre being located into the renamed Dearne North ward.

82 Towards the south of the borough the Borough Council considered a new ward combining the present Wombwell North and Wombwell South wards. However, it considered this proposal would be too large in electorate terms by 2006. It also stated that it had considered transferring part of the Wombwell area into the proposed Stairfoot ward. However, to provide a more defined urban Wombwell ward that provided the best balance of the statutory criteria, it proposed the transferring the villages of Jump and Hemingfield into the proposed Hoyland Milton ward. It considered that this transfer would not diminish the representation of residents' interests in these areas. The Borough Council's proposal would provide a southern boundary for the proposed Wombwell ward running along the Dearne Valley Parkway. To the north the Borough Council proposed that the Aldham House area form part of the proposed Stairfoot ward.

83 The Borough Council proposed that the new Hoyland Milton ward should comprise the Platts Common, Jump and Hemingfield areas across the centre, the Elsecar area to the south and the Milton area in the west, with the boundary following the rear of properties on Croft Road, St Andrew's Crescent and Valley Way. To the north the Borough Council proposed including in Hoyland Milton ward the Blacker Hill settlement that is separated by the A619 Dearne Valley Parkway, arguing that it retains good access to the rest of the ward by the Barnsley Road. After public consultation the Borough Council considered that Hoyland Milton was the most appropriate name for this ward.

84 To the north of the proposed Hoyland Milton ward lies the area of Worsbrough. The Borough Council stated that this area was clearly defined geographically, and retained its own community identity. It further argued that it would be inappropriate to link the proposed Worsbrough ward artificially with areas with which it was not contiguous. The Borough Council therefore proposed a new Worsbrough ward retaining a similar configuration to the current ward, with the inclusion of Worsbrough Village from the present Hoylands West ward to the south.

85 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received at Stage One. As mentioned above we received three other borough-wide schemes for this area, and considered that each had merit. However, due our adoption of the council size of 63 members we were unable to adopt any of the proposals in our draft recommendations.

86 Jump Community Social Club objected to the village of Jump being transferred from the present Wombwell South ward on grounds of community identity. One resident expressed support for the proposed Cudworth ward within a 21-ward pattern. Two residents objected to the configuration of the proposed Cudworth ward. One resident objected to the Borough Council's proposed Wombwell ward. Another resident proposed that Brierley Parish be abolished, however this is a matter that cannot be addressed as part of this review.

87 We note that the electoral variances for the proposed Darfield, Dearne North, Dearne South and North East wards are relatively high compared with the rest of the borough. However, we are persuaded that to their geographical location, and the Borough Council's preference for avoiding parish warding wherever possible, the proposals for these wards represent the best balance between the statutory criteria.

88 In light of the proposed ward pattern for this part of the Borough Council we are further persuaded that the transfer of the villages of Jump and Hemingfield to the proposed Hoyland Milton ward provides the most acceptable ward pattern in this area. We note the objections received concerning the proposed Cudworth ward. However, we also are persuaded that the Borough Council's proposal provides the best balance between the statutory criteria without recourse to parish warding in this area.

89 We therefore propose adopting all of the Borough Council's proposals for this area. We consider they reflect the best balance between the statutory criteria available as they group similar communities together and use well defined boundaries.

90 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 2% below the borough average in Cudworth ward (4% below by 2006), 8% below the borough average in Darfield ward (10% below by 2006), 1% above the borough average in Dearne North ward (6% above by 2006), 2% above the borough average in Dearne South ward (8% above by 2006), 5% above the borough average in Hoyland Milton ward (8% above by 2006), 3% above the borough average in North East ward (8% above by 2006), 2% above the borough average in Wombwell ward (1% above by 2006) and 5% below the borough average in Worsbrough ward (8% below by 2006).

## **Ardsley, Athersley, Central, Monk Bretton, North West, Park, Royston and South West wards**

91 These wards are in the centre of the borough and are each represented by three councillors and are all unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Ardsley ward is 15% below the borough average in Ardsley ward (20% below by 2006), 21% below the borough average in Athersley ward (23% below by 2006), 7% above the borough average in Central ward (4% above by 2006), 6% above the borough average in Monk Bretton ward (10% above by 2006), 9% below the borough average in North West ward (10% below by 2006), 31% below the borough average in Park ward (32% below by 2006), 18% above the borough average in Royston ward (15% above by 2006) and 6% below the borough average in South West ward (8% below by 2006).

92 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed eight new wards in this area. It noted that during its public consultation there had been opposition to its proposals from residents and councillors of the Independent group on the Borough Council. The latter subsequently devised their own scheme that retained the South West ward. However, the Borough Council

considered that the councillors' scheme did not address the issue of council size, tended to divide distinct geographical communities and provided no evidence as to why the South West ward should be retained.

93 The Borough Council therefore proposed a configuration of the central area that is quite similar to the present ward pattern in terms of urban character. It proposed a new Central ward that would comprise Barnsley town centre, including the area at present in South West ward between Summer Land and Sackville Street. This ward would also include the Longham Road area presently in North West ward. In the east of the new ward it would also include the terraced areas of Hoyle Mill and Measborough Dike, currently within Ardsley ward.

94 The Borough Council proposed a new Kingstone ward that would join the area of the present Park ward, from Park Road to Town End, with the similar areas from the present Central and South West wards, of Racecommon Road and Park Grove, which are located south west of the town centre. It also proposed the inclusion of Worsbrough Common from the present Park ward.

95 The Borough Council proposed a new Old Town ward formed from the Honeywell, Old Town, Wilthorpe and Willow Bank areas of the present North West ward. It also proposed the inclusion from the present South West ward of the area south of the Barnsley District General Hospital. It further proposed the inclusion of the Smithies area east of Honeywell that is currently in the present Monk Bretton ward.

96 It further proposed a new Monk Bretton ward comprising the two main settlements of Monk Bretton and Lundwood that are separated by fields and the Priory school campus. It also proposed the inclusion of the Smithies area generally west of Rotherham Road. The Borough Council further proposed that the southern part of Carlton be included within this proposed ward as this village is forecast to be too large in electorate terms to remain entirely within the proposed Royston ward.

97 To the north of the borough, the Borough Council proposed a new Royston ward similar in composition to the present ward. To improve electoral equality by 2006 the Borough Council proposed that this ward comprise the main Royston settlement and include part of the Carlton area that is accessed via by Royston Lane. It proposed that the southern boundary of Royston ward run along the dismantled railway and along to Sandybridge Dyke.

98 The Borough Council's proposed St Helen's ward would it comprise the present Athersley ward and the New Lodge area from the current North West ward. It also proposed including part of the Smithies area separated from the Athersley area by the Rotherham Road. The Borough Council further proposed a new Royston ward comprising the whole of the Royston settlement and that part of the Carlton settlement generally north of Wood Lane.

99 The Borough Council proposed a new Stairfoot ward comprising the Ardsley settlement and the Aldham House area at present located in the Wombwell North ward. To ensure good electoral equality in this ward by 2006 the Borough Council also proposed the inclusion of the Aldham House area that retains access to the centre of Stairfoot by Wombwell Lane/Barnsley Road. To the west of the proposed ward it proposed the inclusion of the Kendray area which is presently split between Ardsley and Park wards. Within this area, the Borough Council also proposed a new Worsbrough ward comprising the settlement of Worsbrough and the small settlement of Worsbrough Village that presently is in Hoyland West ward, as mentioned above.

100 Derby Street & Knowsley Street Neighbourhood Watch objected to the proposed changes to South West ward. Two residents stated they preferred Monk Bretton Priory as a ward name as opposed to Priory as proposed by the Borough Council in its public consultation. Seven residents expressed objections to the Borough Council's amendment to South West ward.

101 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received at Stage One. As mentioned above we received three other borough-wide schemes for this area, and noted there was some merit in each of them. These included 532 proforma letters enclosed with the Independent councillors' group scheme objecting to the division of the present South West ward. However, due to our adoption of a council size of 63 members we were unable to adopt any of the proposals within the alternative schemes.

102 The main objection to the Borough Council's scheme centred on its proposals for South West ward. In assessing the viability of a scheme we have to take into consideration the requirement to achieve a balance between the statutory criteria. Having adopted the council size of 63 members, we are persuaded that the Borough Council's proposals for this area provide the best ward pattern available. Subject to one amendment, we therefore propose broadly basing the draft recommendation on the Borough Council's proposals in this area.

103 To improve levels of electoral equality we propose amending the boundaries between the proposed Central and Kingstone wards. We propose transferring the properties between Sackville Street and Summer Lane along to Fitzwilliam Street from Central ward to Kingstone ward.

104 In light of the public consultation undertaken by the Borough Council we also propose to adopt the ward name Monk Bretton, as we are persuaded that this provides a good reflection of local identity.

105 Under the draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 4% above the borough average in Central ward (5% above by 2006), equal to the borough average in Kingstone ward (3% below by 2006), 1% above the borough average in Monk Bretton ward (1% below by 2006), 5% below the borough average in Old Town ward (1% below by 2006), 5% above the borough average in Hoyland Milton ward (8% above by 2006), 1% below the borough average in St Helen's ward (2% below by 2006) and 2% above the borough average in Stairfoot ward (4% below by 2006).

## Electoral cycle

106 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all Metropolitan boroughs have a system of elections by thirds.

## Conclusions

107 Having considered all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 66 to 63;
- there should be 21 wards;
- the boundaries of 22 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one ward, and no wards should retain their existing boundaries.

108 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- the boundary between Darton West and Dodworth wards should be amended;
- the boundary between the proposed Central and Kingstone wards should be amended.

109 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will effect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements (based on 2001 electorate figures) and with forecast electorates for the year 2006.

*Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements*

	2001 Electorate		2006 Electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	66	63	66	63
Number of wards	22	21	22	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,605	2,730	2,633	2,759
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	11	0	11	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	5	0	6	0

110 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 11 to none. By 2006 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

*Draft recommendation*

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

## Parish and town council electoral arrangements

111 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parishes of Penistone and Tankersley to reflect the proposed borough wards.

112 The parish of Penistone is currently served by 15 councillors representing three wards: Hoylandswaine, Thurlstone & Millhouse and Penistone. The Borough Council propose transferring part of the Hoylandswaine settlement into the proposed Penistone East ward. It therefore proposes the re-warding of Penistone parish, with it maintaining the present number of 15 councillors. It proposes that Thurlstone & Millhouse parish ward return three councillors, Wentworth and Wellhouse parish ward return two councillors, Hoylandswaine parish ward return two councillors, Springvale & Green Road parish ward return two wards, Penistone Town parish ward return four councillors and Cubley parish ward return two councillors. As a result of adopting the Borough Council proposals at borough level we consequently propose new warding arrangements for Penistone parish as proposed by the Borough Council.

*Draft recommendation*

Penistone Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Thurlstone & Millhouse (returning three councillors), Wentworth and Wellhouse (returning two councillors), Hoylandswaine (returning two councillors), Springvale & Green Road (returning two councillors), Penistone Town (returning four councillors) and Cubley (returning two councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated on the large map.

113 The parish of Tankersley is currently served by 11 councillors and is not warded. The Borough Council proposed warding this parish, placing Tankersley West parish ward in the proposed Penistone East ward and West parish ward in the proposed Rockingham ward. The Borough Council proposed that East parish ward be served by 1 councillor. The Borough Council proposed that West parish ward be served by 10 councillor. As a result of adopting the Borough Council proposals at borough level we consequently propose new warding arrangements for Tankersley parish as proposed by the Borough Council.

*Draft recommendation*

Tankersley Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: East and West, each returning one and ten councillors respectively. The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundary, as illustrated on the large map.

*Map 2: Draft recommendations for Barnsley*

## 5 What happens next?

114 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Barnsley contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 11 February 2003. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

115 Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Team Leader  
Barnsley Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

116 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, ***whether or not*** they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to The Electoral Commission, which cannot make the Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after it receives them.



# Appendix A

## Draft recommendations for Barnsley: **Detailed mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Barnsley area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas that are shown in more detail in the large maps.

The **large maps** illustrate the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Barnsley.

*Map A1: Draft recommendations for Barnsley: Key map*

# Appendix B

## Code of practice on written consultation

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

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

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

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