

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS
FOR THE CITY
OF DURHAM

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

October 1998

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the City of Durham.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

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Local Government Commission for England

20 October 1998

Dear Secretary of State

On 14 October 1997 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of the City of Durham under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in June 1998 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 paragraphs 180-181) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in the City of Durham.

We recommend that Durham City Council should be served by 50 councillors representing 20 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

We note that you have now 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 City 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 the City of Durham on 14 October 1997. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 2 June 1998, 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 Durham City:

- **in 15 of the 24 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and seven of these wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2002, electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 15 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in 10 of these wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraphs 180-181) are that:

- **Durham City Council should be served by 50 councillors, one more than at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, four fewer than at present;**
- **changes should be made to the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards, resulting in a net reduction of four wards, while five wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 16 of the 20 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average, with no ward varying by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **By 2002 the number of electors per councillor is forecast to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in every ward.**

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 30 November 1998:

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

*Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Bearpark & Witton Gilbert	3	Bearpark ward (Bearpark parish); Witton Gilbert ward (Witton Gilbert parish)	Map 2
2 Belmont	2	Belmont ward (Belmont parish ward of Belmont parish); Carrville ward (part – part of Carrville parish ward of Belmont parish)	Large map
3 Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield	2	Croxdale ward (part – Brancepeth parish); Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward (East and South parish wards of Brandon & Byshottles parish)	Map 2
4 Brandon	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Central parish ward of Brandon & Byshottles parish)	Map 2
5 Carrville & Gilesgate Moor	3	Carrville ward (part – part of Carrville parish ward of Belmont parish); Gilesgate Moor ward (Gilesgate Moor parish ward of Belmont parish)	Large map
6 Cassop-cum-Quarrington	3	Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward (Cassop-cum-Quarrington parish); Croxdale ward (part – Croxdale & Hett parish)	Map 2
7 Coxhoe	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Coxhoe and Kelloe)	Map 2
8 Crossgate & Framwelgate	3	Elvet ward (part); Neville's Cross ward (part); Framwelgate ward (part)	Large map
9 Deerness	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (Deerness parish)	Map 2
10 Elvet	3	Elvet ward (part); Neville's Cross ward (part)	Large map
11 Framwellgate Moor	3	Framwellgate Moor ward (Framwellgate Moor parish); Framwelgate ward (part)	Map 2
12 Neville's Cross	2	Neville's Cross ward (part)	Large map
13 New Brancepeth & Ushaw Moor	3	New Brancepeth ward (North parish ward of Brandon & Byshottles parish); Ushaw Moor ward (Ushaw Moor parish ward of Brandon & Byshottles parish)	Map 2
14 Newton Hall North	2	Newton Hall ward (part)	Large map

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

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
15	Newton Hall South	2	Newton Hall ward (part); Framwelgate ward (part)	Large map
16	Pelaw & Gilesgate	3	Gilesgate ward (part); Pelaw ward	Large map
17	Pittington & West Rainton	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Pittington and West Rainton)	Map 2
18	St Nicholas	2	Gilesgate ward (part)	Large map
19	Shadforth & Sherburn	3	Shadforth ward (Ludworth and Shadforth parish wards of Shadforth parish); Sherburn ward (Sherburn parish, and Sherburn Hill parish ward of Shadforth parish)	Map 2
20	Shincliffe	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Shincliffe parish)	Map 2

Notes: 1 The wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate, Elvet, Framwellgate Moor (part), Newton Hall North, Newton Hall South, Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas cover the unparished area of the district.

2 Map 2 and the large map in the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the City of Durham. We have now reviewed all the districts in County Durham (except for Darlington) as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England.

2 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996, supplemented in September 1996 and updated in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 14 October 1997, when we wrote to Durham City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. Our letter was copied to Durham County Council, Durham Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils, parish councils in the district, the Member of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published notices in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 19 January 1998.

5 At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations. We also held a public meeting in Durham in order to seek further evidence from interested parties, in particular on the broad number of councillors for

the City Council, the number of councillors per ward, and any significant factors which should be taken into account in determining ward boundaries, including the scope for avoiding a 'detached ward'. An independent assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE, was appointed to chair the meeting, which was held in the Meadowfield Sports Centre in Meadowfield, Durham, on 6 April 1998. Mr Hardy reported his findings to the Commission, which took account of them during its deliberations over the City of Durham review. A note of the public meeting's proceedings is available from the Commission on request.

6 Stage Three began on 2 June 1998 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for the City of Durham*, and ended on 27 July 1998. 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

7 The City of Durham district is situated in the north-east corner of County Durham and covers over 18,600 hectares with a population of 80,000. It comprises a mix of historic townscape, based on the mediaeval city, surrounded by a rural hinterland.

8 The district is roughly bisected by the River Wear which flows south-west to north-east through the area, and which forms part of the south-western boundary of the district with Sedgefield. The old city, which lies at the heart of the district, forms the hub of a road network and transport system serving an area beyond the district. It acts as the natural centre for the residents for work, shopping and leisure pursuits.

9 The unparished central urban area accounts for around half of the district's population and the remainder is spread over some 30 settlements scattered across the district. They range in size from 50 residents to almost 6,000, and in character from small villages grouped around a village green, to large urban settlements with a wide range of facilities and major employment centres. The district includes 15 parishes, covering the rural areas and the eastern fringe of the urban area.

10 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 district average in percentage terms. In the text which follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

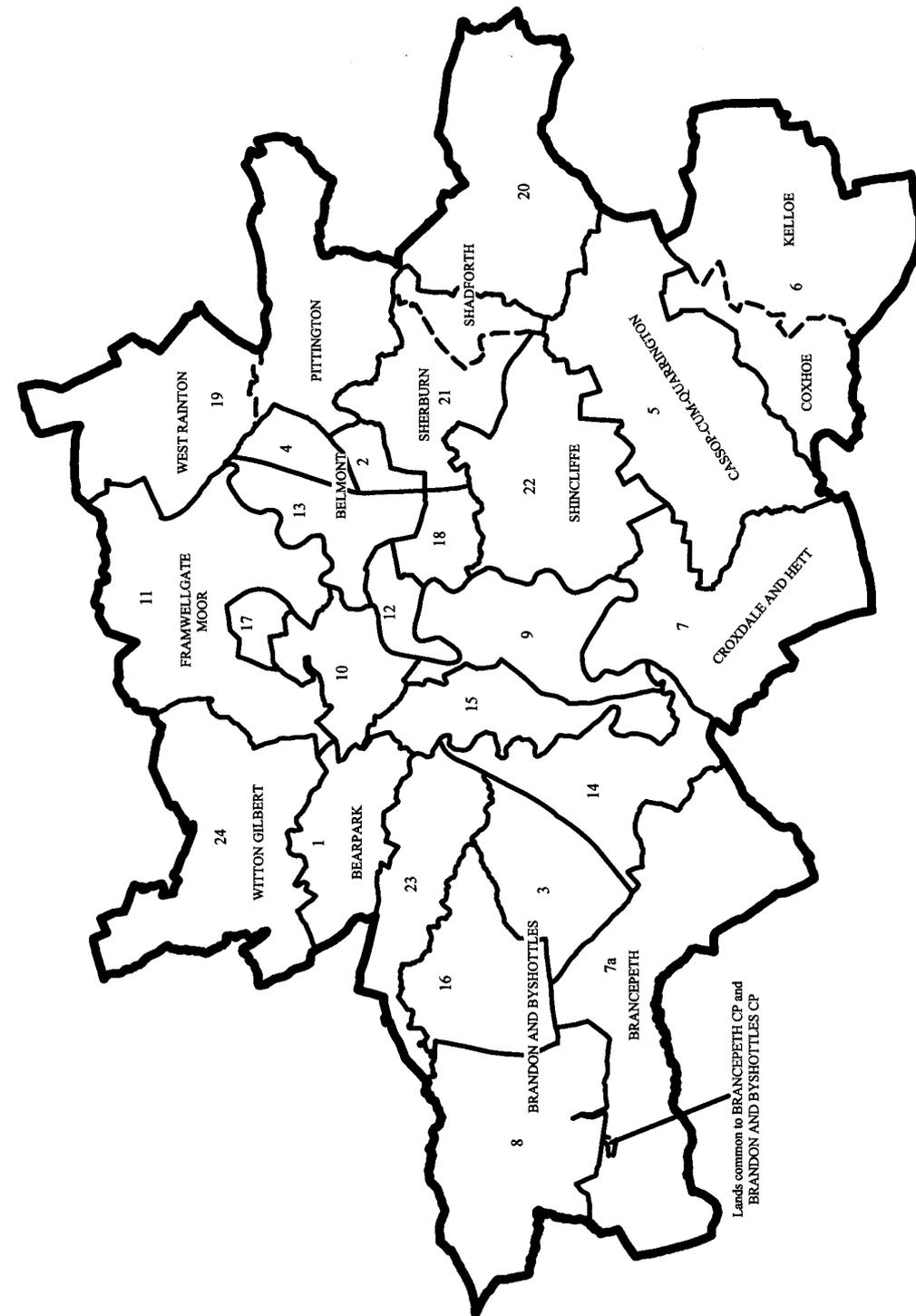
11 The electorate of the district (February 1997) is 70,274. The Council presently has 49 councillors who are elected from 24 wards, six of which are unparished and primarily urban and 18 of which are parished and predominantly rural (although they include Belmont, Carrville and Gilesgate Moor) – Map 1 and Figure 2. Six of the 24 wards are each represented by three councillors, 13 wards elect two councillors each, while the remaining five are single-member wards. The whole Council is elected every four years.

12 Since the last electoral review there has been an

increase in the electorate in Durham City, with around 9 per cent more electors than two decades ago.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,434 electors, which the City Council forecasts will increase to 1,504 by the year 2002 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 15 of the 24 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average and in seven wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Shadforth ward where the councillor represents 47 per cent fewer electors than the district average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Durham City



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- Key to Wards
- 1 Bearpark
 - 2 Belmont
 - 3 Brandon
 - 4 Carrville
 - 5 Cassop-cum-Quarrington
 - 6 Coxhoe
 - 7 Croxdale
 - 7a Croxdale (Det)
 - 8 Deerness
 - 9 Eivet
 - 10 Framwelgate
 - 11 Framwelgate Moor
 - 12 Gilesgate
 - 13 Langley Moor and Meadowfield
 - 14 Neville's Cross
 - 15 New Brancepeth
 - 16 Newton Hall
 - 17 Pelaw
 - 18 Pitlington and West Rainton
 - 19 Shadforth
 - 20 Sherburn
 - 21 Shinccliffe
 - 22 Ushaw Moor
 - 23 Witton Gilbert
 - 24 Witton Gilbert

KEY

————— EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY

- - - - - EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY

Figure 2:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bearpark	1	1,455	1,455	1	1,811	1,811	20
2 Belmont	2	3,000	1,500	5	3,000	1,500	0
3 Brandon	3	4,755	1,585	11	4,841	1,614	7
4 Carrville	2	2,356	1,178	-18	2,371	1,186	-21
5 Cassop-cum-Quarrington	3	3,671	1,224	-15	3,968	1,323	-12
6 Coxhoe	3	4,175	1,392	-3	4,636	1,545	3
7 Croxdale	1	1,125	1,125	-22	1,125	1,125	-25
8 Deerness	2	2,793	1,397	-3	2,844	1,422	-5
9 Elvet	2	4,046	2,023	41	4,144	2,072	38
10 Framwelgate	2	4,014	2,007	40	4,014	2,007	33
11 Framwellgate Moor	2	3,416	1,708	19	3,706	1,853	23
12 Gilesgate	3	5,062	1,687	18	5,542	1,847	23
13 Gilesgate Moor	2	2,418	1,209	-16	2,523	1,262	-16
14 Langley Moor & Meadowfield	2	2,623	1,312	-9	2,758	1,379	-8
15 Neville's Cross	3	5,175	1,725	20	5,335	1,778	18
16 New Brancepeth	1	981	981	-32	1,030	1,030	-32
17 Newton Hall	3	4,193	1,398	-3	4,193	1,398	-7
18 Pelaw	2	1,624	812	-43	1,624	812	-46

continued overleaf

Figure 2 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
19 Pitlington & West Rainton	2	2,951	1,476	3	3,127	1,564	4
20 Shadforth	1	759	759	-47	790	790	-47
21 Sherburn	2	3,043	1,522	6	3,464	1,732	15
22 Shincliffe	1	1,405	1,405	-2	1,405	1,405	-7
23 Ushaw Moor	2	3,258	1,629	14	3,258	1,629	8
24 Witton Gilbert	2	1,976	988	-31	2,187	1,094	-27
Totals	49	70,274	—	—	73,696	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,434	—	1,504	—	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Durham City Council's Stage One 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1997, electors in Shadforth ward were relatively over-represented by 47 per cent, while electors in Elvet ward were relatively under-represented by 41 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One we received 10 representations, including district-wide schemes from Durham City Council, Durham District Liberal Democrats, the Liberal Democrat Group on Durham City Council and the Independent members on the City Council. We also received representations from four parish councils (Bearpark, Framwellgate Moor, Sherburn and Witton Gilbert) and two local residents. We held a public meeting in Durham on 6 April, in order to seek further evidence from interested parties. The meeting was chaired by an independent Assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE. In the light of all the representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for the City of Durham*. A number of considerations informed our preliminary conclusions. First, there appeared to be an acknowledgement locally that the present electoral arrangements are unsatisfactory and capable of significant improvement. Respondents during Stage One – including the City Council, the Liberal Democrats, the Independent members and (after the public meeting) the Conservative Association – all made positive proposals for change to the present electoral arrangements.

15 Second, we acknowledged the absence of consensus on council size but concluded that the circumstances were not then in place that would enable us to put forward with confidence the radically reduced council size of 30 proposed by the Liberal Democrats. We therefore provisionally recommended a continuation, broadly, of the present number of councillors.

16 Third, there were some concerns expressed during Stage One on the number of councillors who should serve each ward: the City Council supported the retention of a pattern of single-, two-, and three-member wards; the Independent members supported multi-member wards; and the Liberal Democrats implicitly acknowledged the advantage of retaining the present mixed pattern in the event of the present council size being broadly maintained. We provisionally concluded that a mixed pattern would best enable local communities to be represented on the Council. However, we

sought to bring representation in the urban areas more into line by avoiding any single-member wards, as proposed by the Independent members.

17 Fourth, we welcomed the calls for an open and constructive debate on the electoral arrangements for the City. We found the public meeting on 6 April very helpful and welcomed the contributions made by representatives of all three political groups on the City Council and others.

18 Fifth, respondents had asked that we take into account established communities. We sought to achieve this in our draft recommendations, while also seeking electoral equality across the whole district, taking into account the developments which were expected to occur.

19 Sixth, we noted in our draft recommendations report that the proposals put forward during Stage One by the City Council, the Liberal Democrats (in their “fall-back submission”) and the Independent members represented a degree of consensus on the location of ward boundaries in much of the district. Either identical, or broadly similar, proposals had been put forward in almost half of the proposed wards in the outer part of the district (except for the southern, detached ward of Croxdale). We concluded that in these areas, those proposals with consensus also represent the best fit with our statutory obligations and we were therefore content to put them forward as our draft recommendations for consultation.

20 In the south of the district, however, we expressed concern in our draft recommendations about the present detached ward of Croxdale. We emphasised the Commission’s wish to avoid detached wards where at all possible and, notwithstanding the eloquent arguments put forward at the public meeting, concluded that there were alternative warding patterns which would avoid a detached ward in this area.

21 In the central part of the district, we concluded that the Liberal Democrats’ scheme overall best reflected our statutory criteria, but we also had regard to the propositions put forward by the City Council and by Independent members. We also

proposed a number of our own modifications to the Liberal Democrats' scheme which would further improve electoral equality.

22 In summary, we proposed that:

- (a) Durham City Council should be served by 50 councillors, one more than at present;
- (b) there should be 20 wards, four fewer than at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) the whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

Draft Recommendation

Durham City Council should comprise 50 councillors, serving 20 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

23 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 15 of the 20 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve by 2002 when only one ward, Neville's Cross ward, was forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the district average.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

24 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 31 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Durham City Council and the Commission.

Durham City Council

25 The City Council accepted that the draft recommendations were “broadly in line with its own recommendations particularly in the rural areas of the district”, but expressed disappointment at the Commission’s proposals for the proposed wards of Croxdale and St Nicholas. The City Council proposed modifications to the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate, Framwellgate Moor, Gilesgate, St Nicholas and Shadforth & Sherburn, and alternative arrangements for the existing Croxdale ward, in order to take more account of local identities. Its proposals were for a 51-member council.

Liberal Democrat Group on the City Council

26 The Liberal Democrat Group on the City Council expressed regret that the more radical 30-member proposal had not been accepted by the Commission as part of the draft recommendations, but said that “in accepting that decision, we generally applaud the Commission’s recommendations on the 50-member version of the Council” and that “in almost all cases we feel that these are about right, and would wish to support them”. They proposed modifications to the boundaries between the wards of Neville’s Cross and Elvet, and Neville’s Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate, and supported the City Council’s modification to the boundary between the wards of Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas. They opposed the City Council’s other Stage Three proposals which they considered “lack logic, ignore established settlement boundaries and involve contradictory views about amenities, representation and identity”, and hoped that the new arrangements

would be in place for the May 1999 elections.

Durham District Liberal Democrats

27 The Durham District Liberal Democrats still considered their original 30-member scheme to be a better long-term solution, but supported the draft recommendations in general. They also supported a “parallel” letter from the Liberal Democrat Group, detailing “minor changes” to the draft recommendations.

Parish Councils

28 At Stage Three we also received representations from four parish councils. Croxdale & Hett Parish Council opposed the draft recommendations as they would affect the existing Croxdale ward, instead supporting the status quo in this area. Framwellgate Moor Parish Council opposed the draft recommendation to create a separate parish ward for the Sniperley area, although it agreed that the “boundary anomaly” at Westcott Drive should be corrected.

29 Shadforth Parish Council opposed the draft recommendation to combine the wards of Shadforth and Sherburn into a three-member ward, and supported the City Council’s Stage One proposal that Shadforth and Sherburn should form separate wards, on grounds of community identity and geography. It proposed that the Sherburn Hill area should form part of a modified Shadforth ward, which would reflect the parish boundary. Shincliffe Parish Council supported the draft recommendation for no change to Shincliffe ward.

Member of Parliament

30 At Stage Three, Gerry Steinberg, MP for Durham, supported the City Council’s revised proposals. In particular, he expressed concern about the draft recommendation to transfer Croxdale & Hett parish into Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward, which he considered had no

basis on grounds of community identity or transport links. He therefore supported the City Council's proposal to combine all of Croxdale ward with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward, which would be represented by three councillors, resulting in an additional member, making a total of 51.

Other Representations

31 A further 23 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations, from eight district councillors, two of which are also county councillors, one parish councillor and 14 local residents.

32 Councillor Beswick, member for Neville's Cross ward, considered the draft recommendations to be both fair and acceptable to the majority of people in Durham, and supported them subject to two boundary modifications to Neville's Cross ward, which would also affect the wards of Elvet and Crossgate & Framwelgate. He opposed the City Council's alternative proposals for Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate wards, describing them as "contrived and illogical", and hoped that the new arrangements would be in place for the May 1999 elections.

33 Councillor Martin, member for Elvet ward and Neville's Cross county division, also proposed modifications to the wards of Elvet and Neville's Cross. He supported the draft recommendation for the Sniperley area and opposed the City Council's alternative proposal for that area.

34 Councillor Dickie, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the draft recommendations for the ward, subject to two modifications to the boundaries with Elvet and Crossgate & Framwelgate wards. He opposed the City Council's revised proposals for Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate wards on community identity grounds, and hoped that the new arrangements would be in place for the May 1999 elections.

35 Councillors Holland and Hawgood, members for Framwelgate ward, supported the draft recommendations for the district. They opposed the City Council's modified proposals for the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate, Framwellgate Moor and Neville's Cross on community identity grounds, the proposal for an extra councillor and that Shadforth and Sherburn should be represented by separate wards.

36 Councillor Young, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the draft recommendations subject to one modification. He proposed that the boundary between the proposed wards of Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate should be modified so that St John's Road and George Street would be in Neville's Cross ward.

37 Councillor Lightley, member for Elvet county division (which includes Croxdale ward) and member for Shincliffe ward, supported the draft recommendations for these areas. He opposed the City Council's revised proposal for Croxdale as it would increase the total number of councillors, and hoped that in the long term the City Council would reduce the number of councillors, strengthen the role of parishes, and establish a parish for the urban area.

38 Councillor Mrs Lupton, member for Belmont ward, supported the draft recommendations for the proposed Carrville & Gilesgate Moor and Belmont wards. However, she proposed that four West Sherburn electors should be transferred from Belmont ward to either Sherburn ward or Carrville & Gilesgate Moor wards, on community identity grounds.

39 Councillor Hutchings, a Croxdale parish councillor, opposed the draft recommendations as they would affect the existing Croxdale ward on community identity grounds, and supported the status quo for the ward. However, he added that if change was considered necessary, he would support the City Council's revised proposal that Croxdale ward should be combined with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward.

40 Six residents of Croxdale ward opposed the draft recommendations for the Croxdale area on community identity grounds. One supported the retention of the status quo, and another resident proposed that Croxdale & Hett parish be combined with Shincliffe ward, as both contain conservation areas. One of the six, a resident of Sunderland Bridge village in Croxdale & Hett parish considered that there are insufficient road links between Croxdale & Hett parish and the existing Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. He noted that there was direct road access from Croxdale & Hett to Meadowfield, Neville's Cross and Elvet and considered that combining Croxdale & Hett parish with any of these would provide "a more logical solution". He also proposed that Sunderland Bridge village be represented by a single parish

councillor on Croxdale & Hett parish. A fourth resident recognised “the anomaly of the present detached ward” and proposed that the whole of the existing Croxdale ward should be combined with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward on community identity grounds.

41 Two residents of Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward also opposed the draft recommendations for Croxdale ward on community identity grounds and considered that there were poor transport links between Croxdale & Hett parish and Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. One of them considered that electors in Croxdale & Hett parish looked more to Meadowfield.

42 A resident of Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward supported the draft recommendation that Brancepeth parish, which forms the western part of the existing Croxdale ward, should join with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward on community identity grounds, and suggested that the new ward be named ‘Brancepeth Castle’. He opposed the City Council’s revised proposals for a three-member ward comprising the existing wards of Langley Moor & Meadowfield and Croxdale, on the grounds that such a ward would be too large and diverse to be represented effectively.

43 Another resident of Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward said that some residents in Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward opposed both the draft recommendation and the City Council’s revised proposal for the ward. However, he considered that the City Council’s proposal for a three-member ward comprising the existing wards of Langley Moor & Meadowfield and Croxdale was the better option. If the draft recommendation was accepted, he proposed that it should be called ‘Boyne’ ward, as it would comprise a large part of the former Lord Boyne estates, but if the City Council’s proposal was accepted, he proposed that the ward be called ‘South-west’.

44 A Croxdale resident proposed that two councillors should represent a ward comprising the settlements of Sherburn Hill, Ludworth, Shadforth and Shincliffe, and that Sherburn village should also be represented by two councillors. A resident of Carrville ward supported the draft recommendations for the area on community identity grounds. A resident of Neville’s Cross ward supported the draft recommendations as being fairer than the present arrangements which he considered “favours the villages compared to the

town”. A resident of Newton Hall ward supported the draft recommendations and considered that “they iron out irregularities in the present arrangements and still give local accountability”. A resident of Belmont ward supported the draft recommendations “in their entirety”.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

45 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for the City of Durham is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

46 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, 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. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

47 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for 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.

48 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to a minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any

imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

49 At Stage One, Durham City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2002, projecting an increase in the electorate of almost 5 per cent from 70,274 to 73,696 over the five-year period from 1997 to 2002. It expected most of the growth to be in the rural wards of Bearpark, Cassop-cum-Quarrington, Coxhoe and Sherburn. In the parished area, growth is expected in the relatively urban Gilesgate ward. The 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.

50 The Liberal Democrat Group considered that the City Council had under-estimated the rate of growth in the Howlands Farm area of Elvet ward where new student accommodation is planned. The City Council anticipated an increase of 100 electors in this area while the Liberal Democrats estimated a figure of nearer 200. After the public meeting, a resident of Elvet ward queried the City Council's electorate forecasts for a number of wards. We were also aware that he raised his concerns direct with the City Council. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to those submitted by the City Council, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

51 At Stage Three Councillor Martin, member for Elvet ward, considered the City Council's estimate of an extra 100 electors in the Howlands Farm site to be an under-estimate. The City Council contended that both its and the Liberal Democrats' forecasts “are in part correct”. It accepted that the accommodation “will indeed be capable of accepting in the region of 200 persons”. However,

it added that, “as the development is intended to house post-graduate students, a high proportion are expected to be of overseas origin, meaning they will be ineligible to register as electors in this country”. The City Council therefore reaffirmed its forecast for an increase of approximately 100 electors in this area. We remain satisfied that the City Council’s figures represent the best estimates presently available.

The Commission’s Approach

52 During Stage Three, our draft recommendations engendered a measure of support. While disagreeing with some of our preliminary conclusions, the City Council commented that it “accepts that the Commission’s proposals were broadly in line with its own recommendations particularly in the rural areas of the district” and limited its detailed comments to five areas; its proposals would result in a council of 51 members, rather than 50 proposed by the Commission. The Liberal Democrat Group, while retaining its preference for a 30-member council, “generally applauded the Commission’s recommendations for the 50-member version of the council. In almost all cases we feel that these are about right, and would wish to support them”. It was supported in this view by the Durham District Liberal Democrats. It made detailed proposals for three areas. The Commission did not hear from the Independent members during Stage Three.

53 We are gratified that our draft recommendations provided a framework within which the review significantly progressed during Stage Three. We consider that if any consensus is to be achieved around proposals which meet the need for electoral equality while reflecting the Commission’s other statutory obligations, this could be on the basis of a council size of around 50 and for a pattern of predominantly multi-member wards.

54 We very much welcomed the positive response we received to our draft recommendations from the political groups. It has meant that we are now able to concentrate on the detail of ward boundaries, rather than the principles which should underpin them. We have therefore drawn the following conclusions.

55 First, there has been a general acknowledgement of the Commission’s proposal for a council size of around 50. As indicated in Chapter Three, we considered alternative council sizes very carefully but we are content to maintain our provisional

conclusion that – having regard to the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received – the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 50 members.

56 Second, there has been widespread acceptance of our draft recommendations for a pattern of predominantly two- or three-member wards. We are therefore content to maintain our draft recommendations.

57 Third, we again welcomed the willingness of local interests to participate in an open debate about the electoral arrangements in the City. We are gratified that our draft recommendations received a good airing during Stage Three, increasing our confidence that we have the evidence available to make robust final recommendations to the Secretary of State.

58 Fourth, the Commission has given particular attention to the evidence provided by those respondents proposing that we should move away from our draft recommendations in particular locations. This evidence tended to reflect perceptions of local community identities and interests. The topography and geography of Durham has a number of characteristics which ought to be taken into account in determining ward boundaries. Much was said at the public meeting held during Stage Two of the review, about how current ward boundaries, or those proposed by other parties, might cut through existing communities or incorporate communities with different characteristics. We have sought to reflect, where possible, the further evidence we have received on local communities and good boundaries in modifying our proposals for the Secretary of State.

59 Fifth, Durham at present elects by whole-council elections. At Stage One, this was supported by the City Council but the Liberal Democrats argued that their 30-member proposal would be best served by annual elections. During Stage Three, few comments were made about electoral cycle and we therefore do not propose to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for change.

60 Finally, we have noted that the views of the political groups from which we have heard have moved on from those which were expressed at Stage One. All broadly reflected the Commission’s

aim to achieve improved electoral equality, taking into account local circumstances. We are grateful for this contribution to our work.

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

- (a) the unparished area
 - Gilesgate and Pelaw wards
 - Framwelgate and Newton Hall wards
 - Elvet and Neville’s Cross wards;
- (b) Bearpark, New Brancepeth, Ushaw Moor and Witton Gilbert wards;
- (c) Brandon, Croxdale, Deerness and Langley Moor & Meadowfield wards;
- (d) Cassop-cum-Quarrington, Coxhoe, Shadforth, Sherburn and Shincliffe wards;
- (e) Belmont, Carrville and Gilesgate Moor wards;
- (f) Framwellgate Moor and Pittington & West Rainton wards.

Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2 in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of this report.

The Unparished Area

62 The unparished, predominantly urban area of Durham is represented at present by 15 councillors in the six wards of Elvet, Framwelgate, Gilesgate, Neville’s Cross, Newton Hall and Pelaw. There is at present severe electoral imbalance in the area. In five of the six wards the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average. Indeed in three wards the number varies by 40 per cent or more from the average, with little overall improvement expected over the five-year period, despite the forecast increase in electorate. The area is in fact entitled at present to 17 councillors (assuming a council size of 50). The views put forward at Stages One and Three, including those from the City Council, the Liberal Democrats and the Independent members (the latter at Stage One only) are described in the following sections.

Gilesgate and Pelaw wards

63 At Stage One the City Council proposed boundary changes to five of the six unparished wards, including that the unparished Pelaw ward should be combined with the parished Gilesgate Moor ward to form a new three-member Gilesgate

Moor & Pelaw ward, and that a new two-member Crossgate ward be created comprising parts of the existing wards of Elvet, Framwelgate and Neville’s Cross. The number of electors per councillor in the new Crossgate ward would be 12 per cent above the average (6 per cent in 2002). In the neighbouring Gilesgate Moor & Pelaw ward, the City Council proposed that 602 electors should be transferred from St Hild and St Bede colleges and St Hild’s Lane in Gilesgate ward polling district AF to Elvet ward, which would move away from using the River Wear as a boundary. In the three-member ward the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average (6 per cent in 2002). The Independent members supported the City Council’s proposed Gilesgate Moor & Pelaw ward.

64 Under their proposal for a 50-member council, the Liberal Democrats proposed that Pelaw ward should be combined with the “upper” part of Gilesgate ward comprising polling district AE and part of polling district AF, to form a three-member ward. They proposed that 593 electors from the colleges of St Hild and St Bede and Pelaw Leazes Lane, currently in polling district AF in Gilesgate ward, together with Gilesgate ward polling district AG (comprising 2,357 electors), should form a new two-member St Nicholas ward. The Liberal Democrats commented that a St Nicholas ward had previously existed in the city, and that the inclusion of electors from the colleges would “create a ward with both historical identity and a natural amalgamation of University voters”. Under their proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent below the average in Pelaw & Gilesgate ward (5 per cent in 2002) and 5 per cent above in St Nicholas ward (equal to the average in 2002).

65 Having considered carefully the representations received, we decided to adopt the Liberal Democrats’ proposed wards of Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas as part of our draft recommendations. The proposals would achieve improved electoral equality and utilise clear boundaries, including the River Wear.

66 At Stage Three the City Council proposed that the boundary between the proposed wards of Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas should be modified. It considered that the boundary outlined in the draft recommendations, running along Gilesgate Bank, would split the old village of Gilesgate in half, and separate Gilesgate from the local church and community centre. It suggested that “a more appropriate point to divide the area

would be Gilesgate roundabout ... the boundary thereafter running behind the houses on the southern side of Gilesgate Bank". This proposal would transfer 130 electors from St Nicholas ward to Pelaw & Gilesgate ward, and was supported by the Liberal Democrats and Gerry Steinberg MP.

67 The boundary amendment put forward would maintain an improved level of electoral equality for the area as a whole. In view of the consensus which exists regarding the proposal for this area, we are content to include it as part of our final recommendations. Under a 50-member council the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent below the average in Pelaw & Gilesgate ward (2 per cent in 2002) and equal to the average in St Nicholas ward (4 per cent below in 2002).

Framwelgate and Newton Hall wards

68 The existing wards of Framwelgate and Newton Hall cover the north of the unparished urban area. On average, each of the two councillors for Framwelgate ward represents 40 per cent more electors than the district average (33 per cent more in 2002), while in Newton Hall ward each of the three councillors represents 3 per cent fewer electors than the average (7 per cent fewer in 2002).

69 At Stage One the City Council proposed no change for Newton Hall ward (currently comprising polling district AA) but proposed considerable changes to Framwelgate ward (currently comprising polling districts AB, AC and AD). It proposed that 1,155 electors be transferred from polling district AB to Framwellgate Moor ward; 416 electors from polling district AC and 121 electors from polling district AD should form part of a new Crossgate ward; and 824 electors from polling district AC be transferred to Neville's Cross ward. The modified Framwelgate ward would be a single-member ward and the number of electors per councillor would be 7 per cent above the average (2 per cent in 2002).

70 The Liberal Democrats proposed extensive changes to both Framwelgate and Newton Hall wards. They argued that the local perception of Newton Hall is "much wider than the ward of the same name" and that "there is a natural local boundary between the parts of the AB (Framwelgate) polling district which regard themselves as in Newton Hall or Framwellgate Moor". They therefore proposed splitting polling

district AB, with 1,938 electors forming part of a new Newton Hall South ward and 588 electors joining Framwellgate Moor ward. Newton Hall South ward would comprise all the electors south of Carr House Drive as far as the southern boundary of the existing Newton Hall ward, plus the 926 electors from polling district AB. Newton Hall North ward would comprise all the electors north of Carr House Drive (i.e. the bulk of polling district AA). Each ward would be represented by two councillors and the number of electors per councillor would be 16 per cent above the average in Newton Hall North and 2 per cent above in Newton Hall South (11 per cent above and 3 per cent below respectively in 2002).

71 The Liberal Democrats considered that the remaining Framwelgate polling districts AC and AD cover an area which has "a great deal of coherence and self-identity" and proposed that they should form a new single-member Framwelgate ward. The number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the average (5 per cent below in 2002). The Liberal Democrats also highlighted a number of "tidying-up issues" which currently exist along the boundary between the wards of Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor, concerning Westcott Drive, the Sniperley Estate, Akley Vale and Victoria Terrace. They considered that Westcott Drive "is currently split in a bizarre way between Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor [wards] and it would make much more sense to include the whole street in the same area". To include the whole area in Framwelgate ward, they proposed "drawing a line along Sacriston Lane to the A167 and then back to the Sniperley roundabout", thereby transferring 69 electors to Framwelgate ward, together with a further 50 electors from the Sniperley estate. Finally, they proposed that 28 electors in Akley Vale estate should be transferred to Framwelgate ward to better reflect community identity. These changes would transfer 147 electors from Framwellgate Moor ward to Framwelgate ward, and would require warding Framwellgate Moor parish.

72 The Independent members proposed that 824 electors should be transferred from Framwelgate ward (polling district AC) to Framwellgate Moor ward, with Framwelgate remaining a two-member ward. They added that the local Independent member considered that a further 23 electors from Westcott Drive should be transferred from Framwelgate to Framwellgate Moor, as the road is currently split between the two wards. Under their

proposal the number of electors represented by each of the two councillors for Framwelgate ward would be 13 per cent above the average (7 per cent in 2002). The Independent members supported the City Council's proposals for the Newton Hall area.

73 After the public meeting, the Independent members modified their proposals, instead proposing the abolition of Framwelgate ward: 881 electors from Framwelgate polling district AC should be transferred to Framwellgate Moor ward; 486 electors from polling district AC and 121 electors from polling district AD be transferred to Crossgate ward; and 2,526 electors from polling district AB be transferred to Newton Hall. The Independent members proposed that Newton Hall should be divided into two wards, Newton Hall North and Newton Hall South, one to be represented by three councillors and the other by two. However, they did not submit a detailed boundary between the two wards but were content to leave this task to the Commission.

74 In our draft recommendations report, we recognised that for the Newton Hall area there was some similarity in the representations received from the Liberal Democrats and, following the public meeting, the Independent members, who both proposed that the area be served by two wards (although the Liberal Democrats proposed that they be represented by a total of four councillors, and the Independent members proposed five).

75 Having considered carefully the representations received, we endorsed the Liberal Democrats' proposals for Newton Hall subject to a further boundary modification between the wards of Newton Hall North and Newton Hall South. Under the Liberal Democrats' proposal 1,938 electors in Framwelgate polling district AB would form part of the proposed Newton Hall South ward, resulting in improved electoral equality in the wider area and using identifiable boundaries. However, we considered that electoral equality could be improved further and proposed that the boundary between Newton Hall North and Newton Hall South wards should be modified so that the boundary runs further north along Canterbury Road and then east along the rear of the properties on Winchester Road, transferring an additional 97 electors from Newton Hall North ward to Newton Hall South ward. The number of electors per councillor would be 13 per cent above the average in Newton Hall North ward and 5 per

cent above in Newton Hall South ward (8 per cent above and equal to the average respectively in 2002).

76 At Stage Three there was general support for our draft recommendations for Newton Hall. In view of the reasonable electoral equality and the level of support achieved, we propose to confirm our draft recommendations for Newton Hall as final.

Elvet and Neville's Cross wards

77 The southern part of the unparished urban area is covered by the two-member Elvet ward and the three-member Neville's Cross ward, both of which are significantly under-represented. The number of electors per councillor is 41 per cent above the average in Elvet and 20 per cent above in Neville's Cross, with little improvement forecast over the five-year period.

78 At Stage One the City Council proposed considerable changes in this area, including the creation of a new Crossgate ward. It proposed that an area with 971 electors in polling district AP in Elvet ward should form part of a new two-member Crossgate ward, noting that this area formed the bulk of the former Crossgate ward which existed prior to 1978. The Council proposed that 310 electors in polling district AN should be transferred from Elvet ward to Crossgate ward, and 36 electors from the Houghall College area (Elvet polling district AO) transferred to Shincliffe ward on the grounds that this "essentially rural area has more in common with its more rural neighbour Shincliffe village". As detailed earlier, the City Council proposed that 602 electors in the colleges of St Hild and Bede and Hild's Lane should be transferred from Gilesgate ward to Elvet ward. The Council proposed that Elvet ward should continue to be represented by two councillors, and the number of electors per councillor would be 19 per cent above the average (16 per cent in 2002).

79 In Neville's Cross ward the Council proposed that the whole of polling district AM should be transferred to the new Crossgate ward, arguing that this area had formed part of the "old" Crossgate ward. As stated earlier, the Council proposed that 824 electors in polling district AC should be transferred from Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward. This latter proposal would extend the northern boundary of Neville's Cross ward to the Sniperley roundabout on the A167, and that road would form "a spinal column down the full length of this ward". The number of

electors represented by each of the three councillors would be 11 per cent above the average (9 per cent in 2002).

80 The City Council's proposed new two-member Crossgate ward was "based upon the former Crossgate ward which existed prior to boundary changes in 1978". The Council considered that "as all of the wards in the central urban [area] were suffering from under-representation ... the re-introduction of this ward would mean that electors could be drawn from the surrounding areas to help reduce the current imbalances". Consequently it proposed that Crossgate ward should comprise 1,320 electors from polling district AM currently in Neville's Cross ward, 971 electors from polling district AP in Elvet ward, 310 electors from polling district AN in Elvet ward, and 416 electors from polling district AC and 121 electors from polling district AD both in Framwelgate ward. The number of electors represented by each of the two councillors for Crossgate ward would be 12 per cent above the average (6 per cent in 2002).

81 The Liberal Democrats also proposed a reconfiguration of wards in this area, including a new Crossgate ward. The proposed new two-member ward would comprise 1,211 electors from polling district AM and 367 electors from polling district AK both currently in Neville's Cross ward; 949 electors from Elvet polling district AP, and 82 electors from Framwelgate polling district AD. The number of electors per councillor in Crossgate ward would be 10 per cent below the average (9 per cent in 2002).

82 In addition, the Liberal Democrats proposed that 1,058 electors (from Van Mildert and St Aidans colleges and the Farewell Hall estate) should be transferred from Neville's Cross polling district AL to Elvet ward. The proposed boundary would follow Potters Bank, run south and west along field boundaries until it meets Mill Hill Lane, then along Mill Hill Lane as far as the A167 and then south along the A167 until it rejoins the existing boundary at Farewell Hall. They also considered that the City Council had underestimated the level of growth in the Howlands Farm area of Elvet ward and that the 2002 forecast electorate figures were too low by some 100 electors. They also proposed that Elvet ward should be represented by three councillors, so that the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average (2 per cent in 2002). The number of electors per councillor in the

modified two-member Neville's Cross ward would be 10 per cent below the average (11 per cent in 2002).

83 The Independent members proposed two options for Neville's Cross ward. Under their first option they proposed that 919 electors from St Aidans College, Teikyo University and Van Mildert College, currently in Neville's Cross ward, should be transferred to Elvet ward. As part of their second option they agreed with the City Council's proposal that polling district AM should be transferred from Neville's Cross ward to Crossgate ward, but they opposed the Council's proposal to extend Neville's Cross northwards to the Sniperley roundabout, arguing that this "would create a ward of great length geographically for one Independent member to cover, and furthermore the ward would lack any form of community identity". As an alternative to this, the Independents proposed that the 919 electors referred to in their first option should be transferred to Elvet ward and Neville's Cross should be represented by two councillors, rather than the current three.

84 Following the public meeting, the Independent members modified their scheme and proposed that 949 electors be transferred from polling district AP in Elvet ward to Crossgate ward and the remainder of Elvet ward should join with Shincliffe ward to form a new three-member ward. They also proposed that 1,320 electors be transferred from polling district AM in Neville's Cross ward to Crossgate ward and 647 electors transferred from Trevelyan and St Mary's colleges in Elvet ward to Neville's Cross ward. Neville's Cross ward would be represented by three councillors and the number of electors per councillor would be 7 per cent above the average (5 per cent in 2002). Under their proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the enlarged three-member Elvet ward would be 9 per cent below the average (11 per cent in 2002).

85 Having considered carefully the representations received, we decided to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposals for the wards of Neville's Cross and Elvet as part of our draft recommendations because of the improved electoral equality which would be achieved across the whole area. However, having sought further clarification from the City Council, we adopted the Council's forecast electorate figure for the Howlands Farm area of Elvet ward and reduced the Liberal Democrats' forecast figure for Elvet ward

accordingly, by some 100 electors. The number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average in Elvet ward and 10 per cent below in Neville's Cross (1 per cent below and 11 per cent below respectively in 2002). We recognised that the level of electoral equality which would be achieved in these wards would not be as good as under some of the alternative proposals. However, we sought to implement a scheme which provides the best electoral equality across the city as a whole, and for that reason we adopted the Liberal Democrats' proposals for Elvet and Neville's Cross.

⁸⁶ However, we considered that the electoral equality which the Liberal Democrats' proposals would achieve in the wards of Crossgate and Framwelgate was capable of improvement. They proposed that Crossgate ward should be represented by two councillors and Framwelgate ward by one. The number of electors per councillor would be 10 per cent below the average in Crossgate and 6 per cent above in Framwelgate (9 per cent below and 5 per cent below respectively in 2002).

⁸⁷ We recommended that the Liberal Democrats' proposed wards of Crossgate and Framwelgate should be combined to form a three-member Crossgate & Framwelgate ward, subject to some boundary modifications between Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor wards proposed by the Liberal Democrats as "tidying-up issues", which are described in more detail earlier in the chapter. We recognised that, following the public meeting, the Independent members submitted a similar proposal which would "abolish" Framwelgate ward and incorporate it into an enlarged three-member Crossgate ward. In order to utilise a more coherent boundary, we also proposed to modify the boundary between Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate wards so that all the properties in Springfield Park were included in Crossgate & Framwelgate. Under our draft recommendations the number of electors represented by each of the three councillors for Crossgate & Framwelgate ward would be 1 per cent below the average (4 per cent below in 2002).

⁸⁸ At Stage Three the City Council proposed modifications to the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Neville's Cross, but supported the draft recommendations for Elvet. It considered that the area to the north and east of the Neville's Cross traffic lights "more naturally relates to Neville's Cross than the proposed Crossgate &

Framwelgate ward. It has more affinity in terms of area housing profile to Neville's Cross and is not part of the traditional City Central area which Crossgate has always been". It proposed that the boundary between the two wards should be modified to run to the east of Grays Terrace and Redhills Lane and then south to the rear of the properties on Farnley Hey Road, west along The Avenue, east along Crossgate Peth, and then east around Archery Rise until it rejoins the Commission's proposed boundary to the east of New College. This proposal would transfer 449 electors in this area from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward, and would include the monument marking the battle of Neville's Cross in Neville's Cross ward, rather than Crossgate & Framwelgate ward.

⁸⁹ The City Council noted that the developments at Sniperley Park and Westcott Drive "have been identified as necessitating re-alignment of the ward boundary". It considered that this area is "quite separate from the Framwelgate area, having more relation to the area to the north and the east, being Framwellgate Moor". Consequently it proposed that the boundary between the wards of Framwellgate Moor and Crossgate & Framwelgate should lie to the south-east of Dryburn Hill until it meets the Sniperley Road roundabout and then run south-west until it rejoins the existing boundary. This would transfer 256 electors in Sniperley Grove, Whitton Grove, Westcott Drive and Dryburn Hill from the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Framwellgate Moor ward, and would remove the need to create a new parish ward for Framwellgate Moor parish.

⁹⁰ Under the City Council's 51-member council the number of electors per councillor in Crossgate & Framwelgate ward would be 16 per cent below the average (18 per cent in 2002) and 8 per cent above in Neville's Cross ward (6 per cent in 2002). The City Council's Stage Three proposals were supported by Gerry Steinberg MP.

⁹¹ The Liberal Democrats proposed modifications to the boundaries of Crossgate & Framwelgate, Elvet and Neville's Cross. They proposed that 124 electors in the Farewell Hall estate should not be transferred to Elvet ward (as in the draft recommendations), but should remain in Neville's Cross ward, on the grounds that "more people there identify with Neville's Cross than with Elvet". They said that any imbalance in Elvet ward caused by the loss of these electors would be off-set by the

opening of the new college at Howlands Farm in Elvet ward, where they restated their Stage One view that 200 students would be in residence by October 1998.

92 The Liberal Democrats also proposed a modification to the boundary between the wards of Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate. They proposed that 114 electors in the area around the monument to the battle, should be transferred from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward. The area includes "community buildings and the Club" and would comprise George Street, Percy Terrace and St John's Road. Under the Liberal Democrats' modified proposals, the number of electors represented by each councillor would be 4 per cent below the average in Crossgate & Framwelgate ward (7 per cent in 2002) and 1 per cent below the average in Neville's Cross ward (3 per cent in 2002).

93 We received a further seven representations regarding this area. Councillor Beswick, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the Liberal Democrats' Stage Three proposals for the wards of Elvet, Neville's Cross and Crossgate & Framwelgate, as he considered that they would better reflect local communities. Councillor Beswick rejected the City Council's Stage Three proposals for the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Neville's Cross as "contrived and illogical". He also opposed the Council's proposals to modify the boundary between the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor.

94 Councillor Dickie, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the retention of the Farewell Hall estate in Neville's Cross ward on community identity grounds. He too proposed the transfer of 111 electors in George Street and St John's Road and the Cross of Neville (broadly the same area as that proposed by the Liberal Democrats) from the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward. He opposed the City Council's Stage Three proposals to transfer the larger area comprising 449 electors from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward and supported the draft recommendation that, with the exception of the 111 electors, the area around Archery Rise should be transferred to Crossgate & Framwelgate on community identity grounds.

95 Councillor Young, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals to include George Street and St John's Road in Neville's Cross ward, rather than Crossgate & Framwelgate ward, on community identity grounds.

96 Councillor Martin, member for Elvet ward, supported the Liberal Democrats' proposal that Farewell Hall estate should remain in Neville's Cross ward and not be transferred to Elvet ward. He also considered that the City Council's estimate of an extra 100 electors in the Howlands Farm site was an under-estimate, and that a higher figure would compensate for any electoral inequality which might result from the transfer of the Farewell Hall estate. He also supported the draft recommendation for the boundary between the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor and opposed the City Council's Stage Three proposals for that area.

97 Councillors Holland and Hawgood, members for Framwelgate ward, supported the draft recommendations for Crossgate & Framwelgate ward. They opposed the City Council's Stage Three proposals for Crossgate & Framwelgate ward on the grounds that they would produce electoral inequality. They could see "no reason" to justify the transfer of 449 electors from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward, and considered that "the only possible justification for a small transfer of electors, wraps around the fact that your present recommendation encloses the Cross of Neville within the Crossgate part of Crossgate & Framwelgate ward rather than the Neville's Cross ward". However, they declared themselves to be "neutral on this score" and pointed out that "after all, the name Crossgate refers to the Cross of Neville also".

98 Councillor Lightley, member for Shincliffe ward and Elvet division, supported the draft recommendation for Elvet ward.

99 We have considered carefully the representations and evidence received and propose to modify our draft recommendations accordingly. We have decided to endorse the City Council's modified boundary between Framwellgate Moor ward and Crossgate & Framwelgate ward, on community identity grounds. However, we conclude that the transfer of a further 449 electors in the south-west of the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to

Neville's Cross ward, would leave Crossgate & Framwelgate ward with an unacceptably high degree of electoral inequality. Furthermore, such a proposal was opposed by a number of respondents. We do, however, propose to adopt the City Council's proposals that 25 electors in Gray's Terrace in the Redhills Lane area should be transferred from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward on community identity grounds and to provide a better boundary.

100 As a result of our decision to endorse the City Council's modified boundary between Framwellgate Moor ward and Crossgate & Framwelgate ward, we cannot endorse the proposed transfer of 114 electors in the area around George Street, Percy Terrace and St John's Road and the Cross of Neville, from Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Neville's Cross ward. In view of the other modifications to the boundary of Crossgate & Framwelgate ward that we propose to accept, any further changes would result in an unacceptably high degree of electoral inequality in Crossgate & Framwelgate ward.

101 Regarding the boundary between the wards of Neville's Cross and Elvet, we propose to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposal (which was also supported by Councillors Beswick and Martin) to retain the 124 electors in the Farewell Hall estate in Neville's Cross ward, rather than transfer them to Elvet ward (as proposed in the draft recommendations). Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average in Elvet (7 per cent in 2002), 8 per cent below in Crossgate & Framwelgate (10 per cent in 2002), and 4 per cent below in Neville's Cross (6 per cent in 2002).

102 The proposed ward boundaries in the urban, predominantly unparished area of the city are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Bearpark, New Brancepeth, Ushaw Moor and Witton Gilbert wards

103 To the west of the unparished area lie the four wards of Bearpark, New Brancepeth, Ushaw Moor and Witton Gilbert. Bearpark and New Brancepeth are both single-member wards; Ushaw Moor and Witton Gilbert wards are each represented by two members. The average number of electors per

councillor is 1 per cent above the district average, 32 per cent below, 14 per cent above and 31 per cent below respectively, with little or no improvement forecast over the five-year period.

104 At Stage One the City Council proposed to retain the overall level of representation of six councillors for the area, but proposed mergers of wards to provide two three-member wards: Bearpark & Witton Gilbert and New Brancepeth & Ushaw Moor. This was supported by the Liberal Democrats and the Independent members.

105 The City Council said that the local members had expressed reservations over the proposal for Bearpark and Witton Gilbert wards, as the present two wards each have "a strong community identity with separate community facilities [and] furthermore, there is a strong geographical division between the two wards in the form of a steep ridge". This proposal had been put forward "purely to assist in correcting the electoral imbalance in both villages, although it would seem that the implementation of this recommendation would work against strong geographical features and community identity". The Liberal Democrats sympathised with these observations. Bearpark Parish Council stated that it "has always sought to sustain and maintain its own identity and not to be merged or become part of urban areas". Witton Gilbert Parish Council supported no change to the warding arrangements in its area.

106 We carefully considered all the representations received in relation to this area, and acknowledged the level of support for the City Council's proposals, which would achieve improved electoral equality and utilise defined boundaries and whole parishes. While we noted the concerns expressed about the inclusion of Bearpark and Witton Gilbert in the same ward, we were also aware of the significant level of over-representation which exists in Witton Gilbert ward. Together with the forecast level of under-representation in Bearpark ward, resulting from housing development, we did not consider that there was a better alternative proposal that would address the serious electoral imbalances. We therefore adopted the proposals put forward by the City Council, the Liberal Democrats and the Independent members as part of our draft recommendations.

107 The number of electors per councillor would be 19 per cent below the district average in Bearpark

& Witton Gilbert ward (10 per cent in 2002) and 1 per cent above the average in New Brancepeth & Ushaw Moor ward (3 per cent below in 2002). We recognised that a degree of over-representation would continue in Bearpark & Witton Gilbert ward, but that some improvement is expected by 2002, and it would provide an overall improvement on the current arrangement.

108 At Stage Three both the City Council and the Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for these wards. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, and in view of the improved level of electoral equality, we propose to confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Bearpark & Witton Gilbert and New Brancepeth & Ushaw Moor as final.

Brandon, Croxdale, Deerness and Langley Moor & Meadowfield wards

109 Four district wards, including the detached Croxdale ward, currently cover the south-west of the district. The number of electors per councillor in the wards of Brandon, Croxdale, Deerness and Langley Moor & Meadowfield is 11 per cent above the district average, 22 per cent below, 3 per cent below and 9 per cent below respectively (7 per cent, 25 per cent, 5 per cent and 8 per cent below in 2002).

110 At Stage One the City Council proposed no change to any of these wards. It acknowledged the high degree of electoral inequality which would persist in the single-member Croxdale ward, stating that “various attempts have been made to link the settlements of Brancepeth Village, Sunderland Bridge, and Croxdale and Hett with their nearest neighbour”. However, it considered that “these essentially very rural villages have nothing in common with the much more urban settlements of Brandon and Durham City central urban area which lie to the north”.

111 The Liberal Democrats also proposed no change for the wards of Brandon and Deerness, but argued that the detached Croxdale ward should be abolished: “[the ward] has no logicity and is merely a device to mop up surplus electors [comprising] two geographically disconnected parts with a substantial distance between the two main centres of population”. They proposed that the western part of Croxdale ward, comprising

Brancepeth parish, should join with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward and the ward renamed Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield, and it should continue to be represented by two councillors. The eastern part of Croxdale ward, comprising Croxdale & Hett parish should join with Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward which should continue to be represented by three councillors.

112 The Independent members also supported no change to the wards of Brandon and Deerness and proposed the same solution as the Liberal Democrats to the detached Croxdale ward, adding that they opposed single-member wards.

113 A resident of Brandon ward proposed that the area around Sleetburn Lane be transferred from Brandon ward to Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward in order to correct what he considered to be “an anomaly in this area”.

114 As set out in our *Guidance*, the Commission’s view of detached wards is that they are undesirable, and it will not normally recommend them to the Secretary of State. Therefore, in view of the improved electoral equality which would be achieved, the identifiable boundaries used, and the fact that it would resolve the anomaly of the detached ward, we put forward for consultation the Liberal Democrats’ and the Independent members’ proposals for the wards of Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield and Cassop-cum-Quarrington (the latter ward is detailed below).

115 We noted that good electoral equality exists in Deerness ward and although in Brandon ward it is not as good, it is expected to improve over the five-year period. In view of this, and recognising the general consensus for no change to the two wards, and that no alternative proposals were received, we proposed to retain the wards of Brandon and Deerness on their existing boundaries as part of our draft recommendations.

116 The number of electors per councillor in Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward, Brandon ward and Deerness ward would be 6 per cent, 13 per cent and 1 per cent below the district average respectively (5 per cent, 9 per cent and 4 per cent below in 2002).

117 At Stage Three the Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for all three

wards, while the City Council supported the draft recommendations for the wards of Brandon and Deerness, but opposed the proposals for the wards of Croxdale and Langley Moor & Meadowfield.

118 No other representations were received concerning the proposals for no change to Brandon and Deerness. Therefore, we are confirming our draft recommendations for no change to the wards of Brandon and Deerness as final.

119 At Stage Three, the City Council said that the residents of Croxdale, Hett and Sunderland Bridge (Croxdale & Hett parish area) “have little in the way of facilities in themselves, the residents’ needs are satisfied by travelling south to Spennymoor (out of the City of Durham) or north to the central area of Durham City, neither of which offer a satisfactory solution in this instance”. The City Council considered that the residents had two other options; the first being the Commission’s draft recommendation to combine Croxdale & Hett parish with Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward which lies to the east. However, the City Council described access to Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward as “by tortuous back roads to an area the residents have nothing in common with and are unlikely to associate”. Instead, it supported a second option, that the 777 electors in the area be combined with the proposed Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward to the west, with road links along the B6300, and “where facilities are both more plentiful and more easily accessible”. This proposal would in effect combine the existing wards of Croxdale and Langley Moor & Meadowfield.

120 The City Council proposed that this enlarged Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward should be represented by three councillors (rather than two as in the draft recommendations) giving a total council size of 51, not 50. Under a 51-member council the number of electors per councillor in the combined Croxdale, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward would be 9 per cent below the average (10 per cent in 2002).

121 Gerry Steinberg MP for the City of Durham constituency, supported the City Council’s Stage Three proposals. He considered the draft recommendations for the Croxdale & Hett parish area to be “totally unacceptable”, arguing that the geography and access available from this area to

Bowburn (in Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward) “is and would be a nightmare for any constituent wishing to travel to see a councillor in the Bowburn and Cassop areas”. He considered that residents in the Croxdale & Hett area “have reasonably easy access to the Meadowfield and Langley Moor areas, where many of them presently depend on the services offered in these villages”. He appreciated that the City Council’s proposal to combine the existing wards of Croxdale and Langley Moor & Meadowfield would mean an additional councillor, but considered this to be “fully justified on the grounds that under the current proposals ... a whole community could be left with no representative”.

122 We received a further 13 representations regarding the proposed Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward. Croxdale & Hett Parish Council considered the draft recommendation to be “a retrograde step and constitutes a serious diminution of the current electoral arrangements”. It supported the retention of the status quo for Croxdale ward, and was concerned that representation for areas with conservation status, currently all within the existing Croxdale ward, “will be diluted by the proposals”. If Croxdale was not permitted to remain as a single-member ward, the Parish Council opposed the retention of a single-member ward for Shincliffe.

123 Councillor Hutchings, a Croxdale parish councillor, opposed the draft recommendations for Croxdale ward on community identity grounds and urged retention of the status quo for the ward. However, he considered that if change was considered necessary, he would support the City Council’s revised proposal that Croxdale ward should be combined with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward.

124 Six residents of Croxdale ward opposed the draft recommendations for the ward on community identity grounds. One supported the retention of the status quo, while another proposed that Croxdale & Hett parish be combined with Shincliffe ward, as both contained conservation areas. One of the six, a resident of Sunderland Bridge village in Croxdale & Hett parish, considered that there were insufficient road links between Croxdale & Hett parish and Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. He noted that there was direct road access to Meadowfield, Neville’s Cross and

Elvet and considered that combining Croxdale & Hett parish with any of these would provide “a more logical solution”. Another resident recognised “the anomaly of the present detached ward” and proposed that the whole of the existing Croxdale ward should be combined with Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward on community identity grounds.

125 Two residents of Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward also opposed the draft recommendations for Croxdale ward on community identity grounds and considered that there were poor transport links between Croxdale & Hett parish and Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. One of the two considered that electors in Croxdale & Hett parish looked more to Meadowfield.

126 A resident of Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward supported the draft recommendation to transfer the Brancepeth parish part of Croxdale ward to Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward as it would reflect community identities, and suggested that the new ward be renamed ‘Brancepeth Castle’. He opposed the City Council’s revised proposals for a three-member ward comprising the existing wards of Langley Moor & Meadowfield and Croxdale, on the grounds that such a ward would be too large and diverse to be represented effectively.

127 Another resident of Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward opposed both the draft recommendation and the City Council’s revised proposal for the ward. However, he considered that the City Council’s proposal for a three-member ward comprising the existing wards of Langley Moor & Meadowfield and Croxdale was the better option. If the draft recommendation was accepted, he proposed that it should be called ‘Boyne’ ward, as it would comprise a large part of the former Lord Boyne estates, but if the City Council’s proposal were accepted, he proposed that the ward be called ‘South-west’.

128 Councillor Lightley, member for Elvet division (including Croxdale ward) and Shincliffe ward, supported the draft recommendation for Croxdale ward. He opposed the City Council’s Stage Three proposals which he considered “cannot ...

be justified”.

129 We have considered carefully the representations and evidence received. However, we are unable to support the retention of the status quo due to the high level of over-representation which exists in Croxdale ward. As stated earlier, the City Council’s proposal that Croxdale & Hett parish should be added to the proposed Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward would entail an additional councillor for the area and a total council size of 51.

130 Based on a council size of 50 or 51, the area covered by the existing wards of Cassop-cum-Quarrington, Croxdale and Langley Moor & Meadowfield is entitled to five councillors, not six as exists at present and would be the case under the City Council’s proposals. To retain six councillors for this area would result in a high degree of over-representation, and would provide an unfair balance of representation in this part of the district. We hear the concerns voiced by local residents, but are not convinced that the effect on community identity would be so detrimental that it would justify the level of electoral inequality which would result from the retention of the status quo, or the addition of an extra councillor. Respondents have argued that residents of Croxdale & Hett parish tend to look south out of the district, north into the urban city area, or west to Meadowfield. However, none of these would provide a solution to the problem of achieving a fair balance of representation across the district. In addition, we note the support of the Liberal Democrats for our draft recommendation. Consequently, we propose to confirm our draft recommendation for Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward, including the ward name, as final.

Cassop-cum-Quarrington, Coxhoe, Shadforth, Sherburn and Shincliffe wards

131 In the south-east of the district lie the three-member wards of Cassop-cum-Quarrington and Coxhoe, the two-member Sherburn ward and the single-member wards of Shadforth and Shincliffe. The number of electors per councillor in these wards is 15 per cent below the district average in

Cassop-cum-Quarrington, 3 per cent below in Coxhoe, 47 per cent below in Shadforth, 6 per cent above in Sherburn and 3 per cent below in Shincliffe, with little or no improvement expected in 2002.

132 At Stage One, as detailed earlier, we proposed that the parish of Croxdale & Hett (which forms the eastern part of the detached Croxdale ward) should join with Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward, which would continue to be represented by three councillors, as proposed by the Liberal Democrats and the Independent members. The number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the average (7 per cent in 2002).

133 In order to address the electoral imbalance in the area, the City Council said that it had considered transferring the Quarrington Hill area from Coxhoe ward to Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. However, the Council did not put it forward arguing that “current community ties were against this and the currently acceptable variance for the Coxhoe ward would have become unacceptable”, and so proposed no change to Coxhoe ward.

134 The City Council also proposed that 779 electors from the village of Sherburn Hill, which currently forms Sherburn Hill parish ward of Shadforth parish and is part of the Sherburn district ward, should form part of a modified Shadforth ward, with the latter continuing to be a single-member ward. The Council stated that the local member for Shadforth ward had “objected to this proposal on the grounds that the residents of Sherburn Hill have strong community ties with the village of Sherburn and have nothing in common with Shadforth”. It noted that the proposal “would also mean a much larger ward with three small settlements to be covered by a single-member”. Nevertheless, the proposal did form part of the Council’s submission.

135 Finally in this area the City Council proposed that polling district AO, comprising 36 electors in the Houghall College area, should be transferred to Shincliffe ward from the unparished Elvet ward because it considered that “this essentially rural area has more in common with the village of Shincliffe than with the more urban ward of Elvet”. It also

proposed that Shincliffe ward should continue to be represented by one councillor.

136 The Liberal Democrats proposed no change to Coxhoe and Shincliffe wards, but that the wards of Shadforth and Sherburn should be combined to form a three-member ward.

137 The Independent members proposed that Coxhoe ward should remain unchanged. They supported the Liberal Democrats’ proposal to combine Shadforth and Sherburn wards into a three-member ward. Although the Independents were opposed to single-member wards, they “considered that there is no viable solution for the Shincliffe ward as joining it with one of the surrounding wards would produce a four-member ward which is clearly unacceptable”. Therefore they proposed no change to the single-member Shincliffe ward.

138 The only other representation received in relation to this area was from Sherburn Parish Council, requesting no change to the district and parish council electoral arrangements for its area.

139 Following the public meeting the Independent members revised their Stage One proposal and, in order to eliminate all single-member wards, proposed that Shincliffe ward should form part of an enlarged three-member Elvet ward where the number of electors per councillor would be 9 per cent below the average (11 per cent in 2002).

140 We considered all the representations received during the initial Stages of the review, and recognised the improved electoral equality which would result under all the various proposals received for this area. While the City Council’s proposals would mean that the Sherburn and Shadforth ward boundaries would be coterminous with the boundaries of the parishes of the same names, the greatest improvement in electoral equality would result under the Liberal Democrats’ proposals, some of which we note also formed part of the Independent members’ proposals. Consequently, as part of our draft recommendations, and in line with our proposed wards in neighbouring parts of the district, we proposed that there should be no change for

Coxhoe and Shincliffe wards, that Shadforth and Sherburn should combine to form a three-member ward, and that Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward should be enlarged to include the parish of Croxdale & Hett. The number of electors per councillor in Cassop-cum-Quarrington, Coxhoe, Shadforth & Sherburn and Shincliffe wards would be 5 per cent above the average, 1 per cent below, 10 per cent below and equal to the average respectively (7 per cent above, 5 per cent above, 4 per cent below and 5 per cent below in 2002).

141 At Stage Three the Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for all five wards, while the City Council supported the draft recommendations for the wards of Coxhoe and Shincliffe, but re-stated its Stage One proposals for Shadforth and Sherburn wards.

142 As stated earlier, the City Council proposed that the status quo should be retained for Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward, and that Croxdale & Hett parish should instead be combined with the proposed Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward and represented by three councillors, giving a council size of 51. The City Council's Stage Three proposals were supported by Gerry Steinberg, MP for the City of Durham constituency, and Councillor Hutchings, a Croxdale parish councillor. Six residents of Croxdale ward and two residents of Cassop-cum-Quarrington opposed the draft recommendation that Croxdale & Hett parish should form part of an enlarged Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward. However, as detailed earlier in this chapter, we are confirming our draft recommendation for Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield ward as final, and as a consequence, do not propose any change to Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward, noting that this would facilitate an appropriate and fair level of representation for this part of the district.

143 The City Council opposed the draft recommendation to combine the wards of Shadforth and Sherburn to form a three-member ward. It considered that the settlements of Shadforth, Ludworth and Sherburn Hill "share certain difficulties by virtue of their socio-economic setting, being relatively small and relatively isolated in themselves, each having little in the way of communal facilities". It also considered that merging the two wards would "further disadvantage the residents of these villages as it is highly probable that the three ...

representatives required would come from the substantially larger settlement of Sherburn and they would be left without an immediate 'voice' on the ground".

144 The City Council proposed instead that Sherburn should be represented by two councillors and that Shadforth, Ludworth and Sherburn Hill should form a single-member ward. The City Council noted that the settlements of Shadforth, Ludworth and Sherburn Hill form the parish wards of Shadforth parish and that the proposed single-member ward would be coterminous with the parish boundary. Under a 50-member council the number of electors per councillor in a single-member Shadforth ward would be 7 per cent above the average (4 per cent in 2002) and 18 per cent below in Sherburn (8 per cent in 2002).

145 The City Council's Stage Three proposals were supported by Gerry Steinberg MP, Shadforth Parish Council and a resident of Croxdale ward.

146 The Liberal Democrats did not support any of the City Council's Stage Three proposals (except the modification to the boundary between the wards of Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas), including those for Shadforth and Sherburn.

147 Croxdale Parish Council opposed the retention of a single-member ward for Shincliffe "when it is not considered appropriate in their area [Croxdale] particularly given the special circumstances of the conservation area status". A Croxdale resident noted that both Croxdale & Hett parish and Shincliffe ward cover conservation areas, and proposed that they should be combined in a single ward.

148 The Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendation for no change to Shincliffe ward, as did Councillor Lightley, member for Shincliffe ward and Elvet division, and Shincliffe Parish Council.

149 Shincliffe ward comprises 1,405 electors, and under a 50-member council, the number of electors represented by the councillor for Shincliffe would be equal to the average (5 per cent below in 2002). It therefore justifies having a single councillor, and to add 777 electors from Croxdale & Hett parish would produce a high degree of electoral inequality. Consequently, we have not been persuaded to move away from our draft

recommendation for Shincliffe ward and confirm no change to the ward as final.

150 As outlined earlier, we have decided to confirm as final our draft recommendation for Cassop-cum-Quarrington ward, and in the light of the good electoral equality and general level of support achieved, we also propose to endorse our draft recommendations for Coxhoe ward as final.

151 We have considered carefully the representations and evidence received in relation to the wards of Shadforth and Sherburn. We note the improvement in electoral equality which would be produced under the draft recommendations for a combined three-member ward for the area, and that this is supported by the Liberal Democrats. We are not persuaded that the effect on community identity arguments outweigh the advantage of electoral equality in a three-member ward for Shadforth & Sherburn ward. We therefore confirm our draft recommendation for Shadforth & Sherburn as final.

Belmont, Carrville and Gilesgate Moor wards

152 In the three two-member wards of Belmont, Carrville and Gilesgate Moor (which together comprise Belmont parish) the number of electors per councillor is 5 per cent above, 18 per cent below and 16 per cent below the district average respectively (equal to the average, 21 per cent below and 16 per cent below the average in 2002).

153 At Stage One, in order to improve electoral inequality in Carrville ward the City Council proposed that the boundary between Belmont and Carrville wards should be modified to transfer 301 electors in Cheveley House, Broomside Lane (part), Brackendale Road, Rosedale and Beechdale, from Belmont ward to Carrville ward. Each ward would continue to be represented by two councillors. Under this proposal the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average in Belmont ward (8 per cent in 2002) and 5 per cent below in Carrville ward (9 per cent in 2002).

154 The City Council also proposed that Gilesgate Moor ward should be joined with the unparished Pelaw ward to form a new three-member ward in order to provide better electoral equality in the area. The number of electors per councillor in the

Pelaw & Gilesgate Moor ward would be 4 per cent below the average (6 per cent in 2002).

155 The Liberal Democrats acknowledged the existing level of electoral equality in Belmont ward and proposed no change for the ward. Under a 50-member council the electoral variance in Belmont ward would be 12 per cent (7 per cent in 2002). However, the Liberal Democrats proposed that the wards of Carrville and Gilesgate Moor be combined to form a three-member ward, therefore providing a total of five councillors in the area. They recognised that “the arithmetic of the area overall does not justify six councillors” (as exists under the current arrangements) and described the Council’s proposals as “a crude attempt to create an alternative with greater numbers but little coherence”. They argued that it seemed sensible to keep these wards together as they fall within the same parish area. The number of electors represented by each of the three councillors for Carrville & Gilesgate Moor ward would be 13 per cent above the average (11 per cent in 2002).

156 The Independent members on the Council proposed two alternative options for Belmont and Carrville wards. They considered that the current boundary between Belmont and Carrville wards along the middle of Broomside Lane “is a very strong boundary” and rather than move away from it as the City Council proposed, they proposed to move the boundary from the middle of the road to the back of the properties fronting Broomside Lane, thereby transferring these properties to Carrville ward. Under their first option they proposed that 180 electors from Broomside Lane, Cheveley House, Belmont Grange Clinic and Beechdale, plus a further nine electors in Belmont House Flats, all currently in Belmont ward, should be transferred to Carrville ward. They also proposed that four electors be transferred from West Sherburn in Belmont ward to Sherburn ward “as there is no direct route from these properties to Belmont”. Under this proposal the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Belmont ward (4 per cent below in 2002) and 10 per cent below in Carrville ward (13 per cent below in 2002).

157 Under their alternative option the Independent members proposed that 312 electors from the area “known locally as ‘Tarmac Properties’”, together with 65 electors on Broomside Lane (from the railway line up to but excluding Cheveley House)

and nine electors in Belmont House Flats, should all be transferred from Belmont ward to Carrville ward. Their alternative option again included the transfer of four electors from West Sherburn in Belmont ward to Sherburn ward. Under this alternative proposal the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent below the average in Belmont ward (11 per cent in 2002) and 7 per cent below in Carrville (unchanged in 2002).

158 Having considered the various options for the three district wards covering Belmont parish, and taking into account our proposal for a three-member Pelaw & Gilesgate ward, we considered that the Liberal Democrats' proposals provide the best alternative, subject to a minor boundary modification between Belmont and Carrville wards in order to further improve electoral equality. We proposed that the boundary between Belmont ward and Carrville & Gilesgate Moor wards should run along the middle of Newlands Road and the High Street before rejoining the existing boundary at Broomside Lane. This would transfer 130 electors from Fellside Gardens, Moor End Terrace, Newlands Road and Swinside Drive, from Carrville & Gilesgate Moor ward to Belmont ward. We were aware that under this proposal Belmont ward would straddle Broomside Lane, but noted that both the City Council and Independent members submitted alternative proposals for this area which would also cross part of Broomside Lane. Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent above the average in Belmont ward (6 per cent in 2002) and 10 per cent above the average in Carrville & Gilesgate Moor ward (8 per cent in 2002).

159 At Stage Three the City Council, the Liberal Democrats and Councillor Lupton, member for Belmont ward, supported the draft recommendations for these wards. However, Councillor Lupton noted that there are four electors in the West Sherburn area of Belmont ward who have no direct road link to Belmont. She said that in order to reach Belmont ward, these electors pass within 200 yards of an existing polling station in Gilesgate Moor and therefore proposed that the four electors should be transferred to either the proposed Carrville & Gilesgate Moor ward or Sherburn ward.

160 However, to include these four electors in a

different ward than at present, in order to meet the requirements of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, we would have to create a separate parish ward of Belmont parish. It is not feasible to create a parish ward comprising so few electors, and we suggest that the situation might best be resolved by a parish boundary review which the City Council is empowered to carry out under the terms of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997.

161 A resident of Carrville ward and a resident of Belmont ward both supported the draft recommendations for the area with one stating that they would reflect community identities.

162 In the light of the evidence received, the improved levels of electoral equality which would result, and in the absence of any proposals to the contrary, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Belmont and Carrville & Gilesgate Moor as final.

Framwellgate Moor and Pittington & West Rainton wards

163 The two-member wards of Framwellgate Moor and Pittington & West Rainton cover the most northerly and north-easterly areas of the district. The electoral variance in Framwellgate Moor ward (which covers the parish of the same name) is 19 per cent and in Pittington & West Rainton ward (which covers the parishes of Pittington and West Rainton) it is 3 per cent (23 per cent and 4 per cent respectively in 2002).

164 At Stage One the City Council proposed that the relatively over-represented Framwellgate Moor ward should gain 1,155 electors from polling district AB in the north-east of the neighbouring unparished Framwellgate ward, and be represented by three councillors, one more than at present. The Council proposed no change for Pittington & West Rainton ward. The number of electors per councillor in Framwellgate Moor would be 8 per cent above the district average (10 per cent in 2002). The Council proposed no change for Pittington & West Rainton ward.

165 The Liberal Democrats agreed with the City Council's proposal for no change for Pittington & West Rainton ward, but proposed an alternative

arrangement for Framwellgate Moor ward. They proposed that 588 electors should be transferred from polling district AB in Framwelgate ward to Framwellgate Moor ward, with the latter represented by three councillors. Under the Liberal Democrats' proposal the number of electors per councillor in Framwellgate Moor ward would be 5 per cent below the average (3 per cent in 2002).

¹⁶⁶ As detailed earlier, the Liberal Democrats also identified some "tidying-up issues" on the boundary between the wards of Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor. They proposed that all the electors in Westcott Drive should be in the same ward, rather than split between the two wards as at present, thereby transferring 69 electors from Framwellgate Moor to Framwelgate. In addition, 50 electors from the Sniperley Estate and 28 electors from Akley Vale should be transferred to Framwelgate ward. They proposed that the boundary should run "along Sacriston Lane to the A167 and then back to the Sniperley roundabout". As a result of these proposals an additional 147 electors would be transferred from Framwellgate Moor ward to the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward - the affected area would form a parish ward of Framwellgate Moor parish.

¹⁶⁷ The Independent members on the Council also proposed no change for Pittington & West Rainton ward but proposed an alternative arrangement for Framwellgate Moor ward. They proposed that 824 electors should be transferred from polling district AC in Framwelgate ward to Framwellgate Moor ward, and that the latter ward should be represented by three councillors. They added that the local Independent member considered that a further 23 electors from Westcott Drive should be transferred from Framwelgate to Framwellgate Moor, as the road is currently split between the two wards. Under their proposal the number of electors per councillor for Framwellgate Moor ward would be 1 per cent above the average (3 per cent in 2002).

¹⁶⁸ The only other representation received in relation to this area was from Framwellgate Moor Parish Council which expressed satisfaction with the existing arrangements.

¹⁶⁹ Following the public meeting the Independent members submitted an amended proposal for Framwellgate Moor ward. They proposed that 881 electors should be transferred from polling district

AC in Framwelgate ward to Framwellgate Moor ward. The number of electors per councillor for Framwellgate Moor would be 2 per cent above the average (4 per cent in 2002).

¹⁷⁰ We recognised the improved balance of representation that the various proposals for the area would achieve. In view of the general support for no change to Pittington & West Rainton ward and the reasonable electoral equality which would prevail, we included this as part of our draft recommendations. The number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the district average (6 per cent in 2002).

¹⁷¹ Having considered the various proposals for Framwellgate Moor ward, we decided to consult on the Liberal Democrats' proposals (including their suggested "tidying-up" proposals) which would achieve good electoral equality, utilise clear boundaries and contribute to a good electoral scheme across the district. We proposed that the boundary between the wards of Framwellgate Moor and Framwelgate should run north-west along the B6532 Dryburn Road until it meets the existing boundary. Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in Framwellgate Moor and Pittington & West Rainton wards would be 9 per cent below and 5 per cent above the district average respectively (6 per cent below and 6 per cent above in 2002).

¹⁷² At Stage Three both the City Council and the Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendation for no change to Pittington & West Rainton ward. Following consultation on our proposals, in the absence of any representations to the contrary, we propose to endorse our draft recommendation for Pittington & West Rainton ward as final.

¹⁷³ The City Council did however propose a modification to the draft recommendations for Framwellgate Moor ward, while the Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations.

¹⁷⁴ The City Council noted that the developments at Sniperley Park and Westcott Drive "have been identified as necessitating re-alignment of the ward boundary". It considered that this area is "quite separate from the Framwelgate area, having more relation to the area to the north and the east, being Framwellgate Moor" and proposed that the

boundary between the wards of Framwellgate Moor and Crossgate & Framwelgate should lie to the south-east of Dryburn Hill until it meets the Sniperley Road roundabout and then run south-west as far as the existing boundary. This would transfer 256 electors in Sniperley Grove, Whitton Grove, Westcott Drive and Dryburn Hill from the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward to Framwellgate Moor ward, and would remove the need to create a new parish ward for Framwellgate Moor parish. The City Council's Stage Three proposals were supported by Gerry Steinberg MP.

175 Framwellgate Moor Parish Council considered that "the boundary anomaly at Westcott Drive should be corrected and that the parish remain as a single parish with eleven members".

176 As stated earlier, Councillor Martin, member for Elvet ward, and Councillor Beswick, member for Neville's Cross ward, supported the draft recommendation for the boundary between the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor and opposed the City Council's Stage Three proposals for the area. Councillors Holland and Hawgood, members for Framwelgate ward, also supported the draft recommendations for this area and opposed the City Council's Stage Three proposals. They considered that the draft recommendation "correctly recognised that the natural physical boundary between Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor lies along the Sacriston Road ... and drew the boundary accordingly" and that "there is no case whatsoever for you to alter that boundary".

177 We have considered carefully the evidence received. We judge that the City Council's modified boundary between the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor would better reflect community identities in the area, as the area appears to look north towards Framwellgate Moor, rather than south to Crossgate & Framwelgate. It would provide a coherent boundary and good electoral equality and would also alleviate the need to ward Framwellgate Moor parish. Consequently, we propose to adopt the City Council's revised boundary as part of our final recommendations. Under a 50-member scheme the number of electors per councillor in Framwellgate Moor ward would be 2 per cent below

the district average (equal to the average in 2002).

Electoral Cycle

178 At Stage One the City Council favoured the retention of the present system of whole-council elections for the Council, while the Durham District Liberal Democrats, supported by the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council, proposed elections by thirds, in line with their proposed pattern of 10 three-member wards. However, we recommended a 50-member council and did not propose to recommend change to the present system of whole-council elections in Durham City.

179 At Stage Three we received no further representations regarding the electoral cycle. We therefore do not propose to recommend change to the present system of whole-council elections.

Conclusions

180 Having considered all the evidence and representations received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following modifications:

- (a) retention of the Farewell Hall estate in Neville's Cross ward;
- (b) the boundary between Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas wards should run to the rear of the properties on the south side of Gilesgate Bank;
- (c) the boundary between Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor wards should lie to the south-east of Dryburn Hill until it meets the Sniperley Road roundabout and then run south-west until it rejoins the existing boundary.

181 Our final recommendations for Durham City Council are that :

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 49 to 50;
- (b) there should be a net reduction of four wards to 20;
- (c) the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) the council should continue to be elected every

Figure 3:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1997 electorate		2002 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	49	50	49	50
Number of wards	24	20	24	20
Average number of electors per councillor	1,434	1,405	1,504	1,474
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	15	4	15	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	7	0	10	0

four years.

182 Figure 3 (above) shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 and 2002 electorate figures

183 As Figure 3 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 15 to four, with no ward varying by more than 10 per cent by 2002. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Durham City Council should comprise 50 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

184 At Stage One we received five submissions regarding parish council electoral arrangements. As part of our draft recommendations, we proposed adopting the proposed boundary between the district wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate and Framwellgate Moor suggested by the Liberal Democrats in order to “tidy-up” the existing boundary. This would entail the inclusion of 147 electors in the area of Sniperley Park and Westcott Drive, currently within Framwelgate Moor parish, in the new Crossgate & Framwelgate district ward. While Framwellgate Moor Parish Council supported no change to its present arrangements, the proposed area of transfer is part of Framwellgate Moor parish and, in order to adhere to the provisions of Schedule 11, we proposed that the affected area should form a new Sniperley parish ward of Framwellgate Moor parish, represented by one parish councillor. The remaining area should form Framwellgate Moor parish ward, represented by 10 parish councillors. The proposed Sniperley parish ward would form

part of Crossgate & Framwelgate district ward, and Framwellgate Moor parish ward would remain part of Framwellgate Moor district ward.

185 At Stage Three, Framwellgate Moor Parish Council opposed the draft recommendation that it be warded, although it agreed that “the boundary anomaly at Westcott Drive should be corrected”. As part of our final recommendations for the district warding arrangements, we have adopted the City Council’s proposal to include the area of Sniperley Park, Westcott Drive and Dryburn Hill, wholly within Framwellgate Moor district ward, rather than the proposed Crossgate & Framwelgate ward, to reflect community ties. As a consequence, there is no longer a need to ward Framwellgate Moor parish, and therefore we propose no change for the parish.

186 At Stage Three, a resident of Sunderland Bridge village in Croxdale & Hett parish proposed that Sunderland Bridge village be represented by a single parish councillor on Croxdale & Hett parish. However, we did not receive a request from the parish council that it be warded, and therefore propose to make no recommendation for change to Croxdale & Hett parish.

187 At Stage One we also received representations from Bearpark, Sherburn and Witton Gilbert parish councils requesting no change to their electoral arrangements. In our consultation report, we did not recommend any further changes to the electoral arrangements of parishes in the district.

188 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district, and are confirming this as final.

Final Recommendation

Elections for parish councils should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that for the City Council.

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Durham City

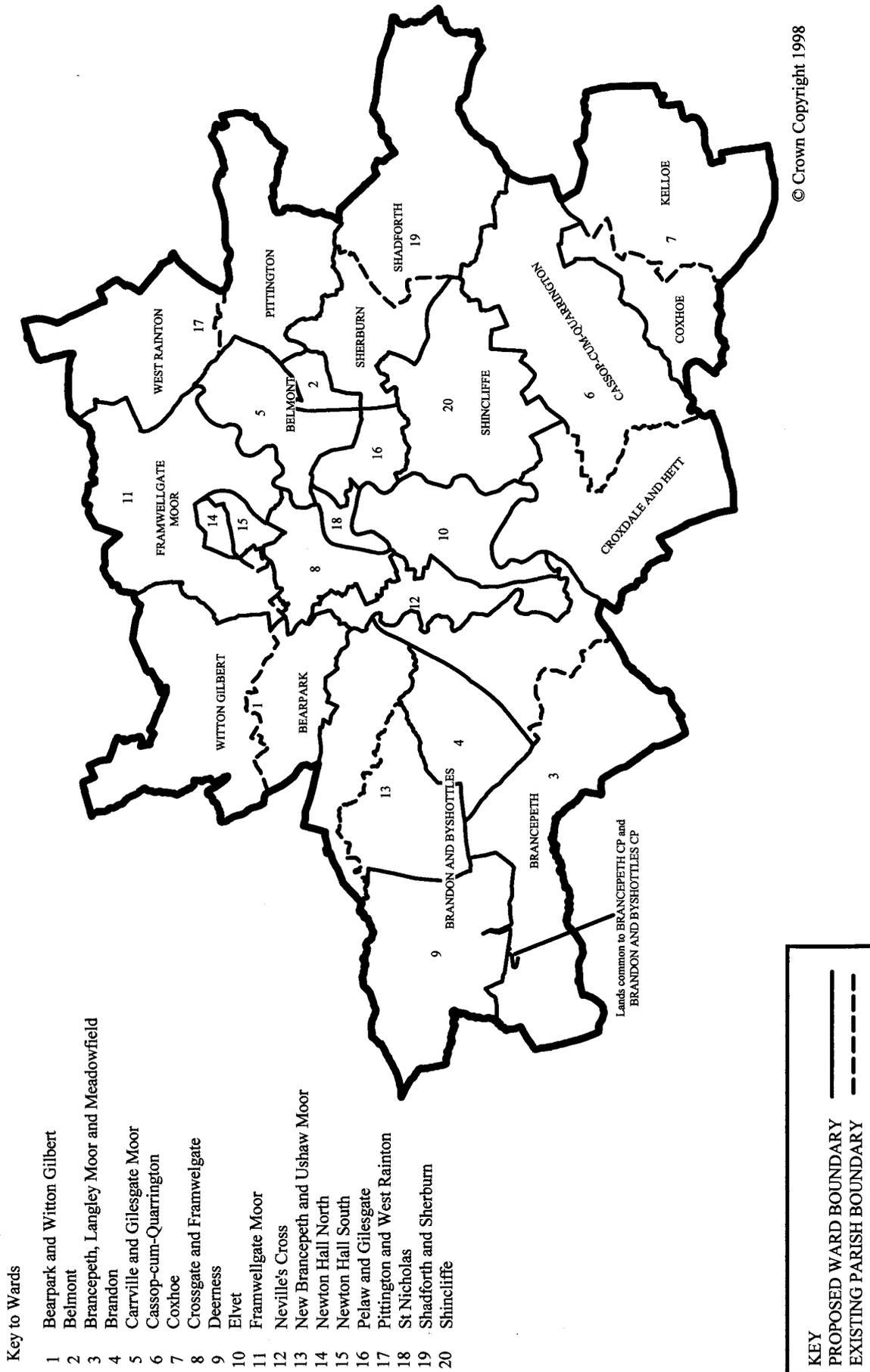


Figure 4:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Durham City

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bearpark & Witton Gilbert	3	3,431	1,144	-19	3,998	1,333	-10
2 Belmont	2	3,130	1,565	11	3,130	1,565	6
3 Brancepeth, Langley Moor & Meadowfield	2	2,971	1,486	6	3,106	1,553	5
4 Brandon	3	4,755	1,585	13	4,841	1,614	9
5 Carrville & Gilesgate Moor	3	4,644	1,548	10	4,764	1,588	8
6 Cassop-cum-Quarrington	3	4,448	1,483	5	4,745	1,582	7
7 Coxhoe	3	4,175	1,392	-1	4,636	1,545	5
8 Crossgate & Framwelgate	3	3,881	1,294	-8	3,961	1,320	-10
9 Deerness	2	2,793	1,397	-1	2,844	1,422	-4
10 Elvet	3	4,031	1,344	-4	4,129	1,376	-7
11 Framwellgate Moor	3	4,113	1,371	-2	4,403	1,468	0
12 Neville's Cross	2	2,688	1,344	-4	2,768	1,384	-6
13 New Brancepeth & Ushaw Moor	3	4,239	1,413	1	4,288	1,429	-3
14 Newton Hall North	2	3,170	1,585	13	3,170	1,585	8
15 Newton Hall South	2	2,961	1,481	5	2,961	1,481	0
16 Pelaw & Gilesgate	3	3,866	1,289	-8	4,346	1,449	-2

Figure 4 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Durham City

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
17 Pittington & West Rainton	2	2,951	1,476	5	3,127	1,564	6
18 St Nicholas	2	2,820	1,410	0	2,820	1,410	-4
19 Shadforth & Sherburn	3	3,802	1,267	-10	4,254	1,418	-4
20 Shincliffe	1	1,405	1,405	0	1,405	1,405	-5
Totals	50	70,274	—	—	73,696	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,405	—	—	1,474	—

Source: Electorate figures are based the Liberal Democrat Group's submission, except for Elvet ward where the forecast electorate figure for 2002 reflects the City Council's forecasts. This has a negligible effect on electoral variances.

Notes: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

6. NEXT STEPS

189 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in the City of Durham and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

190 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.

191 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 Review
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

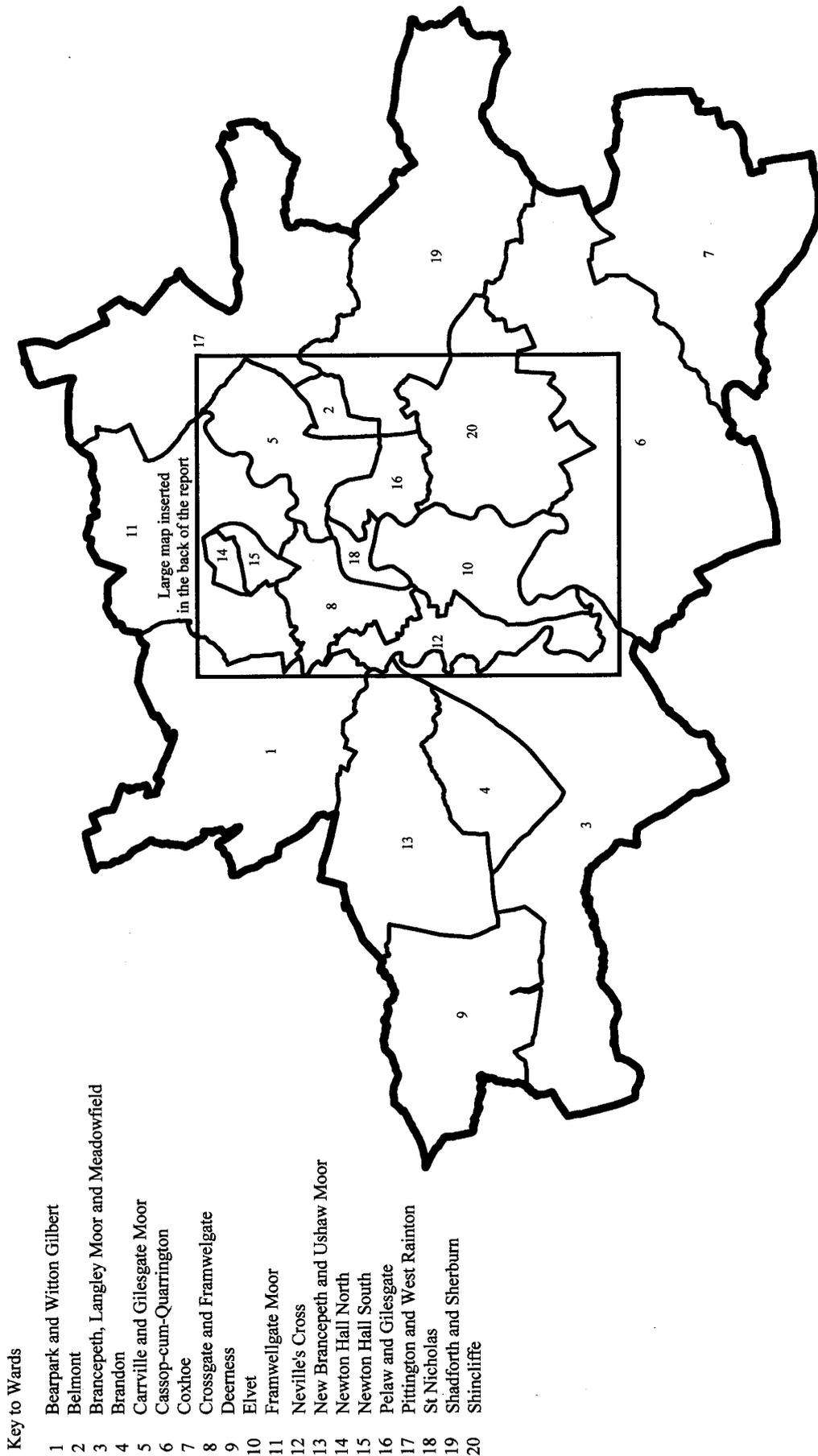
Final Recommendations for Durham City: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Durham City area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the area which is shown in more detail on the large map inserted at the back of the report.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the Commission's proposed warding arrangements for the urban, predominantly unparished, area of Durham city.

Map A1:
Final Recommendations for Durham City: Key Map



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- Key to Wards**
- 1 Bearpark and Witton Gilbert
 - 2 Belmont
 - 3 Brancepeth, Langley Moor and Meadowfield
 - 4 Brandon
 - 5 Carrville and Gilesgate Moor
 - 6 Cassop-cum-Quarrington
 - 7 Coxhoe
 - 8 Crossgate and Framwelgate
 - 9 Deerness
 - 10 Elvet
 - 11 Framwelgate Moor
 - 12 Neville's Cross
 - 13 New Brancepeth and Ushaw Moor
 - 14 Newton Hall North
 - 15 Newton Hall South
 - 16 Pelaw and Gilesgate
 - 17 Pitlington and West Rainton
 - 18 St Nicholas
 - 19 Shadforth and Sherburn
 - 20 Shincliffe

APPENDIX B

Draft Recommendations for Durham City

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 4, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations only in respect of the wards of Crossgate & Framwelgate, Elvet, Framwellgate Moor, Neville's Cross, Pelaw & Gilesgate and St Nicholas where our draft proposals were as set out in Figure B1.

Although many of the constituent areas appear the same as under our final recommendations, in fact the affected areas are not exactly the same. The final recommendations are detailed in Chapter 5.

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
Crossgate & Framwelgate	3	Elvet ward (part); Neville's Cross ward (part); Framwelgate ward (part); Framwellgate Moor ward (part – part of Framwellgate Moor parish)
Elvet	3	Elvet ward (part); Neville's Cross ward (part)
Framwellgate Moor	3	Framwellgate Moor ward (part – part of Framwellgate Moor parish); Framwelgate ward (part)
Neville's Cross	2	Neville's Cross ward (part)
Pelaw & Gilesgate	3	Gilesgate ward (part); Pelaw ward
St Nicholas	2	Gilesgate ward (part)

Figure B2:

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Crossgate & Framwelgate	3	4,162	1,387	-1	4,242	1,414	-4
Elvet	3	4,155	1,385	-1	4,253	1,418	-4
Framwellgate Moor	3	3,857	1,286	-9	4,147	1,382	-6
Neville's Cross	2	2,539	1,270	-10	2,619	1,310	-11
Pelaw & Gilesgate	3	3,736	1,245	-11	4,216	1,405	-5
St Nicholas	2	2,950	1,475	5	2,950	1,475	0

Source: Electorate figures are based on the Liberal Democrats' Stage One submission.