

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Burnley in Lancashire

February 2000

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of wards and electoral divisions – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, and the number of councillors and ward names. We can also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the borough.

This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Burnley in Lancashire.

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CONTENTS

	page
SUMMARY	<i>v</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>5</i>
3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED	<i>9</i>
4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>11</i>
5 NEXT STEPS	<i>23</i>
APPENDICES	
A Draft Recommendations for Burnley: Detailed Mapping	<i>25</i>
B The Statutory Provisions	<i>29</i>

A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Burnley town is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Burnley on 7 September 1999.

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

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

- **in five of the 16 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and three wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **by 2004 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 five wards and by more than 20 per cent in three wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 66–67) are that:

- **Burnley Borough Council should have 45 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 15 wards, instead of 16 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 14 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one, with two wards retaining their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In all of the proposed 15 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all 15 wards expected to vary by no more than 8 per cent from the average for the borough in 2004.**

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

- **new warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for Hapton parish;**

- **an increase in parish councillors in Ightenhill parish from five to seven.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 15 February 2000. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.**
- **It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 10 April 2000:

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Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
1	Bank Hall	3	Bank Hall ward (part); Brunshaw ward (part); Fulfilled ward (part)
2	Briercliffe	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (including Briercliffe parish)
3	Brunshaw	3	Brunshaw ward (part); Fulfilled ward (part)
4	Cliviger with Worsthorne	3	Cliviger with Worsthorne ward (including the parishes of Cliviger and Worsthorne-with-Hurstwood), Brunshaw ward (part)
5	Coal Clough with Deerplay	3	Coal Clough with Deerplay ward (part - including the parishes of Dunnockshaw and Habergham Eaves); Rosehill ward (part)
6	Daneshouse with Stoneyholme	3	Daneshouse with Stoneyholme ward; Bank Hall ward (part)
7	Gannow	3	Lowerhouse ward (part); Gawthorpe ward (part); Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward (part)
8	Gawthorpe	3	Gawthorpe ward (part); Hapton with Park ward (part)
9	Hapton with Park	3	Hapton with Park ward (part - including part of Hapton parish)
10	Lanehead	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
11	Queensgate	3	Queensgate ward; Bank Hall ward (part)
12	Rosegrove with Lowerhouse	3	Barclay ward (part); Coal Clough with Deerplay ward (part); Hapton with Park ward (part - part of Hapton parish); Lowerhouse ward (part)
13	Rosehill with Burnley Wood	3	Bank Hall ward (part); Fulfilled ward (part); Rosehill ward (part)
14	Trinity	3	Trinity ward; Barclay ward (part); Coal Clough with Deerplay ward (part); Fulfilled ward (part)
15	Whittlefield with Ightenhill	3	Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward (part - including Ightenhill parish)

Note: Map 2 and Appendix A, including the large map in the back of the report, illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Burnley

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bank Hall	3	4,569	1,523	0	4,677	1,559	-1
2	Briercliffe	3	4,619	1,540	1	4,698	1,566	-1
3	Brunshaw	3	4,754	1,585	4	4,872	1,624	3
4	Cliviger with Worsthorne	3	4,468	1,489	-2	4,544	1,515	-4
5	Coal Clough with Deerplay	3	4,988	1,663	9	5,095	1,698	8
6	Daneshouse with Stoneyholme	3	4,435	1,478	-3	4,510	1,503	-5
7	Gannow	3	4,533	1,511	-1	4,660	1,553	-1
8	Gawthorpe	3	4,684	1,561	3	4,890	1,630	3
9	Hapton with Park	3	4,090	1,363	-10	4,646	1,549	-2
10	Lanehead	3	4,468	1,489	-2	4,544	1,515	-4
11	Queensgate	3	4,553	1,518	0	4,675	1,558	-1
12	Rosegrove with Lowerhouse	3	4,518	1,506	-1	4,740	1,580	0
13	Rosehill with Burnley Wood	3	4,728	1,576	3	4,808	1,603	2
14	Trinity	3	4,342	1,447	-5	4,576	1,525	-3
15	Whittlefield with Ightenhill	3	4,784	1,595	5	4,947	1,649	5
	Totals	45	68,533	-	-	70,882	-	-
	Averages	-	-	1,523	-	-	1,575	-

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

Note: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 The current total electorate figure differs marginally from the total in Figure 4; however we would expect this to have a negligible impact on variances

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Burnley in Lancashire on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the 12 districts in Lancashire (excluding Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool) as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. We expect to review the unitary authorities of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool in 2001. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Burnley. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in 1990 (Report No. 588). The electoral arrangements of Lancashire County Council were last reviewed in 1980 (Report No. 399). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements shortly after completion of the district reviews in order to enable orders to be made by the Secretary of State for the 2005 county elections.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we must have regard to:

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

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also make recommendations on the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the borough.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties*. This sets out our approach to the reviews.

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

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

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

9 The review is in four stages (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Stages of the Review

Stage	Description
One	Submission of proposals to the Commission
Two	The Commission’s analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one half of the borough council would be elected, in year two half the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral areas in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities.

11 Following publication of the White Paper we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the Lancashire districts, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we considered that local authorities and other interested parties might wish to have regard to the Secretary of State’s intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. The proposals are now being taken forward in a Local Government Bill published in December 1999 and are currently being considered by Parliament.

12 Stage One began on 7 September 1999, when we wrote to Burnley Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough and the Members of the European Parliament for the North West Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local

press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 29 November 1999.

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

14 Stage Three began on 15 February 2000 and will end on 10 April 2000. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.**

15 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to move away from them in any areas, and submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, he will make an order. The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 The borough of Burnley is situated in the east of Lancashire, and is bordered to the north by Pendle borough, to the west and south by the boroughs of Ribble Valley, Hyndburn and Rossendale and to the east by West Yorkshire. The borough has a population of some 91,130 and covers around 11,000 hectares, comprising Burnley town together with surrounding settlements. Historically the town has been an important manufacturing centre, particularly in the cotton industry. Although textiles are still manufactured, more recently manufacturing in the town has moved to include products for the aerospace and automotive industries. The town is served by the M65 motorway while the Leeds & Liverpool canal runs through the borough.

17 The borough contains seven parishes, but much of the main urban centre of Burnley is unparished.

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

19 The electorate of the borough is 68,522 (February 1999). The Council presently has 48 members who are elected from 16 wards, all of which are represented by three members. The Council is elected by thirds.

20 Since the last electoral review there has been little change in the electorate in Burnley borough. At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,428 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,477 by the year 2004 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 five of the 16 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in three wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward where the councillor represents 33 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Burnley

Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bank Hall	3	4,076	1,359	-5	4,176	1,392	-6
2 Barclay	3	3,252	1,084	-24	3,453	1,151	-22
3 Briercliffe	3	4,619	1,540	8	4,698	1,566	6
4 Brunshaw	3	4,031	1,344	-6	4,137	1,379	-7
5 Cliviger with Worsthorne	3	4,452	1,484	4	4,528	1,509	2
6 Coal Clough with Deerplay	3	4,281	1,427	0	4,378	1,459	-1
7 Daneshouse	3	4,167	1,389	-3	4,238	1,413	-4
8 Fulfilledge	3	3,717	1,239	-13	3,781	1,260	-15
9 Gawthorpe	3	4,566	1,522	7	4,772	1,591	8
10 Hapton with Park	3	5,013	1,671	17	5,585	1,862	26
11 Lanehead	3	4,468	1,489	4	4,544	1,515	3
12 Lowerhouse	3	4,362	1,454	2	4,488	1,496	1
13 Queensgate	3	4,115	1,372	-4	4,230	1,410	-5
14 Rosehill	3	4,313	1,438	1	4,387	1,462	-1
15 Trinity	3	3,376	1,125	-21	3,594	1,198	-19
16 Whittlefield with Ightenhill	3	5,714	1,905	33	5,893	1,964	33
Totals	48	68,522	-	-	70,882	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,428	-	-	1,477	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Burnley Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1999, electors in Barclay ward were relatively over-represented by 24 per cent, while electors in Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward were relatively under-represented by 33 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

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

22 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers and members from the Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received five representations during Stage One, including borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and a joint submission from the Independent and Conservative Parties, each of which may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

Burnley Borough Council

23 The Borough Council proposed a council of 45 members, three less than at present, serving 15 wards compared to the existing 16. The Council proposed retaining a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough. It considered that its proposals would achieve substantial improvements to electoral equality while reflecting the other statutory criteria. It noted that “the outcome of the [Council’s own] public consultation exercise has not revealed any substantial feeling against the proposals”. Under the Borough Council’s scheme, three wards would retain their existing boundaries while the boundaries of the remaining wards would change.

24 Under the Borough Council’s proposals, no ward would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average either now or in 2004.

The Independent and Conservative Parties

25 Councillors Alston, Fisk and Tate, writing on behalf of the Independent and Conservative Parties (‘the Independents and Conservatives’), submitted for consideration a working paper which had been drawn up by officers at the Borough Council. They proposed a council of 44 members comprising 10 three-member wards and seven two-member wards. Under this proposal two wards, Fullede with Burnley Wood and Hapton with Park, would vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average in 2004, in fact varying by 19 per cent and 17 per cent respectively.

Parish Councils

26 We received two representations from parish councils. Dunnockshaw Parish Council stated that it was satisfied with the present arrangements for the parish. Ightenhill Parish Council expressed concern at the Borough Council’s proposals, arguing that the proposals “do not address democratic concerns”.

Other Representations

27 The North West Conservatives stated that they supported the proposals put forward by the Conservative Party. They also stated that these proposals had the support of local Conservative councillors and the Burnley Conservative Association.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Burnley is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

30 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.

31 Our *Guidance* states that although 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 the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral 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

32 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 3 per cent from 68,522 to 70,882 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expects the growth to be relatively evenly distributed, with the most noticeable increase in Hapton with Park ward (572 electors). The Council has 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. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

33 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the Borough Council's figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

Council Size

34 As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government. Burnley Borough Council presently has 48 members. The Borough Council proposed reducing the existing council size to 45, in a uniform pattern of 15 three-member wards. The Independent and Conservative Parties made a joint submission proposing a reduction in council size to 44, comprising 10 three-member wards and seven two-member wards.

35 We have considered both proposals, but have not been persuaded that the 44-member scheme would meet the objectives of this review better than the 45-member scheme submitted by the Council. In particular we noted that a council size of 45 would provide a good balance of representation between the parished and the unparished areas. Therefore, having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 45 members.

Electoral Arrangements

36 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received during Stage One, and in particular the borough-wide schemes received from the Borough Council and the joint submission from the Independents and Conservatives. We have calculated that both schemes would secure improvements to electoral equality compared to the existing arrangements. However, we note that the proposals put forward by the Borough Council would provide better electoral equality across the borough as a whole than those put forward by the Independents and Conservatives. In particular we note that under the Independents' and Conservatives' proposal two wards, Hapton with Park and Fulfilledge with Burnley Wood, would retain substantial electoral imbalances in 2004.

37 With regard to the warding patterns put forward in the two borough-wide schemes, we note that the Borough Council proposed a pattern of 15 three-member wards covering the borough while the Independents and Conservatives proposed 10 three-member wards and seven two-member wards. Having carefully examined the two sets of proposals, we do not consider that there is sufficient evidence in terms of the statutory criteria to depart from the existing pattern of three-member wards or for a reduction to 44 rather than 45 councillors overall. Consequently, we have concluded that we should base our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme, as we consider that it would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than the existing arrangements or the other proposals received during Stage One. However, we note that in a number of areas the Borough Council has made proposals for minor modifications to external parish boundaries, largely to reflect ground detail, which we are unable to adopt as we are unable to recommend changes to such boundaries as part of a periodic electoral review. For borough warding purposes the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (i) Briercliffe, Cliviger with Worsthorne and Lanehead wards;
- (ii) Bank Hall, Daneshouse and Queensgate wards;

- (iii) Brunshaw, Fulledge and Rosehill wards;
- (iv) Barclay, Coal Clough with Deerplay and Trinity wards;
- (v) Lowerhouse and Whittlefield with Ightenhill wards;
- (vi) Gawthorpe and Hapton with Park wards.

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

Briercliffe, Cliviger with Worsthorpe and Lanehead wards

39 These three wards are situated in the east of the borough. Briercliffe ward comprises the parish of Briercliffe together with a small unparished area in the west of the ward, Cliviger with Worsthorpe ward comprises the parishes of Cliviger and Worsthorpe-with-Hurstwood, and Lanehead ward is entirely unparished. The number of electors per councillor is 8 per cent above the borough average in Briercliffe ward (6 per cent in 2004), 4 per cent above in Cliviger with Worsthorpe ward (2 per cent in 2004) and 4 per cent above in Lanehead ward (3 per cent in 2004).

40 At Stage One Burnley Borough Council proposed that these three wards should each remain unchanged. Under a council size of 45, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the borough average in Briercliffe ward (1 per cent below in 2004), 3 per cent below in Cliviger with Worsthorpe ward (4 per cent below in 2004) and 2 per cent below in Lanehead ward (4 per cent below in 2004). The Independents and Conservatives also proposed that the Briercliffe and Cliviger with Worsthorpe wards should be retained on their existing boundaries. They proposed, however, that Lanehead ward should be modified to include an area in the north, east of the existing Bank Hall ward. Under the Independents' and Conservatives' scheme, which only included electorate figures for 2004, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the borough average in Briercliffe ward, 6 per cent below in Cliviger with Worsthorpe ward and 9 per cent above in Lanehead ward.

41 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received during Stage One. We note that both schemes proposed that Briercliffe and Cliviger with Worsthorpe wards should be retained on their existing boundaries. In the light of this consensus, together with the good electoral equality which would be achieved under a council size of 45 in the two wards concerned, we are adopting the proposals for these wards as part of our draft recommendations, subject to two minor amendments to the boundary between Cliviger with Worsthorpe ward and Brunshaw ward to better reflect ground detail. With regard to the proposals for Lanehead ward, we note that, under a council size of 45, the Borough Council's proposals would achieve a better level of electoral equality, while retaining existing community ties and facilitating our proposals for the wider borough area. We are therefore adopting the Borough Council's proposals for Lanehead ward as part of our draft recommendations. Our proposals are shown on Map A2 and the large map at the back of this report.

Bank Hall, Daneshouse and Queensgate wards

42 These three wards are situated in the centre and north of Burnley town and each is entirely unparished. Bank Hall ward contains most of Burnley's central commercial area. The number of electors per councillor is 5 per cent below the borough average in Bank Hall ward (6 per cent in 2004), 3 per cent below in Daneshouse ward (4 per cent in 2004) and 4 per cent below in Queensgate ward (5 per cent in 2004).

43 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that Bank Hall ward should be modified to have a more easterly orientation. The Council proposed that the part of Bank Hall ward to the west of the A682 should be transferred to form part of the ward to the north, while the area to the south of the River Calder would form part of a new Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward. It proposed that Bank Hall ward should be further modified to include an area around Higgin Street, currently in Fulfilledge ward, together with an area on either side of Ormerod Road, currently in Brunshaw ward. The northern boundary of Bank Hall ward would be modified, transferring an area around Ivy Street to Queensgate ward. Under the Council's scheme there would be no further changes to the boundaries of Daneshouse and Queensgate wards, although the Council proposed that Daneshouse ward should be renamed Daneshouse with Stoneyholme.

44 Under the Borough Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the borough average in Bank Hall ward (1 per cent below in 2004), 3 per cent below in Daneshouse with Stoneyholme ward (5 per cent below in 2004) and equal to the borough average in Queensgate ward (1 per cent below in 2004).

45 The Independents and Conservatives proposed that the existing three-member Queensgate ward should be modified to incorporate a similar area in the north of the existing Bank Hall ward to that proposed by the Borough Council. They proposed that the existing three-member Daneshouse ward should be modified to include an area of Bank Hall ward around Pheasantford Street. The Independents and Conservatives also proposed that a revised two-member Trinity ward should comprise much of the existing ward together with an area in the south west of the existing Bank Hall ward, containing most of the town's central commercial area. Under their proposals, which only included electorate figures for 2004, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the borough average in Daneshouse ward, 1 per cent above in Queensgate ward and 8 per cent below in Trinity ward.

46 We have given careful consideration to the proposals which we have received in this area. In particular, we note that the Borough Council's proposals would achieve a better level of electoral equality than those put forward by the Independents and Conservatives, while facilitating our proposals for the wider area and, we judge, providing a satisfactory reflection of the other statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting the Borough Council's proposals for the wards of Bank Hall, Daneshouse with Stoneyholme and Queensgate as part of our draft recommendations. Our proposals are detailed on the large map at the back of this report.

Brunshaw, Fulfilledge and Rosehill wards

47 Together these three wards form the south-eastern part of the central urban area of the borough and each is entirely unparished. The number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent below

the borough average in Brunshaw ward (7 per cent below in 2004), 13 per cent below in Fulfilled ward (15 per cent below in 2004) and 1 per cent above in Rosehill ward (1 per cent below in 2004).

48 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that, in addition to the modification to the boundary of Fulfilled ward, outlined above, the remainder of Fulfilled ward should be divided between the existing Brunshaw ward and a new Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward. Specifically it proposed that Brunshaw ward should include that part of Fulfilled ward which lies generally to the east of Mitella Street, while the remaining area which lies generally to the west of the River Calder would form part of a new Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward. The Council further proposed that the new Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward should include part of the existing Rosehill ward lying to the east of the Manchester Road, but also incorporating those properties on the eastern edge of Scott Park.

49 Under the Borough Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent above the borough average in Brunshaw ward (3 per cent in 2004) and 3 per cent above in Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward (2 per cent in 2004).

50 In addition to the proposed modification to a three-member Brunshaw ward detailed earlier, the Independents and Conservatives included proposals for a new three-member Fulfilled with Burnley Wood ward. The new ward would comprise the existing Fulfilled ward, together with an area of the existing Bank Hall ward lying generally to the east of Centenary Way and an area of Rosehill ward situated generally to the east of Moseley Road and the railway line. The working paper sent to us by the Independents and Conservatives noted that electoral equality in Fulfilled and Burnley Wood ward would be worse than in other wards, but stated that "there is a strong case for this exception due to the retention of community identities". Under these proposals, by 2004 the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the borough average in Briercliffe ward and 19 per cent above in Fulfilled with Burnley Wood ward.

51 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received during Stage One. We are particularly concerned at the poor levels of electoral equality which would result under the proposals put forward by the Independents and Conservatives. While we note the issues raised regarding community identities in the area, we do not consider that such levels of electoral inequality are justified in this case. Consequently we are adopting the Borough Council's proposals in this area as part of our draft recommendations as we consider that they would secure substantial improvements to electoral equality, and, having visited the area, we judge that they satisfactorily reflect the statutory criteria while facilitating our proposals across the wider area. As noted above, we have proposed minor amendments to the boundary between the wards of Brunshaw and Cliviger with Worsthorne. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on the large map at the back of this report.

Barclay, Coal Clough with Deerplay and Trinity wards

52 The wards of Barclay, Coal Clough with Deerplay and Trinity are situated in the centre and south of the borough. Coal Clough with Deerplay ward comprises the parishes of Dunnockshaw and Habergham Eaves together with an unparished area in the south of Burnley town, while

Barclay and Trinity wards are unparished. The area covered by these wards is significantly over-represented: the number of electors per councillor is 24 per cent below the borough average in Barclay ward (22 per cent below in 2004), equal to the average in Coal Clough with Deerplay ward (1 per cent below in 2004) and 21 per cent below in Trinity ward (19 per cent below in 2004).

53 In order to address the current over-representation in Trinity ward, the Borough Council proposed that it should be expanded to include part of Barclay ward to the east of Cog Lane together with the Chicken Hill area of Coal Clough with Deerplay ward. It proposed that Coal Clough with Deerplay ward should be further modified to include an area which lies generally to the west of the Manchester Road, currently in Rosehill ward, while an area around Florence Avenue, currently in Coal Clough with Deerplay ward, would be combined with Barclay ward. The Council proposed that, in order to address the under-representation in Barclay ward, it should be further expanded to include part of Lowerhouse ward around Lowerhouse County Junior School and the Printers Fold area of Hapton with Park ward. It also proposed that Barclay ward should be renamed Rosegrove with Lowerhouse.

54 Under the Borough Council's proposals the average number of electors per councillor would be 9 per cent above the borough average in Coal Clough with Deerplay ward (8 per cent above in 2004), 1 per cent below the borough average in Rosegrove with Lowerhouse ward (equal to the average in 2004) and 5 per cent below the borough average in Trinity ward (3 per cent below in 2004).

55 The Independents and Conservatives proposed that, in addition to the modification to the three-member Rosehill ward, outlined above, the ward should be expanded to the west and south to take in areas of the existing Coal Clough with Deerplay ward. They proposed that a modified two-member Coal Clough with Deerplay ward should be further amended to include an area of Barclay ward around Paisley Street together with an area of Trinity ward around Richmond Street. They proposed that a modified two-member Barclay ward should incorporate an area of Trinity ward around Westway. Under the Independents' and Conservatives' proposals the average number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Barclay ward in 2004, 7 per cent above the average in Coal Clough with Deerplay ward and 3 per cent above in Rosehill ward.

56 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received in this area. While we note that both sets of proposals would secure substantial improvements to electoral equality, we are unable to have regard to any single area in isolation but must consider the impact which any proposals would have upon the wider area. Consequently, we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals for the wards in this area, as we judge they would provide a satisfactory balance of the statutory criteria while permitting the provision of a good borough-wide scheme. Our proposals are shown on the large map at the back of this report.

Lowerhouse and Whittlefield with Ightenhill wards

57 These two wards are situated in the north of the borough. Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward comprises Ightenhill parish together with an unparished area to the south, while Lowerhouse ward is entirely unparished. The number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent above the borough

average in Lowerhouse ward (1 per cent in 2004) and 33 per cent above the average in Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward both now and in 2004.

58 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that the majority of the existing Lowerhouse ward should be combined with an area of Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward on either side of Ightenhill Park Lane to form a new Gannow ward. The Council also proposed that this ward should incorporate part of the existing Gawthorpe ward in the Poets Road area. It proposed no further amendments to Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward. Under the Borough Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the borough average in Gannow ward both now and in 2004 and 5 per cent above the borough average in Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward both now and in 2004.

59 The Independents and Conservatives proposed that Lowerhouse ward should be retained on its existing boundaries and with the existing level of representation. It proposed that the existing Ightenhill & Whittlefield ward should be divided into two along Tunnel Street, Ighten Road and Ightenhill Park Lane and then running generally north to the borough boundary, to form two new two-member wards of Ightenhill and Whittlefield. Under their proposals, which included electorate figures for 2004 only, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the borough average in Ightenhill ward, 7 per cent below the borough average in Lowerhouse ward and 7 per cent below the borough average in Whittlefield ward. Additionally, Ightenhill Parish Council stated that it did not agree in principle with the Council's proposals.

60 Having considered the proposals put to us in this area at Stage One, we are adopting the proposals put to us by the Borough Council as part of our draft recommendations, as we judge that they provide the best balance of the need to secure improvements to electoral equality while having regard to the other statutory criteria. We have proposed a minor modification to the boundary between Gannow and Whittlefield with Ightenhill wards to ensure that the borough ward boundary reflects parish boundaries. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on the large map at the back of this report.

Gawthorpe and Hapton with Park wards

61 These two wards are situated in the west of the borough. Hapton with Park ward comprises Hapton parish together with an unparished area to the north, while Gawthorpe ward is entirely unparished. The number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the borough average in Gawthorpe ward (8 per cent in 2004) and 17 per cent above in Hapton with Park ward (26 per cent in 2004).

62 The Borough Council's proposals addressed the substantial under-representation in Hapton with Park ward by reconfiguring the wards in this area. Consequently it proposed amending the boundary between Hapton with Park and Lowerhouse wards, detailed above. The Council also proposed that an area in the northeast of Hapton with Park ward should be transferred to Gawthorpe ward. It further proposed that the boundary between Gawthorpe ward and the new Gannow ward should be amended, as detailed above. Under the Borough Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent above the borough average in Gawthorpe ward both now and in 2004 and 10 per cent below the borough average in Hapton with Park ward (2 per cent below in 2004).

63 The Independents and Conservatives proposed that Gawthorpe ward should be divided into two new two-member wards: Gawthorpe North, comprising the northern portion of the existing Gawthorpe ward, and Gawthorpe South, comprising the remainder of the existing Gawthorpe ward together with the Stone Moor Bottoms area of Hapton with Park ward. They proposed that the remaining Hapton with Park ward should retain its existing representation. Under the Independents' and Conservatives' proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent below the borough average in Gawthorpe North ward in 2004, 1 per cent above in Gawthorpe South ward and 17 per cent below the average in Hapton with Park ward.

64 We have given careful consideration to the views which we have received in this area at Stage One. We are particularly concerned at the poor levels of electoral equality which would result in Hapton with Park ward under the Independents' and Conservatives' proposals. While, under the proposals put to us by the Borough Council, the number of electors per councillor would initially vary by 10 per cent from the borough average in Hapton with Park ward, we note that this is forecast to improve to 2 per cent by 2004. Moreover, we consider that the Borough Council's modifications to Gawthorpe ward would provide a satisfactory balance between the need to secure improvements to electoral equality and the other statutory criteria. We are therefore adopting the Borough Council's proposals for Gawthorpe and Hapton with Park wards as part of our draft recommendations. Our proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of this report.

Electoral Cycle

65 The Borough Council commented that it wished to continue the present cycle of elections by thirds. We received no further comments on the electoral cycle for Burnley and we are therefore proposing to retain the existing cycle in our draft recommendations.

Conclusions

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

- (i) there should be a reduction in council size from 48 to 45;
- (ii) there should be 15 wards, one fewer than at present;
- (iii) the boundaries of 14 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one ward;
- (iv) elections should continue to be held by thirds.

67 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's proposals, but propose departing from them in a number of minor instances, affecting the proposed wards of Brunshaw, Cliviger with Worsthorne, Gannow and Whittlefield with Ightenhill (which would involve the transfer of a small number of electors) and affecting the proposed wards of Coal Clough with Deerplay, Rosegrove with Lowerhouse and Rosehill with Burnley Wood (which would not affect any electors).

68 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1999 electorate figures and forecast electorates for the year 2004.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1999 electorate		2004 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	48	45	48	45
Number of wards	16	15	16	15
Average number of electors per councillor	1,428	1,523	1,477	1,575
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	5	0	5	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	3	0	3	0

69 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Burnley Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from five to none. By 2004 this improvement in electoral equality is anticipated to continue.

Draft Recommendation
 Burnley Borough Council should comprise 45 councillors serving 15 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A, including the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

70 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Local Government Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Accordingly we propose consequential warding arrangements for Hapton parish and an amendment to the level of representation for Ightenhill Parish Council.

71 The parish of Hapton is served by nine councillors and is not currently warded. In its submission the Borough Council proposed a borough ward boundary amendment between Hapton with Park ward and the ward to the east which would require warding Hapton with Park parish. As this proposal forms part of our draft recommendations, and in the absence of specific proposals

from the Borough Council, we propose that Hapton parish should be divided into two wards, Hapton and Printers Fold, represented by eight councillors and one councillor respectively. Hapton parish ward would form part of Hapton with Park ward while Printers Fold parish ward would form part of a proposed Rosegrove with Lowerhouse ward.

Draft Recommendation
Hapton Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Hapton (returning eight councillors) and Printers Fold (returning one councillor). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map in at the back of the report.

72 The Borough Council informed us that Ightenhill Parish Council had requested an increase in the number of councillors serving the parish from five to seven, and the Council asked that such “a measure be introduced for elections held from 2002 onwards”. While the timing of implementation of any arrangements relating to this review is a matter for the Secretary of State alone, we are content to recommend the proposal to increase the number of members representing Ightenhill Parish Council from five to seven.

Draft Recommendation
Ightenhill Parish Council should have seven councillors, two more than at present, representing the parish as a whole.

73 In addition, the Borough Council proposed several minor amendments to the external boundaries of a number of parishes so that they would follow ground detail, thereby reflecting the Council’s borough warding proposals. However, as part of this review the Commission is unable to make recommendations for change to parish boundaries and consequently we are not including such modifications as part of our draft recommendations.

74 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district.

Draft Recommendation
For parish councils, elections should continue to take place at the same time as for the principal authority.

75 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Burnley and welcome comments from the Borough Council and others relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names, and parish and town council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

Map 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Burnley

5 NEXT STEPS

76 We are putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Burnley. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 10 April 2000. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Commission and the Borough Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

77 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Review Manager
Burnley Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphyn Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142

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78 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for Burnley: Detailed Mapping

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

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Map A2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed boundary between Brunshaw and Cliviger with Worsthorne wards.

The large map inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the unparished area.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Burnley: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed boundary between Brunshaw and Cliviger with Worsthorne wards

APPENDIX B

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: the Commission's Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear¹. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas will be included in the Commission's review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

2 Under section 13(5) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

- (i) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- (ii) secure effective and convenient local government.

3 In reporting to the Secretary of State, the Commission may make recommendations for such changes to electoral arrangements as are specified in section 14(4) of the 1992 Act. In relation to principal authorities, these are:

- the total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions);
- the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral area, and the years in which they are to be elected; and
- the name of any electoral area.

4 Unlike the LGBC, the Commission may also make recommendations for changes in respect of electoral arrangements within parish and town council areas. Accordingly, in relation to parish or town councils within a principal authority's area, the Commission may make recommendations relating to:

¹ The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.

- the number of councillors;
- the need for parish wards;
- the number and boundaries of any such wards;
- the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward or, in the case of a common parish, for each parish; and
- the name of any such ward.

5 In conducting the review, section 27 of the 1992 Act requires the Commission to comply, so far as is practicable, with the rules given in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 for the conduct of electoral reviews.

Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

6 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

7 In relation to shire districts:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the district likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

- (a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the district;
- (b) in a district every ward of a parish council shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district;
- (c) in a district every parish which is not divided into parish wards shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district.

8 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a)–(c) above, regard should be had to:

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

9 The Schedule provides that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards, regard shall be had to whether:

- (f) the number or distribution of electors in the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- (g) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

10 Where it is decided to divide any such parish into parish wards, in considering the size and boundaries of the wards and fixing the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward, regard shall be had to:

- (h) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;
- (i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (j) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

11 Where it is decided not to divide the parish into parish wards, in fixing the number of councillors to be elected for each parish regard shall be had to the number and distribution of electors of the parish and any change which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the fixing of the number of parish councillors.