

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Thanet in Kent

November 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 local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of 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 district.

© Crown Copyright 2000

Applications for reproduction should be made to: Her Majesty's Stationery Office Copyright Unit.

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by the Local Government Commission for England with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.

Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
Licence Number: GD 03114G.

This report is printed on recycled paper. ♻️

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>13</i>
5 NEXT STEPS	<i>39</i>
APPENDICES	
A Draft Recommendations for Thanet: Detailed Mapping	 <i>41</i>
B Proposed Electoral Arrangements from: – Thanet District Council – North & South Thanet Conservative Associations – Councillor Hudson – Mr John Cox	 <i>45</i>
C The Statutory Provisions	<i>53</i>

A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Thanet on 9 May 2000.

- **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 Thanet:

- **In 12 of the 27 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and six wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **By 2005 this unequal representation 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 14 wards and by more than 20 per cent in five wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 121-122) are that:

- **Thanet District Council should have 56 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 23 wards, instead of 27 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of four, and one ward should retain its existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

These draft 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 all 23 of the proposed wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **An improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue with the number of electors per councillor in all 23 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2005.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Birchington and Broadstairs & St Peter's.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for 10 weeks from 14 November 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 22 January 2001:

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

**Fax: 020 7404 6142
E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk
Website: www.lgce.gov.uk**

Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Beacon Road (in Broadstairs)	2	Beacon Road ward; Bradstowe ward (part); Kingsgate ward (part)	Large map
2	Birchington North	2	Birchington East ward (part – Birchington East ward of Birchington parish (part)); Birchington West ward (part – Birchington West ward of Birchington parish (part))	Maps 2 and A2
3	Birchington South	3	Birchington East ward (part – Birchington East ward of Birchington parish (part)); Birchington West ward (part – Birchington West ward of Birchington parish (part))	Maps 2 and A2
4	Bradstowe (in Broadstairs)	2	Bradstowe ward (part); Kingsgate ward (part)	Large map
5	Central Harbour (in Ramsgate)	3	Central Eastcliff ward (part); Central Westcliff ward (part); St Lawrence ward (part)	Large map
6	Cliffsend & Pegwell (in Ramsgate)	2	Central Westcliff ward (part); Southwood ward (part)	Large map
7	Cliftonville & Northdown (in Margate)	3	Cliftonville ward (part); Dane Park ward (part); Northdown Park ward (part)	Large map
8	Dane Valley (in Margate)	3	Dane Park ward (part); Northdown Park ward (part)	Large map
9	Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	Central Eastcliff ward (part); Sir Moses Montefiore ward (part)	Large map
10	Esplanade (in Margate)	2	Cliftonville ward (part); Dane Park ward (part)	Large map
11	Garlinge (in Margate)	2	Margate West ward (part); Marine ward (part); Westgate-on-Sea ward (part)	Large map
12	Kingsgate (in Broadstairs)	1	Kingsgate ward (part)	Large map
13	Margate Central (in Margate)	3	Cecil ward; Ethelbert ward; Pier ward	Large map
14	Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	Newington ward; St Lawrence ward (part)	Large map
15	Northwood (in Ramsgate)	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large map
16	Pierremont (in Broadstairs)	3	Pierremont ward; Upton ward (part)	Large map
17	St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	St Lawrence ward (part) Southwood ward (part)	Large map

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
18	St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	3	St Peter's ward; Upton ward (part)	Large map
19	Salmestone (in Margate)	2	Marine ward (part); Salmestone ward (part)	Large map
20	Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	Sir Moses Montefiore ward (part); Upton ward (part)	Large map
21	Thanet Villages	3	Margate West ward (part); Minster ward (Minster parish); St Lawrence ward (part – Manston parish); Salmestone ward (part); Thanet Parishes ward (Acol, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes); Westgate-on-Sea ward (part)	Map 2 and Large map
22	Westbrook (in Margate)	2	Margate West ward (part); Marine ward (part); Westgate-on-Sea ward (part)	Large map
23	Westgate-on-Sea	3	Westgate-on-Sea ward (part)	Large map

Notes: 1 The district contains seven parishes, including Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council, as indicated above. The towns of Margate and Ramsgate are unparished.

2 Map 2 and Appendix A, including the large map inserted inside the back of the report, illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

3 We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Thanet

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Beacon Road (in Broadstairs)	2	3,279	1,640	-5	3,302	1,651	-7
2 Birchington North	2	3,323	1,662	-4	3,365	1,683	-5
3 Birchington South	3	5,032	1,677	-3	5,092	1,697	-4
4 Bradstowe (in Broadstairs)	2	3,330	1,665	-4	3,417	1,709	-4
5 Central Harbour (in Ramsgate)	3	5,447	1,816	5	5,546	1,849	4
6 Cliffsend & Pegwell (in Ramsgate)	2	3,529	1,765	2	3,644	1,822	3
7 Cliftonville & Northdown (in Margate)	3	5,137	1,712	-1	5,214	1,738	-2
8 Dane Valley (in Margate)	3	5,366	1,789	3	5,395	1,798	1
9 Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,402	1,801	4	5,643	1,881	6
10 Esplanade (in Margate)	2	3,507	1,754	1	3,716	1,858	5
11 Garlinge (in Margate)	2	3,621	1,811	5	3,630	1,815	2
12 Kingsgate (in Broadstairs)	1	1,636	1,636	-6	1,688	1,688	-5
13 Margate Central (in Margate)	3	5,171	1,724	-1	5,410	1,803	2
14 Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	3,447	1,724	-1	3,458	1,729	-3
15 Northwood (in Ramsgate)	3	4,994	1,665	-4	4,999	1,666	-6
16 Pierremont (in Broadstairs)	3	5,566	1,855	7	5,635	1,878	6
17 St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	3,553	1,777	3	3,615	1,808	2
18 St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	3	5,450	1,817	5	5,578	1,859	5

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
19 Salmestone (in Margate)	2	3,700	1,850	7	3,715	1,858	5
20 Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	3,451	1,726	0	3,662	1,831	3
21 Thanet Villages	3	4,676	1,559	-10	4,848	1,616	-9
22 Westbrook (in Margate)	2	3,333	1,667	-4	3,386	1,693	-5
23 Westgate-on-Sea	3	5,064	1,688	-3	5,370	1,790	1
Totals	56	97,014	-	-	99,328	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,732	-	-	1,774	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on Thanet District Council's submission.

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Thanet in Kent on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the 12 two-tier districts in Kent as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Thanet. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1976 (Report No. 160). The electoral arrangements of Kent County Council were last reviewed in November 1980 (Report No. 402). We completed a directed electoral review of Medway in 1996. We expect to commence a periodic electoral review of Medway later this year, and of the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, ie 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* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Appendix C).

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the District 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 district.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (third edition published in October 1999). 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 to achieve, as far as possible, equality of representation across the district as a whole. Having regard to the statutory criteria, our aim is to achieve as low a level of electoral imbalance as is practicable. 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 district’s electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a district 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, ie in year one half of the district 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 1999/2000 PER programme, including the Kent districts, that the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the October 1999 *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 have been taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, provides that the Secretary of State may make Orders to change authorities’ electoral cycles. However, until such time as the Secretary of State makes any Order under the 2000 Act, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas, and our present *Guidance*.

12 Stage One began on 9 May 2000, when we wrote to Thanet District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Kent County Council, Kent Police Authority, the local authority associations, Kent Association of Parish Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the South East Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the District Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 31 July 2000.

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

14 Stage Three began on 14 November 2000 and will end on 22 January 2001. 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 district of Thanet covers an area of some 10,300 hectares in north-east Kent, and has a population of 126,000. The district's major settlements are the coastal towns of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate. Thanet contains both a major international sea port in Ramsgate and an international passenger and cargo airport at Manston. The district is linked by road and rail to the rest of Kent and London. The district contains seven parishes, including Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council, but the towns of Margate and Ramsgate are unparished and comprise a total of 67 per cent of the district's total electorate.

17 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'.

18 The electorate of the district is 97,014 (February 2000). The Council presently has 54 members who are elected from 27 wards. Two wards cover the relatively rural area in the south and west of the district, two wards cover the large village of Birchington and the remainder cover the predominantly urban Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate areas. Six of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 15 are each represented by two councillors and six are single-member wards. Whole-council elections take place every four years. Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Thanet, with around 4 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments in the district.

19 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,797 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,839 by the year 2005 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 12 of the 27 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, six wards by more than 20 per cent and two wards by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Birchington East ward where each of the two councillors represent 38 per cent more electors than the district average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Thanet

Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Beacon Road (in Broadstairs)	2	3,122	1,561	-13	3,139	1,570	-15
2 Birchington East	2	4,971	2,486	38	5,051	2,526	37
3 Birchington West	2	3,384	1,692	-6	3,406	1,703	-7
4 Bradstowe (in Broadstairs)	2	3,192	1,596	-11	3,248	1,624	-12
5 Cecil (in Margate)	1	1,589	1,589	-12	1,609	1,609	-13
6 Central Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	4,906	1,635	-9	5,089	1,696	-8
7 Central Westcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,474	1,825	2	5,621	1,874	2
8 Cliftonville (in Margate)	3	6,315	2,105	17	6,546	2,182	19
9 Dane Park (in Margate)	2	3,521	1,761	-2	3,551	1,776	-3
10 Ethelbert (in Margate)	1	1,608	1,608	-10	1,690	1,690	-8
11 Kingsgate (in Broadstairs)	1	1,931	1,931	7	2,020	2,020	10
12 Margate West (in Margate)	3	5,055	1,685	-6	5,086	1,695	-8
13 Marine (in Margate)	1	1,949	1,949	8	1,963	1,963	7
14 Minster	2	2,578	1,289	-28	2,661	1,331	-28
15 Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	3,248	1,624	-10	3,258	1,629	-11
16 Northdown Park (in Margate)	2	4,174	2,087	16	4,228	2,114	15
17 Northwood (in Ramsgate)	3	4,994	1,665	-7	4,999	1,666	-9
18 Pier (in Margate)	1	1,974	1,974	10	2,111	2,111	15
19 Pierremont (in Broadstairs)	2	2,854	1,427	-21	2,892	1,446	-21

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
20 St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	3,524	1,762	-2	3,560	1,780	-3
21 St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	2	4,904	2,452	36	5,026	2,513	37
22 Salmestone (in Margate)	2	3,633	1,817	1	3,647	1,824	-1
23 Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	2,832	1,416	-21	3,104	1,552	-16
24 Southwood (in Ramsgate)	2	3,925	1,963	9	4,042	2,021	10
25 Thanet Parishes	1	1,468	1,468	-18	1,528	1,528	-17
26 Upton (in Broadstairs)	2	4,508	2,254	25	4,545	2,273	24
27 Westgate-on-Sea	3	5,381	1,794	0	5,708	1,903	3
Totals	54	97,014	-	-	99,328	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,797	-	-	1,839	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Thanet District 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2000, electors in Minster ward were relatively over-represented by 28 per cent, while electors in Birchington East ward were relatively under-represented by 38 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

20 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 Thanet District Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

21 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met officers and members from the District Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 18 representations during Stage One, including district-wide schemes from the District Council, North & South Thanet Conservative Associations, Councillor Hudson and a local resident, Mr John Cox. All representations may be inspected at the offices of the District Council and the Commission.

Thanet District Council

22 The District Council proposed a small increase in council size, from 54 to 55, serving 22 wards, five fewer than at present. Under the Council's proposals for a mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards, the Margate area would gain one councillor and be covered by four two-member wards and four three-member wards. Broadstairs & St Peter's would be covered by four wards, while Ramsgate would have a pattern of seven two- and three-member wards. The Council proposed creating a two-member Thanet Villages ward comprising Acol, Manston, Minster and Monkton parishes, and combining St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes with the southern part of Birchington parish to form a new three-member Birchington Rural ward. The northern part of Birchington would form a new two-member Birchington Coastal ward.

23 The District Council's proposals would involve some change to existing ward boundaries, and electoral equality would improve across the district, with the number of electors per councillor varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average in all 22 wards, both now and in five years' time. The Council's proposals are summarised at Appendix B.

North & South Thanet Conservative Associations

24 North & South Thanet Conservative Associations ('the Conservatives') proposed reducing council size to 40 members divided between 20 two-member wards. Under the Conservatives' proposals the Birchington area would be represented by four councillors, with St Nicholas-at-Wade combined with the western part of the village, and the eastern part of the village forming a separate Birchington East ward. The remaining part of the rural area would be combined with Cliffsend to form a two-member Villages ward. The Margate area would be covered by seven two-member wards, while Ramsgate, including the East Dumpton area, would be represented by six two-member wards. Broadstairs & St Peter's would be covered by four two-member wards.

25 The Conservatives' scheme would involve extensive modifications to current ward boundaries throughout the district. Under their proposals the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average in all 20 wards, both now and in five years' time. The Conservatives' proposals are summarised at Appendix B.

Councillor Hudson

26 Councillor Hudson (Birchington West ward) also proposed a council size of 40, with a mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards across the district. Under his proposal Birchington and the rural parishes would be represented by a total of six councillors, while Margate would be covered by four three-member wards and one two-member ward. The Broadstairs area would be represented by eight councillors in three wards, and Ramsgate would be covered by four three-member wards. Under Councillor Hudson's proposals the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average in all 15 wards, both now and in five years' time. Councillor Hudson's proposals are summarised at Appendix B.

Mr John Cox

27 Mr John Cox, a local resident, proposed reducing the size of the council by half, to 27 members. Under his proposals for nine three-member wards, Birchington and the rural parishes would be represented by three councillors, Broadstairs & St Peter's by six councillors, Margate by nine councillors and Ramsgate by nine councillors. While Mr Cox's proposed warding arrangements would be based on a combination of existing wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10 per cent from the district average in four wards and by more than 20 per cent in one ward. Mr Cox's proposals are summarised at Appendix B.

Members of Parliament

28 We received one representation from a Member of Parliament. Dr Stephen Ladyman, Member of Parliament for South Thanet, supported a council size of 27, arguing that a reduction in the number of members would more appropriately reflect levels of councillors' workload in light of changes to the Council's political management structure in Thanet. Dr Ladyman contended that, at present, members' wards "do not provide sufficient 'case work' to in any way justify their membership of the Council in the absence of any 'formal' role". Furthermore, Dr Ladyman argued that a reduced council size would enable political parties to put forward higher quality candidates at district elections, and that the cost savings of a smaller council size could be used to increase the remaining members' allowances in order that they might provide "a much better level of service to their electorate".

Parish and Town Councils

29 We received a total of 10 representations from parish and town councils and their members during Stage One of the review. We received two submissions from Birchington Parish Council, which requested no change to the boundaries of the existing Birchington East and Birchington West wards. Councillor P Francis (Birchington Parish Council) expressed opposition to the District Council's proposal to include St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes in a revised Birchington Rural ward. We also received two submissions from St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council, which objected to the Council's proposed Birchington Rural ward, and proposed creating a single Villages ward comprising the rural communities of Thanet. Three parish councillors from St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council also expressed opposition to the

Council's proposed Birchington Rural ward, and supported the creation of a single Thanet Villages ward.

30 Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council expressed support for the District Council's proposals in relation to the Broadstairs area, but proposed renaming the Council's Viking ward as Pierremont ward. Minster Parish Council proposed retaining the existing single-member Thanet Parishes and two-member Minster wards.

Other Representations

31 We received three further representations at Stage One of the review. Broadstairs, St Peter's and Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed full support for the District Council's proposals for Thanet, while Councillor Neville Thomas (Birchington West ward) supported reducing the size of the Council to 40 members, but made no specific proposals for warding arrangements. Kent County Council contended that the proposals for revised wards in the district would have a consequential effect on the review of County Council electoral divisions in the future.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

32 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Thanet is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests 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”.

33 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 next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

34 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.

35 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, 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 and interests. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates.

Electorate Forecasts

36 The District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 2 per cent from 97,014 to 99,328 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expects most of the growth to be in Sir Moses Montefiore and Westgate-on-Sea wards. 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.

37 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the District Council’s figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. We welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during Stage Three.

Council Size

38 Thanet District Council currently has 54 members. At Stage One, 17 representations were received, of which four – from the District Council, North & South Thanet Conservative

Associations, Councillor Hudson and Mr Cox – put forward district-wide schemes for electoral arrangements in Thanet. The District Council proposed that there should be a small increase in council size to 55, while both the Conservatives and Councillor Hudson proposed a significant reduction in council size to 40 members. Mr Cox proposed a greater reduction to 27 members. Dr Stephen Ladyman MP supported a reduction in council size to 27 members, while Councillor Thomas supported a council size of 40.

39 As previously explained, the Commission’s starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case. The Commission will not generally seek a substantial increase or decrease in council size but will be prepared to consider the case for change where there is persuasive evidence. In particular, when considering proposals for a significant change in council size, we will look for some evidence of local consensus over the proposed increase or reduction. Having considered the representations received at Stage One, it was clear that no such consensus existed in Thanet. At the end of Stage One, we considered that we required further information and evidence from the parties concerned before reaching conclusions on the most appropriate council size for Thanet. We therefore appointed an independent Assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE, to conduct a public meeting in the area and report to us with his findings. The public meeting was held on 7 September 2000 at the Council Offices in Margate. A note of the proceedings is available from the Commission’s offices on request.

40 In its submission the District Council stated that it had established a Working Party to draw up proposals for electoral arrangements in Thanet, and that “in view of the introduction of the Cabinet system, the Working Party considered schemes for a reduction in council size to 40 members and options to maintain the existing council size”. The Working Party concluded that the achievement of electoral equality in Thanet would best be met by a council size of 55, and a proposed scheme based on a council size of 55 was adopted by the Council’s Policy Committee.

41 At the public meeting Councillor Green outlined the District Council’s approach to the review, stating that the Working Party had sought to support the status quo and retain established representational patterns unless a compelling case for change was presented. He cited a report published in January 2000 by an independent panel set up by Thanet and Shepway district councils to deal with members’ allowances which indicated that, while councillors’ workloads varied across the two districts, in some instances members were devoting the equivalent of full-time hours to their casework. Moreover, given the high level of economic deprivation in some areas of Thanet, Councillor Green argued that the level of workload varied between councillors in Thanet and that some currently experience very heavy workloads. While Councillor Green recognised that the new structure of political management might help reduce levels of workload for some members, he stated that a number of important committees remain and argued that a council of between 47 and 55 members would be necessary to ensure the efficient functioning of the council.

42 In their submission the Conservatives proposed a reduction in council size to 40 members, arguing that changes to the council structure in Thanet, including the abolition of the committee system, would mean that fewer councillors would in future be required in order “to fulfil the work commitment”. At the public meeting Councillor Ezekiel, on behalf of the Conservatives, argued that, in light of recent changes to the Council’s political management structure, members should

consider the opportunity to streamline their own structure. He contended that modern working methods, including the use of IT, mean that a 40-member council could achieve significant savings and remain effective, and refuted the argument that councillors' workloads would be excessively heavy under a 40-member council.

43 In his submission, Councillor Hudson also proposed reducing the council size to 40 members, arguing that a smaller council would be more effective and less expensive to run and that, in light of changes to the Council's committee structure, "the meeting workload for the majority of members is very small and therefore does not justify having such a large body of members". At the public meeting he noted that, since he had been elected to the Council in 1976, both the number of staff employed by the Council and the size of its managed housing stock had reduced significantly, and many responsibilities had been transferred from the Council to other bodies. He argued that fewer members will be involved in policy decisions and the strategic direction of the Council under the new political management structure, and that backbench members will be limited to a representational role.

44 In his submission, Mr Cox proposed a more significant reduction in council size to 27 members, arguing that "changes in local government responsibilities in recent years have made a smaller number [of councillors] a practical proposition". He also argued that a significant reduction in council size would provide a number of benefits for the electorate of Thanet, including higher quality candidates at district elections and lower costs.

45 Dr Stephen Ladyman MP also proposed a significant reduction in council size. He expressed support for a council size of 27, arguing that the current council size "presents every political party with severe problems as no party can be sure of providing a full slate of appropriate or committed individuals". He also contended that, at present, there is insufficient casework to justify the current council size of 54 members. We also received a representation from Councillor Thomas, who supported reducing the council size to 40 in order to "make the Council a much more effective organisation".

46 In Thanet, the four district-wide submissions proposed a wide range of council sizes. The independent Assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE, considered the submissions received at Stage One and the other representations received which related specifically to the issue of council size, together with the evidence presented at the public meeting. In May 1999, in advance of the legislation implementing the Government's White Paper *Local Leadership, Local Choice*, Thanet District Council adopted a Leader and Cabinet model of political management, with a cabinet of eight senior councillors making recommendations to a politically balanced Policy Committee of 19 members. A more streamlined cabinet structure of political management has therefore now been in place at Thanet District Council for over 18 months.

47 Taking account of all the views expressed, the Assessor considered that there is little objective evidence to support a reduction in council size of the scale envisaged by some respondents. He considered that we should use the District Council's proposal for a 55-member council as the basis for our draft recommendations.

48 We have considered the evidence presented to us a Stage One, and Mr Hardy's report. While we accept that the experience of councillors' workloads may differ across the district, we have

not been persuaded that the new structure has reduced levels of members' workloads to such an extent that a reduction in council size on the scale proposed would be desirable. Moreover, we have received no significant evidence from those proposing to reduce the size of the council as to the benefits which would accrue from a smaller council size. We do recognise, however, that the new structure is still evolving, and consider that once it has become more settled, greater clarity may be brought to the issue of council size and the future role of councillors in Thanet. However, based on the arguments and evidence presented to us at this time, we have not been persuaded that the proposed reduction in council size would lead to more convenient and effective local government or would better reflect the identities and interests of local communities.

49 While we are content to base our draft recommendations on the District Council's proposals for a 55-member council, we are mindful of the distinct and disparate nature of Thanet's rural and urban communities, and the concerns expressed by representatives of the rural communities over proposals to link them with more urban areas. In light of these concerns, we have not been persuaded that the Council's proposal to combine the St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre Parish Council area with part of Birchington parish would appropriately reflect the identities and interests of these rural communities. We consider that the parishes of St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre would more appropriately be combined with the district's other rural parishes to form a separate ward, and propose creating a revised three-member Thanet Villages ward. Birchington would retain a total of five councillors, as proposed by the Council. The effect of this would be to increase council size from 54 to 56 members. We consider that a council size of 56 would provide reasonable electoral equality and, by providing separate representation for the rural part of the district, would best reflect community identities and interests and provide effective and convenient local government.

50 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 56 members.

Electoral Arrangements

51 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the four district-wide schemes for electoral arrangements in Thanet. From these representations, some considerations have emerged which have informed our draft recommendations. As outlined above, our proposals for Thanet are based on a council size of 56, which we consider to be the most appropriate council size for the district, having regard to the evidence submitted and to the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area. Given this preliminary conclusion on the most appropriate council size, we are unable to adopt in their entirety any of the schemes submitted at Stage One. However, we note that there are some areas where there is a degree of consensus regarding community boundaries and, wherever possible, we have attempted to reflect those areas of agreement. While our draft recommendations are based largely on the District Council's proposals, we have sought to build on those proposals in several areas in order to improve electoral equality further and reflect community identities and interests in the district. All four district-wide schemes are discussed in detail below, and are

summarised in Appendix B. For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Birchington East, Birchington West, Minster and Thanet Parishes wards;
- (b) Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards;
- (c) Cecil, Ethelbert, Pier and Salmestone wards;
- (d) Cliftonville, Dane Park and Northdown Park wards;
- (e) Beacon Road, Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards;
- (f) Pierremont, St Peter's and Upton wards;
- (g) Central Eastcliff, Central Westcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards;
- (h) St Lawrence and Southwood wards;
- (i) Newington and Northwood wards.

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

Birchington East, Birchington West, Minster and Thanet Parishes wards

53 Birchington East, Birchington West, Minster and Thanet Parishes wards cover the western and southern parts of Thanet district, and include the large village of Birchington together with the more rural parishes to its south. Birchington East and Birchington West wards are each represented by two councillors, and are coterminous with Birchington East and Birchington West wards of Birchington parish. The two-member Minster ward is coterminous with the parish of Minster, while Thanet Parishes ward comprises the parishes of Acol, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre, and is represented by a single councillor. Birchington East ward has 38 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average while Birchington West ward has 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (37 per cent more and 7 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Minster and Thanet Parishes wards have 28 per cent and 18 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (28 per cent and 17 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

54 In its submission the District Council noted that, under its proposed council size of 55, the electorate in Birchington would be entitled to between four and five councillors. It therefore proposed combining the parishes of St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre with part of Birchington to form a new three-member Birchington Rural ward. The Council argued that "it would be appropriate to link the southern part of Birchington, which is partly rural, to the rural parishes of Sarre and St Nicholas-at-Wade". Under the Council's proposals the remaining parts of the current Birchington East and Birchington West wards, to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line, Alpha Road, Epple Road and the A28 Canterbury Road, would be combined to form a new two-member Birchington Coastal ward. The remainder of the current Thanet Parishes ward, comprising Acol and Monkton parishes, would be combined with Minster ward and Manston parish to form a new two-member Thanet Villages ward. The Council noted that "these villages have been joined because of their common interests in London (Manston) Airport and Manston Business Park". Based on a council size of 55, the proposed Birchington Coastal ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (5 per cent more than the average by 2005), while Birchington Rural ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole, both now and in five years' time. The proposed

Thanet Villages ward would have 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (5 per cent more than the average by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

55 The Conservatives also proposed linking parts of the rural area with Birchington. Under their proposals, St Nicholas-at-Wade parish would be combined with the current Birchington West ward and the part of the current Birchington East ward to the west of Park Avenue, Kings Road and Brunswick Road to form a revised two-member Birchington West ward. The remaining part of the current Birchington East ward would be combined with Acol parish and the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the south of the A28 Canterbury Road and the west of Linksfield Road to form a revised two-member Birchington East ward. Manston, Monkton and Sarre parishes would be combined with Minster ward and the Cliffsend area of Southwood ward to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road to form a new two-member Villages ward. Under the Conservatives' proposed council size of 40, Birchington East and Birchington West wards would have 3 per cent and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (3 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Their proposed Villages ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole, rising to 2 per cent more than the average by 2005.

56 Councillor Hudson also proposed that St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes be linked with part of Birchington. He proposed combining the two parishes with Birchington West ward and the part of the current Birchington East ward to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line and the west of Albion Road to form a new two-member Birchington West, St Nicholas & Sarre ward. Under his proposals, the remaining part of the current Birchington East ward would form a revised two-member Birchington East ward. The parishes of Acol and Monkton, currently in Thanet Parishes ward, would be combined with Minster ward, Manston parish (from St Lawrence ward) and the Cliffsend area to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road (from Southwood ward), to form a new two-member The Villages ward. Based on a council size of 40, Birchington East and Birchington West, St Nicholas & Sarre wards would have 6 per cent and 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (6 per cent and 8 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). The Villages ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the average, and 4 per cent more than average by 2005.

57 Mr Cox proposed combining the whole of Birchington parish (Birchington East and Birchington West wards) with Minster ward and the current Thanet Parishes ward to form a new three-member Thanet Parishes ward. Under Mr Cox's proposed council size of 27, Thanet Parishes ward would have 15 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

58 We received a further nine representations in relation to this area. Birchington Parish Council requested that there be no change to the existing boundaries of Birchington East and Birchington West wards. It also proposed that the small rural villages of Acol, Cliffsend, Manston, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre be combined to form a single ward, and requested that no change be made to the number of parish councilors serving Birchington, as detailed below. Councillor P Francis (Birchington Parish Council) expressed opposition to the proposal to combine St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes with part of Birchington, arguing that "neither of these two communities have anything in common". St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council also

expressed opposition to the proposal to combine St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes with part of Birchington, noting that “St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre is an entirely rural farming community with little in common with urban Birchington”, and proposed combining all of the district’s rural communities in a single ward. Councillor Tapp (St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council) also objected to the Council’s proposed Birchington Rural ward, arguing that “it would be far better to have an extended Thanet Villages ward to encompass all the rural areas”. Councillors Bolton and Tweedale (St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council) also expressed opposition to the proposal to include St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes in an enlarged Birchington ward. Minster Parish Council requested that the current two-member Minster ward and single-member Thanet Parishes ward be retained.

59 We have carefully considered all the representations received and the evidence available to us. In light of this evidence, we do not consider that proposals to combine either St Nicholas-at-Wade or Sarre with part of Birchington would appropriately reflect the identities and interests of these communities. Birchington is a large and distinct coastal village which is more urban in character than St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre. While St Nicholas-at-Wade parish extends northwards as far as the edge of Birchington, the main settlements of St-Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre are both a significant distance from Birchington and are separated from it by the A299 Thanet Way. We consider that these parishes retain considerably stronger ties with the remaining smaller parishes of the district. We are also mindful of the concerns expressed by representatives of the rural communities regarding linkage with more urban areas and adequate levels of representation. We do, however, concur with the view of the District Council that the villages of Acol, Monkton, Minster and Manston parish share common interests relating to the development of London (Manston) Airport and Manston Business Park and would benefit from being combined in one ward.

60 In light of these concerns, we propose combining Acol, Manston, Minster, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes to form a new three-member Thanet Villages ward. We have considered including the settlement of Cliffsend in a new Thanet Villages ward. However, such an option would lead to a degree of under-representation for the rural area, and would provide a ward which stretched from coast to coast which would not, in our opinion, best reflect community identities in this area. In order to unite the district’s rural communities within a single ward and provide for improved electoral equality, we also propose including the small settlements of Woodchurch and Lydden, which are located on the southern periphery of the current Westgate-on-Sea and Salmestone wards respectively, in the proposed Thanet Villages ward.

61 While we have proposed allocating three councillors for the rural area of the district, we concur with the District Council’s proposal to increase the number of councillors for the Birchington area from four to five. However, as a consequence of our draft recommendation for a new Thanet Villages ward, we propose amending the boundary between the Council’s Birchington Coastal and Birchington Rural wards in order to improve levels of electoral equality in both wards. Under our draft recommendations, the parts of Birchington East and Birchington West wards to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line would be combined to form a new two-member Birchington North ward, while the remaining parts of Birchington East and Birchington West wards would form a new three-member Birchington South ward. We are content that our proposals for the Birchington area would provide for a clear and easily identifiable boundary between the two wards and reflect community identities and interests well.

62 Based on a council size of 56, the proposed Birchington North and Birchington South wards would have 4 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (5 per cent and 4 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). The proposed Thanet Villages ward would have 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, improving to 9 per cent fewer than the average by 2005. Our proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards

63 Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards cover the western part of Margate to the west of the Bambom Brothers' Dreamland Amusement Park and the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line, together with the urban settlement of Westgate-on-Sea. The three-member Margate West ward and single-member Marine ward include the Garlinge and Westbrook areas of Margate, and have 6 per cent fewer and 8 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (8 per cent fewer and 7 per cent more than the average by 2005). Westgate-on-Sea ward has equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole (3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005), and is represented by three councillors.

64 The District Council proposed only minimal change to warding arrangements in this area. Under its proposals, the Queensdown area of Salmestone ward would be transferred to a revised three-member Westgate-on-Sea ward, thereby uniting the properties on Woodchurch Road within a single ward. In order to improve electoral equality in the revised Westgate-on-Sea ward, the Council proposed transferring the part of the current ward to the east of The Grove and Quex Road to a new three-member Westbrook & Garlinge ward, comprising the current Margate West ward less the area to the south of Shottendane Road. The Council noted that, "in order to create a distinct boundary", it had proposed moving the boundary between Salmestone and Westbrook & Garlinge wards to the centre of Shottendane Road. The Council also proposed creating a revised two-member Marine ward, comprising the current Marine ward and the part of Pier ward to the south of King Street and west of Trinity Square. Under a council size of 55, the proposed Westbrook & Garlinge and Marine wards would have 1 per cent and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (1 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more than the district average respectively by 2005). Westgate-on-Sea ward would have 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, improving to equal to the district average by 2005. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

65 The Conservatives also proposed little change to warding arrangements in this area. As outlined above, they proposed combining the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the south of the A28 Canterbury Road and the west of Linksfield Road with part of Birchington East ward and Acol parish to form a revised Birchington East ward. Under their proposals, the remaining part of the current Westgate-on-Sea ward would be combined with Briary Close and a small part of Canterbury Road (currently in Margate West ward) to form a new two-member Westgate ward. The boundaries of the two-member Margate West ward would remain unchanged, other than the transfer of Briary Close and Canterbury Road, as detailed above. Finally, Marine ward would be combined with part of Salmestone ward to form a new Hartsdown ward, as detailed below. Based on a council size of 40, the Conservatives' proposed Margate West ward would have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while Westgate ward would have 2 per cent

fewer electors per councillor than the average (1 per cent and 2 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

66 Councillor Hudson proposed combining the current Margate West and Marine wards with the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the north of the A28 Canterbury Road and the east of Roxburgh Road, to form a revised three-member Margate West ward. The remaining part of the current Westgate-on-Sea ward would be combined with the Queensdown area of Salmestone ward to form a revised two-member Westgate-on-Sea ward. Under Councillor Hudson's proposed council size of 40, Margate West ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (6 per cent more than the average by 2005), while Westgate-on-Sea ward would have 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (equal to the average by 2005).

67 Mr Cox proposed combining the current Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards to form a revised three-member Margate West ward. Under Mr Cox's proposed council size of 27, a new Margate West ward would have 15 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, rising to 16 per cent more than the average in five years' time.

68 We are content that All Saints' Avenue and Margate Railway Station form a significant boundary between the central and seafront area of Margate and west Margate, and consider that the existing boundary between Marine and Pier wards should be retained. Indeed, we note that there was some consensus of opinion among district-wide submissions to largely retain this boundary. We have therefore not been persuaded to put forward the District Council's proposal to combine Marine ward with part of Pier ward as part of our draft recommendations. However, while the current Margate West and Marine wards have a reasonable level of electoral equality, we consider that the existing boundary between the two wards no longer reflects patterns of community ties in this area. We consider that the A28 Canterbury Road constitutes a more significant boundary which broadly divides the two communities of Garlinge and Westbrook, and therefore propose combining the part of Margate West and Marine wards to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line and Canterbury Road to form a new two-member Westbrook ward. The remaining parts of Margate West and Marine wards, to the south of the railway line and Canterbury Road, would be combined to form a new two-member Garlinge ward. We also propose transferring Tivoli Park Avenue and the Mere Gate area of Marine ward to Salmestone ward, as detailed below. We consider that there is some merit to the District Council's proposal to provide a clearer southern boundary in this area by utilising Shottendane Road as a boundary. We propose transferring the parts of Margate West and Westgate-on-Sea wards to the south of Shottendane Road, incorporating all properties with sole access from Shottendane Road, to the proposed Thanet Villages ward, thereby providing a clearer and more easily identifiable boundary for our proposed Garlinge ward, and facilitating more convenient and effective local government in this area.

69 We consider that Westgate-on-Sea forms a distinct and discrete community to the west of Margate town, and are content to largely retain the existing Westgate-on-Sea ward. However, in order to improve electoral equality, we propose transferring the area to the north of the A28 Canterbury Road and the east of The Grove to our proposed Westbrook ward, and the area to the south of Canterbury Road and the east of Quex Road to our proposed Garlinge ward. As

discussed previously, we also propose transferring the Woodchurch area of Westgate-on-Sea ward to a new Thanet Villages ward.

70 Under a council size of 56, Garlinge and Westbrook wards would have 5 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (2 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Westgate-on-Sea ward would have 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, improving to 1 per cent more than the average by 2005.

Cecil, Ethelbert, Pier and Salmestone wards

71 Cecil, Ethelbert and Pier wards cover the central part of Margate town, to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line and to the west of Dane Park, and are each represented by a single councillor. Cecil and Ethelbert wards have 12 per cent and 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively, while Pier ward has 10 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (13 per cent fewer, 8 per cent fewer and 15 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). The two-member Salmestone ward covers part of Margate to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line, and also includes the more rural settlements of Lydden and Woodchurch. Salmestone ward has 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (1 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

72 As detailed above, the District Council proposed combining the part of Pier ward to the south of King Street and west of Trinity Square with the current Marine ward to form a revised Marine ward. It proposed combining the remaining part of Pier ward with the part of Ethelbert ward to the north of Dane Road, the part of Cliftonville ward to the west of Cornwall Gardens, and the part of Dane Park ward to the north of Dane Road and the west of Wyndham Avenue and Lower Northdown Avenue to form a new three-member Esplanade ward. The Council noted that, owing to the extent of socio-economic problems in the area, both Ethelbert and Pier wards are the subject of special funding. It proposed combining the remaining part of Ethelbert ward with Cecil ward and the part of the current Dane Park ward to the north of College Road and the west of Fitzroy Avenue and Laleham Road to form a revised two-member Dane Park ward. The two-member Salmestone ward would remain largely unchanged under the Council's proposals. As detailed above, part of Margate West ward would be transferred to the revised Salmestone ward and the Queensdown area would be united within the revised Westgate-on-Sea ward. Based on a council size of 55, the Council's proposed Dane Park and Salmestone wards would have 2 per cent and 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (equal to and 1 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). Esplanade ward would have 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, improving to 2 per cent fewer than the average by 2005. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

73 Under the Conservatives' proposals for this area, the part of Salmestone ward to the north of Beatrice Road and the west of Ramsgate Road would be combined with Ethelbert and Pier wards and the part of Cecil ward to the west of Victoria Road and the north of Cowper Road and Milton Avenue to form a new two-member Margate Central ward. The remaining part of Salmestone ward would be combined with Marine ward to form a new two-member Hartsdown ward, and the remaining part of Cecil ward would be transferred to a revised Dane Park ward, as

detailed below. Under a council size of 40, the Conservatives' proposed Hartsdown and Margate Central wards would have 1 per cent and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (1 per cent fewer and 9 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

74 Councillor Hudson proposed less extensive change to warding arrangements in this area. Under his proposals, Cecil, Ethelbert and Pier wards would be combined with the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the west of Godwin Road, the part of Dane Park ward to the west of Cliftonville Avenue and Dane Road, and the part of Salmestone ward to the north of College Road to form a new three-member Margate Central ward. The remaining part of Salmestone ward would form part of a new Margate South ward, as detailed below. Under a council size of 40, Councillor Hudson's proposed Margate Central ward would have 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (7 per cent more than the average by 2005).

75 Mr Cox proposed combining Cecil, Dane Park, Pier and Salmestone wards to form a new three-member Margate Town ward. Ethelbert ward would be transferred to a revised Cliftonville ward, as detailed below. Under a council size of 27, Mr Cox's proposed Margate Town ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

76 As discussed previously, we consider that All Saints' Avenue and Margate Railway Station constitutes a significant boundary between the central and seafront area of Margate and west Margate, and we have not been persuaded to put forward the District Council's proposed Marine ward. We consider that the largely residential community in Marine ward is distinct from the primarily commercial town centre area, and that combining them in a single ward would not reflect local community ties appropriately. Moreover, we note that while the central area of Margate town would be divided between two district wards under the Council's proposals, both Councillor Hudson and the Conservatives have proposed retaining the town centre within a single ward. In the light of the proposals and evidence received at Stage One, we propose combining Cecil, Ethelbert and Pier wards to form a new three-member Margate Central ward, which would cover the central area of Margate town to the north of the railway line and the west of Addiscombe Road, Park Road, Wilderness Hill and Arthur Road. The proposed ward would encompass the historic and commercial centre of Margate town, and would include the Library and the Civic Centre.

77 We consider that the current Salmestone ward reflects community ties in the area of Margate to the south of the railway line well, and we are therefore content to largely retain the existing ward. However, as outlined above, we propose transferring the rural Lydden and Woodchurch areas from the current Salmestone ward to the proposed Thanet Villages ward in order to unite the rural areas of the district within a single ward. We also propose incorporating the Tivoli Park Avenue and Mere Gate areas, currently in Marine ward, within the revised two-member Salmestone ward. Under our proposed council size of 56, Margate Central ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, and Salmestone ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (2 per cent and 5 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

Cliftonville, Dane Park and Northdown Park wards

78 Cliftonville, Dane Park and Northdown Park wards cover the largely residential eastern part of Margate town, to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line. The three-member Cliftonville and two-member Northdown Park wards have 17 per cent and 16 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (and 19 per cent and 15 per cent more than the average by 2005). The two-member Dane Park ward has 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average currently, and is predicted to have 3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005.

79 The District Council proposed a number of significant changes to warding arrangements in this area. As detailed above, it proposed combining parts of Pier and Ethelbert wards with the part of Cliftonville ward to the west of Cornwall Gardens and the part of Dane Park ward to the north of Dane Road and the west of Wyndham Avenue and Lower Northdown Avenue to form a new three-member Esplanade ward. The remaining parts of Cliftonville and Dane Park wards would be combined with the part of Northdown Park ward to the north of Northdown Park Road and St Mary's Avenue to form a new three-member Palm Bay ward. The Council noted that properties to the south of Northdown Park Road share similar characteristics with properties in the western part of Cliftonville ward. It proposed combining the remaining part of Northdown Park ward combined with the part of the current Dane Park ward to the south of College Road and to the east of Fitzroy Avenue and Laleham Road to form a new two-member Dane Valley ward. Under a council size of 55, Palm Bay ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while Dane Valley ward would have 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (2 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

80 The Conservatives proposed only minimal change to warding arrangements in this area. Under their proposals, Northdown Park ward would be combined with the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the east of Princess Margaret Avenue and to the south of Saltwood Gardens, Pluckley Gardens, Egerton Drive and Summerfield Road to form a new two-member Northdown ward. The current Dane Park ward would be combined with the part of Cecil ward to the east of Victoria Road and the south of Cowper Road and Milton Avenue and the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the west of Sewyn Road to form a revised two-member Dane Park ward. The remaining part of Cliftonville ward would form a revised two-member Cliftonville ward. Based on a council size of 40, Cliftonville ward would have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while Northdown ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average (4 per cent more and 2 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Dane Park ward would have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, improving to equal to the average by 2005.

81 As detailed above, Councillor Hudson proposed transferring the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the west of Godwin Road to a Margate Central ward. Under his proposals, the remaining part of the current Cliftonville ward would be combined with the part of Dane Park ward to the east of Cliftonville Avenue and the north of Northdown Park Road and the part of Northdown Park ward to the north of Northdown Park Road and St Mary's Avenue to form a revised three-member Cliftonville ward. The remaining parts of Dane Park and Northdown Park

wards would be combined with the part of Salmestone ward to the south of College Road to form a new three-member Margate South ward. Under a council size of 40, Cliftonville and Margate South wards would have 3 per cent and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (3 per cent and 3 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

82 Mr Cox proposed combining the current Cliftonville ward with Ethelbert and Northdown Park wards to form a revised three-member Cliftonville ward. Dane Park ward would be transferred to the proposed Margate Town ward, as detailed above. Under his proposal for a council size of 27, Mr Cox's proposed Cliftonville ward would have 12 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, rising to 13 per cent more than the average in five years' time.

83 In order to address the high levels of electoral inequality in Cliftonville and Northdown Park wards in east Margate, we have proposed allocating an additional councillor to this area. We consider that there is some merit to the District Council's proposed Palm Bay ward, and note that there is some agreement among respondents as to the extent of community boundaries in this area. We are therefore content to adopt the Council's proposal as the basis for our recommendations in this area. While we recognise consider that Palm Bay is a prominent local geographical feature, we note that Cliftonville and Northdown are well-known communities in their own right and therefore propose naming the new ward as Cliftonville & Northdown ward for the purpose of our draft recommendations. We also propose uniting the whole of Cornwall Gardens within the three-member Cliftonville & Northdown ward, and amending the boundary to run to the east of Laleham Gardens and then east along the centre of Northdown Park Road.

84 Under our draft recommendations, the remaining part of Northdown Park ward, to the south of Northdown Park Road, would be combined with the part of Dane Park ward to the south of Addiscombe Road and Northdown Park Road to form a new three-member Dane Valley ward. The remaining parts of Cliftonville and Dane Park wards would be combined to form a new two-member Esplanade ward. Based on a council size of 56, the proposed Cliftonville & Northdown ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (2 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Dane Valley and Esplanade wards would have 3 per cent and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (1 per cent and 5 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

Beacon Road, Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards

85 Beacon Road, Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards cover the northern part of Broadstairs town, and are coterminous with Beacon Road, Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards of Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council. The single-member Kingsgate ward comprises the communities of Kingsgate and North Foreland, and has 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (10 per cent more than the average by 2005). Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards lie to the north and east of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line respectively, and are each represented by two councillors. Beacon Road ward has 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average while Bradstowe ward has 11 per cent fewer than the average (15 per cent and 12 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

86 The District Council proposed relatively few changes to warding arrangements in this area. Under its proposals, Beacon Road ward would be combined with the part of the current St Peter's ward to the north of the A255 Broadstairs Road to form a revised three-member St Peter's ward. In the east, Bradstowe ward, less part to the east of Belmont Road and the south of Rectory Road, would be combined with Kingsgate ward and the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway to form a new three-member Foreland ward. Based on a council size of 55, the Council's proposed Foreland and St Peter's wards would have 3 per cent fewer and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively, both now and in five years' time. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals. Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council also expressed support for the District Council's proposals in the Broadstairs area.

87 Under the Conservatives' proposals for this area, Kingsgate ward would be combined with the part of Beacon Road ward to the east of Beacon Road, The Oaks and Cedar Close and to the south of Churchfields, Trinity Square and Elmwood Close to form a new two-member North Foreland ward. The remaining part of Beacon Road ward would be combined with Bradstowe ward, the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway and the part of St Peter's ward to the north of the High Street and the east of Poplar Road, Victoria Road and Alderney Gardens to form a new two-member Broadstairs Eastcliff ward. Under a council size of 40, the Conservatives' proposed Broadstairs Eastcliff and North Foreland wards would have 5 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councilor than the district average respectively (6 per cent and 3 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

88 Councillor Hudson proposed less extensive change to warding arrangements in this area. Under his proposals, Beacon Road and Kingsgate wards would be combined to form a new two-member Broadstairs North ward. Bradstowe ward would be combined with Pierremont ward and part of Upton ward to form a new Broadstairs East ward, as detailed below. Based on a council size of 40, Councillor Hudson's proposed Broadstairs North ward would have 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

89 Mr Cox proposed combining Beacon Road and Kingsgate wards with the current St Peter's ward to form a revised three-member St Peter's ward. Bradstowe ward would be transferred to a new Broadstairs ward, as detailed below. Under his proposal for a council size of 27, Mr Cox's proposed St Peter's ward would have 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

90 We consider that existing warding arrangements in this area reflect local community identities well, and are therefore content to largely retain the current ward boundaries, subject to some minor amendments in order to improve electoral equality. In particular, we consider that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line forms a significant barrier between north Broadstairs and the St Peter's area to the south, and we have not been persuaded to put forward the District Council's proposal to combine Beacon Road ward with part of St Peter's ward as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that Reading Street and the more historic St Peter's community form distinct and discrete areas which share only limited communication links, and therefore propose retaining the existing boundary between Beacon Road and St Peter's wards.

91 Under our draft recommendations for warding arrangements in this area, the current two-member Beacon Road ward would be enlarged to include Lerryn Gardens, Rose Tower Court and Elmwood Farm from the current Kingsgate ward, and the eastern side of Callis Court Road and Bairds Hill from Bradstowe ward. In order to improve electoral equality in Bradstowe ward we propose including the part of Kingsgate ward to the south of Guy Close and Francis Road in an enlarged two-member Bradstowe ward. We consider that the High Street forms an easily identifiable community boundary in this area, and are content to retain it as the southern boundary of Bradstowe ward. The remaining part of Kingsgate ward would form a revised single-member Kingsgate ward. Under our proposed council size of 56, Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards would have 5 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (7 per cent and 4 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). The proposed Kingsgate ward would have 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, improving to 5 per cent by 2005.

Pierremont, St Peter's and Upton wards

92 Pierremont, St Peter's and Upton wards cover the southern part of Broadstairs town, and are coterminous with Pierremont, St Peter's and Upton wards of Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council. Upton ward also includes the unparished West Dumpton area. The two-member St Peter's and Upton wards lie to the west of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line, and have 36 per cent and 25 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (37 per cent and 24 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). Pierremont ward, which is also represented by two councillors, has 21 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

93 The District Council again proposed only minor changes to ward boundaries in this area. As detailed above, the Council proposed transferring part of Upton ward to the new Foreland ward and combining part of the current St Peter's ward with Beacon Road ward to form a revised St Peter's ward. It also proposed combining the part of Upton ward to the east of Rosemary Avenue and Salisbury Avenue with Pierremont ward and the part of Bradstowe ward to the east of Belmont Road and the south of Rectory Road to form a new two-member Viking ward. The remaining part of Upton ward, less the unparished area to the south of Park Avenue, would be combined with the part of the current St Peter's ward to the south of the A255 Broadstairs Road and Dane Park Road to form a new three-member Bromstone ward. Under a council size of 55, the Council's proposed Bromstone ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time, while Viking ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole (1 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals in relation to this area. Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council expressed support for the District Council's proposals for the Broadstairs area, but proposed renaming the Council's Viking ward as Pierremont ward.

94 The Conservatives proposed more extensive change to warding arrangements. Under their proposals, St Peter's ward, less the part to the north of the High Street and the east of Poplar Road, Victoria Road and Alderney Gardens, would be combined with part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road, comprising Dorothy Drive, Hopes Lane, Donnahay Road, Helmdon Close, Violet Avenue and the northern part of Pysons Road, to form a new two-member

Bromstone ward. The part of Upton ward to the south of The Broadway and the north of West Dumpton Lane would be combined with the part of Pierremont ward to the west of Dumpton Park Drive and the north of West Cliff Road to form a new two-member Broadstairs Viking Bay ward. The remaining part of Upton ward would be transferred to a new Whitehall ward, and the remaining part of Pierremont ward would be transferred to a new Cliffside ward, as detailed below. Based on the Conservatives' proposed council size of 40, Broadstairs Viking Bay and Bromstone wards would have 4 per cent and 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (5 per cent and 2 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

95 Councillor Hudson proposed combining St Peter's ward with the part of Upton ward to the west of St Peter's Park Road, Gladstone Road and Salisbury Road and the north of West Dumpton Lane to form a new two-member Broadstairs West ward. The part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue would be transferred to a new Dumpton ward, as detailed below. The remaining part of Upton ward would be combined with Bradstowe and Pierremont wards to form a new three-member Broadstairs East ward. The proposed Broadstairs East and Broadstairs West wards would have 1 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (2 per cent and 3 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005), based on a council size of 40.

96 Mr Cox proposed combining Bradstowe, Pierremont and Upton wards to form a new three-member Broadstairs ward. The current St Peter's ward would form part of a revised St Peter's ward, as detailed above. Under Mr Cox's proposed council size of 27, the proposed Broadstairs ward would have 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

97 As discussed previously, we consider that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line constitutes a significant boundary between north Broadstairs and the St Peter's area, and we have not been persuaded to put forward the District Council's proposed St Peter's ward. We consider that the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway forms part of the well-established St Peter's settlement, and propose transferring the area to an enlarged three-member St Peter's ward comprising the Fairfield, Westwood and St Peter's communities.

98 We note that there was some consensus of opinion among district-wide submissions to transfer the unparished West Dumpton area of Upton ward from Broadstairs to a Ramsgate ward, and we consider that district boundaries in this area should be coterminous with the boundary of Broadstairs & St Peter's parish. In order to address the high levels of electoral inequality in Pierremont and Upton wards, we propose combining the remaining part of Upton ward with the current Pierremont ward to form an enlarged three-member Pierremont ward. Based on a council size of 56, the proposed Pierremont and St Peter's wards would have 7 per cent and 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (and 6 per cent and 5 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

Central Eastcliff, Central Westcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards

99 Central Eastcliff, Central Westcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards cover the seafront area of Ramsgate town. The three-member Central Eastcliff ward covers much of the town centre area,

while Central Westcliff ward includes the remaining parts of the town centre, the port and marina, and is also represented by three councillors. The two-member Sir Moses Montefiore ward has 21 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (16 per cent fewer than the average by 2005), while Central Eastcliff and Central Westcliff wards have 9 per cent fewer and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (8 per cent fewer and 2 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

100 The District Council proposed only minimal change to warding arrangements in this area. In order to improve electoral equality it proposed transferring the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and the east of West Dumpton Lane to a revised two-member Sir Moses Montefiore ward. Under the Council's proposals, the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the north of Station Approach Road would be combined with Central Eastcliff ward, less the part to the west of Chatham Street, to form a new three-member Eastcliff ward. The eastern boundary of the proposed Eastcliff ward would be amended to follow the East Gully of the Royal Harbour. This amendment would affect no electors. The part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of Grange Road would be combined with the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the west of Chatham Street and the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the east of Wilfred Road and the south of Station Approach Road to form a new three-member Central Harbour ward. Based on a council size of 55, the Council's proposed Central Harbour, Eastcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards would have 4 per cent, 3 per cent and 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (4 per cent, 2 per cent and 5 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

101 Under the Conservatives' proposals the part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward to the west of Dumpton Road and Dumpton Park Road would be transferred to a new Whitehall ward, as detailed below. The remaining part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward would be combined with the part of Pierremont ward to the south of Westcliff Road and the east of Dumpton Park Drive, and the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the north of St Luke's Avenue and Victoria Road and the east of Bellevue Road and the Plains of Waterloo, to form a new two-member Cliffside ward. The remaining part of Central Eastcliff ward, less the part to the west of Hollicondane Road, would be combined with the part of the current Central Westcliff ward to the east of the High Street, Cannon Road, North Avenue and Addington Street to form a new two-member Ramsgate Central ward. Finally, the remaining part of the current Central Westcliff ward would be combined with the part of Southwood ward to the east of the A256 Sandwich Road and the south of the A253 Canterbury Road and London Road to form a revised two-member Central Westcliff ward. Under a council size of 40, Cliffside and Central Westcliff wards would have 4 per cent fewer and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (1 per cent fewer and 3 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). Ramsgate Central ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole, and 1 per cent more than the average in five years' time.

102 Councillor Hudson proposed more extensive change to warding arrangements in this area. Under his proposals, Sir Moses Montefiore ward would be combined with the unparished part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue, the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road and the south of Pysons Road and the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the east of Margate Road and the north of Boundary Road and Hereson Road, to form a new three-member

Dumpton ward. The remaining part of Central Eastcliff ward would be combined with the part of St Lawrence ward to the south of Park Road and the part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of Grange Road to form a new three-member Ramsgate Central ward. Based on a council size of 40, Councillor Hudson's proposed Dumpton ward would have 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, while Ramsgate Central ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (6 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

103 Mr Cox proposed combining Central Eastcliff and Central Westcliff wards to form a new three-member Ramsgate Central ward. Sir Moses Montefiore ward would be transferred to a new Ramsgate Moses & Northwood ward, as detailed below. Under Mr Cox's proposed council size of 27, the proposed Ramsgate Central ward would have 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (3 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

104 We broadly concur with the District Council's proposals for warding arrangements in this area, and are content to base our draft recommendations on its proposed Central Harbour, Eastcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards. As detailed above, we have proposed transferring the West Dumpton area, to the south of Park Avenue, from Upton ward to a revised Sir Moses Montefiore ward. We note that West Dumpton area is a distinct community which shares no communication links with the Northwood area, and is separated from Northwood by farmland and playing fields. In light of the absence of obvious community ties between the two areas, we have not been persuaded that the Council's proposal to divide West Dumpton between the proposed Northwood and Sir Moses Montefiore district wards would appropriately reflect community identities and interests in the area, nor would it be conducive to effective and convenient local government. In order to improve electoral equality in the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward, we have also proposed transferring the part of the current Sir Moses Montefiore ward to the south of College Road and Cecilia Road to a new Eastcliff ward.

105 We consider that the A254 Margate Road forms a strong and easily identifiable boundary which clearly delineates communities in east Ramsgate. We have not been persuaded that the District Council's proposal to include the part of Central Westcliff ward to the north of Station Approach Road within its Eastcliff ward would appropriately reflect the identities and interests of electors in the area to the west of Margate Road. Under our proposals for the Ramsgate area, the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Margate Road would be retained within a new three-member Central Harbour ward, and we also propose uniting both sides of Wilfred Road and Nursery Close within the new ward. We note that the Council's Central Harbour ward would unite all of the Royal Harbour and ferry terminal area within a single ward, and we are content to put forward the proposed Central Harbour ward as part of our draft recommendations for Thanet, subject to the minor amendments described above. Under our proposed council size of 56, Sir Moses Montefiore ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole, and 3 per cent more than the average in five years' time. Central Harbour and Eastcliff wards would have 5 per cent and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (4 per cent and 6 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

St Lawrence and Southwood wards

106 St Lawrence and Southwood wards lie to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line in Ramsgate, and are each represented by two councillors. St Lawrence ward comprises the Nethercourt Estate and the Ramsgate Station area to the west of the A254 Margate Road and north of Park Road, while Southwood ward includes the Chilton area of Ramsgate and the settlement of Cliffsend. St Lawrence ward has 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, and Southwood ward has 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (3 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005).

107 Under the Council's proposals for this area, the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Grange Road would be combined with Southwood ward, less the part to the north of London Road, Rawdon Road and Queen Bertha Road, to form a new two-member Cliffsend & Pegwell ward. The Council noted that these areas are "linked together by Pegwell Bay". It also stated that it had been mindful of any possible future changes to parishing arrangements in the area, and had therefore not proposed dividing Cliffsend village between district wards. The remaining part of Southwood ward would be combined with the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the west of Wilfred Road to form a revised two-member St Lawrence ward. Under the Council's proposed council size of 55, Cliffsend and Pegwell ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while St Lawrence ward would have 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (5 per cent and 2 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

108 As detailed above, the Cliffsend area of Southwood ward, to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road, would be transferred to the new Villages ward under the Conservatives' proposals, while the part of Southwood ward to the south of the A253 Canterbury Road and London Road would be transferred to a revised Central Westcliff ward. Manston parish, currently in St Lawrence ward, would be transferred to the new Villages ward. The remaining part of Southwood ward would be combined with the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the west of the A254 Margate Road to form a revised two-member St Lawrence ward. Based on a council size of 40, the proposed St Lawrence ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

109 Under Councillor Hudson's proposals for warding arrangements in this area, the part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of Grange Road would be transferred to a new Ramsgate Central ward, as detailed above. He proposed combining the remaining part of Central Westcliff ward with the part of Southwood ward to the east of the A256 Sandwich Road and St Lawrence ward, less Manston parish and the part to the south of Park Road, to form a new three-member Nethercourt & Chilton ward. Manston parish and the remaining part of Southwood ward would be transferred to the proposed The Villages ward, as detailed above. Under Councillor Hudson's proposed council size of 40, Nethercourt & Chilton ward would have 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (6 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

110 Mr Cox proposed combining Newington, St Lawrence and Southwood wards to form a new three-member Ramsgate North ward. Under Mr Cox's proposed a council size of 27, the

proposed Ramsgate North ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (2 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

111 We consider that the District Council's proposals for this area would provide a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than either the existing arrangements or other district-wide submissions received at Stage One. We have therefore decided to adopt its proposals for Cliffsend & Pegwell and St Lawrence wards subject to some minor amendments. We propose combining the part of Southwood ward to the south of London Road, Norman Road and Edith Road with the remaining part of Central Westcliff ward to form a two-member Cliffsend & Pegwell ward. We recognise that Cliffsend is a relatively self-contained rural community, but note that it shares strong communication links with the Pegwell area via the A253 Canterbury Road. Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell ward would have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (3 per cent more than the average by 2005).

112 While we are content that the District Council's proposed St Lawrence ward provides a reasonable balance between electoral equality and community identities and interests in this area, we propose some minor amendments in order to better reflect local ties in the north of the ward. We consider that the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the north of Manston Road, incorporating St Laurence Court, shares few links with the Nethercourt Estate which forms the remaining part of St Lawrence ward. We therefore propose transferring the Manston Road area to a revised Newington ward, as detailed below. While we recognise that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line forms a natural community boundary in this area, we are content that both Manston Road and Newington Road provide strong communication links between Newington and the St Laurence Court area. We have also proposed uniting both sides of Wilfred Road and Nursery Close within the new Central Harbour ward, as detailed above. Under our draft recommendations, the two-member St Lawrence ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, improving to 2 per cent more than the average by 2005.

Newington and Northwood wards

113 Newington and Northwood wards cover the part of Ramsgate town to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line. The two-member Newington ward comprises the Newington Estate to the east of Newington Road, and has 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (11 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Northwood ward, which is represented by three councillors, comprises the Whitehall Estate and the community of Northwood, and has 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (9 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

114 The District Council proposed minimal change to ward boundaries in this area. It proposed combining the part of the current Northwood ward to the south of Allenby Road and the west of the A254 Margate Road with the current Newington ward to form a new three-member Newington & Whitehall ward. The remaining part of the current Northwood ward would be combined with the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and the west of Dumpton Lane to form a revised two-member Northwood ward. Based on a council size of 55, Newington & Whitehall ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while Northwood ward would have 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (1

per cent and 3 per cent more than the average respectively by 2005). Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

115 The Conservatives proposed more extensive change to warding arrangements in this area, combining the current Newington ward with the part of Northwood ward to the north of Allenby Road and the west of Margate Road and Northwood Road to form a revised two-member Newington ward. As detailed above, the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road, comprising Dorothy Drive, Hopes Lane, Donnahay Road, Helmdon Close, Violet Avenue and the northern part of Pysons Road, would be transferred to a new Bromstone ward. The remaining part of Northwood ward would be combined with the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and the part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward to the west of Dumpton Lane and Dumpton Park Road to form a new two-member Whitehall ward. Under the proposed council size of 40, Newington ward would have 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, while Whitehall ward would have 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (6 per cent and 2 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

116 Under Councillor Hudson's proposals for this area, the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road and the south of Pysons Road would be transferred to a new Dumpton ward, as detailed above. The remaining part of Northwood ward would be combined with Newington ward to form a new three-member Newington & Haine ward, which would have 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (2 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

117 Mr Cox proposed combining Northwood and Sir Moses Montefiore wards to form a new three-member Ramsgate Moses & Northwood ward. Newington ward would form part of a proposed Ramsgate North ward, as detailed above. Under Mr Cox's proposed council size of 27, the proposed Ramsgate Moses & Northwood ward would have 27 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, both now and in five years' time.

118 We are content that existing warding arrangements in this area reflect community ties well, and that the current Newington and Northwood wards would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality under a council size of 56. We consider that the Newington Estate area forms a distinct and discrete community to the west of Newington Road, and we have not been persuaded that the District Council's proposal to combine it with part of the Whitehall area would accurately reflect local identities and interests in either area. We propose retaining the existing three-member Northwood ward and two-member Newington ward, subject to transferring the Manston Road area from St Lawrence ward to the revised Newington ward, as detailed above. Based on a council size of 56, the proposed Newington ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, while Northwood ward would have 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (3 per cent and 6 per cent fewer than the average respectively by 2005).

Electoral Cycle

119 We received only one representation regarding the district's electoral cycle. The Conservatives proposed that the whole council be elected in 2003, with elections by halves every second year after 2003.

120 The implementation of the Commission's proposals are entirely a matter for the Secretary of State, and we have no powers to recommend elections by halves. In the absence of any other proposals for change to the district's electoral cycle, we therefore recommend no change to the existing cycle of whole-council elections every four years.

Conclusions

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

- there should be an increase in council size from 54 to 56;
- there should be 23 wards;
- the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of four wards;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council every four years.

122 As already indicated, the District Council's proposals have formed the basis for our draft recommendations, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- we propose allocating an additional councillor to the rural Thanet Villages ward in order to better reflect local community ties in the rural area of Thanet and improve electoral equality;
- we propose creating a new two-member Birchington North ward and a three-member Birchington South ward;
- we propose amending ward boundaries in Margate to create new Garlinge, Westbrook, Margate Central and Cliftonville & Northdown wards, and revised Esplanade and Dane Valley wards;
- in the Broadstairs and St Peter's area, we propose largely retaining the existing Kingsgate, Bradstowe and Beacon Road wards, and creating revised St Peter's and Pierremont wards in order to better reflect community ties;
- we propose amending ward boundaries in Ramsgate, placing the West Dumpton area within a revised Sir Moses Montefiore ward and retaining all of the Whitehall Estate within Northwood ward.

123 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2000 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2005.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2000 electorate		2005 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	54	56	54	56
Number of wards	27	23	27	23
Average number of electors per councillor	1,797	1,732	1,839	1,774
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	12	0	14	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	6	0	5	0

124 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Thanet District Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the district average from 12 to none. By 2005 no wards are forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district.

Draft Recommendation
 Thanet District Council should comprise 56 councillors serving 23 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 whole-council elections every four years.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

125 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parish of Birchington and the town of Broadstairs & St Peter’s in order to reflect our proposed district wards.

126 The parish of Birchington is currently served by 10 councillors representing two parish wards, Birchington East and Birchington West. Birchington East parish ward is currently

represented by six parish councillors, while Birchington West parish ward is represented by four parish councillors. In its submission, the District Council stated that it had considered three options for parish warding arrangements in Birchington, including one option under which the Parish Council would be served by nine members, one fewer than at present. However, it had decided not to put forward any proposals on parish warding arrangements in Birchington to the Commission, in order that the Parish Council might make its own representation in relation to this area. Birchington Parish Council and Councillor Francis (Birchington Parish Council) both expressed opposition to any proposal that would reduce the number of parish councillors for Birchington parish, and requested that the Council retain the existing 10 members.

127 In our draft recommendations for Thanet we proposed creating a two-member Birchington North district ward and a three-member Birchington South district ward. As a consequence of our draft recommendations, we propose amending the boundary between the two parish wards in Birchington to reflect the proposed district wards. We propose that Birchington North parish ward should return four parish councillors, while Birchington South parish ward should return six parish councillors.

Draft Recommendation
Birchington Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Birchington North parish ward (returning four parish councillors) and Birchington South parish ward (returning six parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map A2 in Appendix A.

128 Broadstairs & St Peter’s Town Council is currently served by 15 councillors representing six town council wards. Beacon Road, Bradstowe, St Peter’s and Upton town council wards are each represented by three councillors, while Pierremont town council ward is represented by two councillors and Kingsgate town council ward is represented by a single councillor. The District Council proposed creating four town council wards which would reflect its proposed district ward boundaries in Broadstairs. Broadstairs & St Peter’s Town Council expressed support for the Council’s proposal to retain 15 town councillors for Broadstairs, but proposed renaming the Council’s Viking ward as Pierremont ward.

129 In our draft recommendations for Thanet we proposed revising the existing Beacon Road, Bradstowe, Kingsgate, Pierremont and St Peter’s wards. As a consequence of our draft recommendations for district warding arrangements in Broadstairs, we propose amending the boundaries of the town council wards in Broadstairs & St Peter’s to reflect the proposed district wards. Pierremont and St Peter’s wards would return four town councillors each, Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards would return three town councillors each and Kingsgate ward would return one town councillor.

Draft Recommendation

Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council should comprise 15 town councillors, as at present, representing five town council wards: Pierremont and St Peter's wards (returning four town councillors each), Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards (returning three town councillors each) and Kingsgate ward (returning one town councillor). The boundary between the five town council wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted inside the back cover of this report.

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

Draft Recommendation

For parish and town councils, whole-council elections should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that of the District Council.

131 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Thanet and welcome comments from the District 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 Thanet

5 NEXT STEPS

132 We are putting forward draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for consultation. We will take fully into account all representations received by 22 January 2001. 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 District Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

133 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

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

Fax: 020 7404 6142
E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk
www.lgce.gov.uk

134 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 Thanet: Detailed Mapping

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

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district 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 Birchington North and Birchington South wards.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the towns of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Thanet: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed Ward Boundaries in Birchington

APPENDIX B

Thanet District Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B1: Thanet District Council's Proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Birchington Coastal	2	3,761	1,881	7	3,777	1,889	5
Birchington Rural	3	5,307	1,769	0	5,437	1,812	0
Bromstone (in Broadstairs)	3	5,255	1,752	-1	5,353	1,784	-1
Central Harbour (in Ramsgate)	3	5,064	1,688	-4	5,187	1,729	-4
Cliffsend & Pegwell (in Ramsgate)	2	3,763	1,882	7	3,788	1,894	5
Dane Park (in Margate)	2	3,605	1,803	2	3,629	1,815	0
Dane Valley (in Margate)	2	3,433	1,717	-3	3,451	1,726	-4
Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,110	1,703	-3	5,293	1,764	-2
Esplanade (in Margate)	3	5,000	1,667	-6	5,307	1,769	-2
Foreland (in Broadstairs)	3	5,127	1,709	-3	5,243	1,748	-3
Marine (in Margate)	2	3,659	1,830	4	3,780	1,890	5
Newington & Whitehall (in Ramsgate)	3	5,454	1,818	3	5,462	1,821	1
Northwood (in Ramsgate)	2	3,703	1,852	5	3,708	1,854	3
Palm Bay (in Margate)	3	5,444	1,815	3	5,535	1,845	2
St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	3,573	1,787	1	3,696	1,848	2
St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	3	5,371	1,790	1	5,446	1,815	1

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Salmestone (in Margate)	2	3,636	1,818	3	3,650	1,825	1
Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	3,173	1,587	-10	3,443	1,722	-5
Thanet Villages	2	3,669	1,835	4	3,790	1,895	5
Viking (in Broadstairs)	2	3,512	1,756	0	3,578	1,789	-1
Westbrook & Garlinge (in Margate)	3	5,340	1,780	1	5,381	1,794	-1
Westgate-on-Sea	3	5,098	1,699	-4	5,412	1,804	0
Totals	55	97,057	–	–	99,346	–	–
Averages	–	–	1,765	–	–	1,806	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on Thanet District Council's submission.

Notes: 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 There are a number of small anomalies in the electorate figures supplied, and as a result this table and other tables do not exactly tally. Small changes to ward electorates may arise as a result of further analysis at Stage Three.

North & South Thanet Conservative Associations' Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B2: North & South Thanet Conservative Associations' Proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Birchington East	2	5,016	2,508	3	5,104	2,552	3
Birchington West	2	4,915	2,458	1	4,936	2,468	-1
Broadstairs Eastcliff (in Broadstairs)	2	4,619	2,310	-5	4,675	2,338	-6
Broadstairs Viking Bay (in Broadstairs)	2	4,667	2,334	-4	4,742	2,371	-5
Bromstone (in Broadstairs)	2	4,735	2,368	-2	4,857	2,429	-2
Central Westcliff (in Ramsgate)	2	4,962	2,481	2	5,109	2,555	3
Cliffside (in Ramsgate)	2	4,661	2,331	-4	4,933	2,467	-1
Cliftonville (in Margate)	2	4,944	2,472	2	5,175	2,588	4
Dane Park (in Margate)	2	4,960	2,480	2	4,990	2,495	0
Hartsdown (in Margate)	2	4,884	2,442	1	4,902	2,451	-1
Margate Central (in Margate)	2	5,164	2,582	6	5,403	2,702	9
Margate West (in Margate)	2	4,968	2,484	2	4,999	2,500	1
Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	4,647	2,324	-4	4,657	2,329	-6
Northdown (in Margate)	2	4,811	2,406	-1	4,865	2,433	-2
North Foreland (in Broadstairs)	2	4,722	2,361	-3	4,828	2,414	-3
Ramsgate Central (in Ramsgate)	2	4,841	2,421	0	5,024	2,512	1

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	5,011	2,506	3	5,109	2,555	3
Villages	2	4,874	2,437	0	5,062	2,531	2
Westgate	2	4,733	2,367	-2	5,060	2,530	2
Whitehall (in Ramsgate)	2	4,880	2,440	1	4,885	2,443	-2
Totals	40	97,014	–	–	99,315	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,425	–	–	2,483	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on North & South Thanet Conservative Associations' submission.

Notes: 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 There are a number of small anomalies in the electorate figures supplied, and as a result this table and other tables do not exactly tally. Small changes to ward electorates may arise as a result of further analysis at Stage Three.

Councillor Hudson's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B3: Councillor Hudson's Proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Birchington East	2	4,567	2,284	-6	4,644	2,322	-6
Birchington West, St Nicholas & Sarre	2	4,495	2,248	-7	4,578	2,289	-8
Broadstairs East (in Broadstairs)	3	7,181	2,394	-1	7,264	2,421	-2
Broadstairs North (in Broadstairs)	2	5,053	2,527	4	5,159	2,580	4
Broadstairs West (in Broadstairs)	3	7,035	2,345	-3	7,194	2,398	-3
Cliftonville (in Margate)	3	7,486	2,495	3	7,681	2,560	3
Dumpton (in Ramsgate)	3	6,741	2,247	-7	7,022	2,341	-6
Margate Central (in Margate)	3	7,666	2,555	5	7,998	2,666	7
Margate South (in Margate)	3	7,603	2,534	4	7,637	2,546	3
Margate West (in Margate)	3	7,758	2,586	7	7,861	2,620	6
Nethercourt & Chilton (in Ramsgate)	3	6,911	2,304	-5	7,030	2,343	-6
Newington & Haine (in Ramsgate)	3	7,320	2,440	1	7,328	2,443	-2
Ramsgate Central (in Ramsgate)	3	7,529	2,510	3	7,809	2,603	5

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
The Villages	2	5,008	2,504	3	5,156	2,578	4
Westgate-on-Sea	2	4,705	2,353	-3	4,971	2,486	0
Totals	40	97,058	–	–	99,332	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,426	–	–	2,483	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on Councillor Hudson's submission.

Notes: 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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 There are a number of small anomalies in the electorate figures supplied, and as a result this table and other tables do not exactly tally. Small changes to ward electorates may arise as a result of further analysis at Stage Three.

Mr John Cox's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B4: Mr John Cox's Proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Broadstairs	3	10,554	3,518	-2	10,685	3,562	-3
Cliftonville (in Margate)	3	12,097	4,032	12	12,464	4,155	13
Margate Town	3	10,717	3,572	-1	10,918	3,639	-1
Margate West	3	12,385	4,128	15	12,757	4,252	16
Ramsgate Central	3	10,380	3,460	-4	10,710	3,570	-3
Ramsgate Moses & Northwood	3	7,826	2,609	-27	8,103	2,701	-27
Ramsgate North	3	10,697	3,566	-1	10,860	3,620	-2
St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	3	9,957	3,319	-8	10,185	3,395	-8
Thanet Parishes	3	12,401	4,134	15	12,646	4,215	15
Totals	27	97,014	-	-	99,328	-	-
Averages	-	-	3,593	-	-	3,679	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on Mr John Cox's submission.

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

APPENDIX C

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:

- (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- (b) 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.

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

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:

- 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.

