

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
Worthing in West Sussex

*February 2002*

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



# WHAT IS THE 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 on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission:

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

With effect from 1 April 2002, the Electoral Commission will assume the functions of the Local Government Commission for England and take over responsibility for making Orders putting in place the new arrangements resulting from periodic electoral reviews (powers which currently reside with the Secretary of State). As part of this transfer the Electoral Commission will set up a Boundary Committee for England which will take over responsibility for the conduct of PERs from the Local Government Commission for England. The Boundary Committee for England will conduct electoral reviews following the same rules and in the same manner as the Local Government Commission for England. Its final recommendations on future electoral arrangements will then be presented to the Electoral Commission which will be able to accept, modify or reject the Boundary Committee for England's findings. Under these new arrangements there will remain a further opportunity to make representations directly to the Electoral Commission after the publication of the final recommendations. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to send comments to the Electoral Commission.



## SUMMARY

We began a review of Worthing's electoral arrangements on 10 July 2001.

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

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

- **in two of the 12 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough and one ward varies by more than 20 per cent;**
- **this level of representation is expected to remain constant over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in one ward by 2006;**
- **the existing arrangements provide for unequal distribution of councillors within Worthing, with the area to the north of the railway line being slightly under-represented and the area to the south of the railway line being slightly over-represented.**

Our main proposals for Worthing's future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 96 – 97) are that:

- **Worthing Borough Council should have 37 councillors, one more than at present;**
- **there should be 13 wards, instead of 12 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of nine of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one, and three wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In 12 of the proposed 13 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 5 per cent from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 26 February 2002. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission which, with effect from 1 April 2002, will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also decide when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 22 April 2002:

**Review Manager  
Worthing Review  
LGCE  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU**

**Fax: 020 7404 6142  
E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)**

*Table 1: Draft Recommendations: Summary*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1	Broadwater	3	<i>Unchanged</i> – Broadwater ward
2	Castle	3	Castle ward; part of Tarring ward
3	Central	3	part of Central ward; part of Heene ward; part of Selden ward
4	Durrington	2	part of Durrington ward
5	Gaisford	3	part of Gaisford ward; part of Offington ward
6	Goring	3	<i>Unchanged</i> – Goring ward
7	Heene	3	part of Heene ward
8	Marine	3	<i>Unchanged</i> – Marine ward
9	Northbrook	2	part of Durrington ward
10	Offington	3	part of Gaisford ward; part of Offington ward
11	Salvington	3	part of Durrington ward; part of Offington ward; Salvington ward
12	Selden	3	part of Central ward; part of Selden ward
13	Tarring	3	part of Tarring ward

*Notes: 1 The whole borough is unparished.*

*2 The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.*

Table 2: Draft Recommendations for Worthing

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Broadwater	3	6,460	2,153	2	6,591	2,197	2
2	Castle	3	6,306	2,102	-1	6,188	2,063	-4
3	Central	3	5,944	1,981	-6	6,190	2,063	-4
4	Durrington	2	4,519	2,260	7	4,529	2,265	5
5	Gaisford	3	6,732	2,244	6	6,704	2,235	4
6	Goring	3	6,751	2,250	6	6,743	2,248	5
7	Heene	3	6,143	2,048	-3	6,288	2,096	-2
8	Marine	3	6,427	2,142	1	6,390	2,130	-1
9	Northbrook	2	3,453	1,727	-18	4,425	2,213	3
10	Offington	3	6,141	2,047	-3	6,086	2,029	-5
11	Salvington	3	6,851	2,284	8	6,775	2,258	5
12	Selden	3	6,197	2,066	-2	6,222	2,074	-3
13	Tarring	3	6,390	2,130	1	6,293	2,098	-2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>78,314</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>79,424</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,117</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,147</b>	<b>-</b>

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

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

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the borough of Worthing in West Sussex, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the seven districts in West Sussex 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 expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Worthing. Worthing's last review was carried out by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1978 (Report no. 304). The electoral arrangements of West Sussex County Council were last reviewed in June 1984 (Report no. 473). We expect to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of the year.

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

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

4 Full details of the legislation under which we work are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the reviews.

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

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

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward will have to be fully justified. 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 assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, 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 electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

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

*Table 3: Stages of the Review*

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

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper called *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one, half of the district council would be elected, in year two, half of 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 wards in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. The proposals were taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, states 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 current *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 10 July 2001, when we wrote to Worthing Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified West Sussex County Council, Sussex Police, the local authority associations, West Sussex Association of Local Councils, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the borough, 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 Worthing Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of submissions (the end of Stage One) was 15 October 2001.

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

13 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 26 February 2002 and will end on 22 April 2002, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore**

**important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

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



## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

15 Worthing is the largest town in West Sussex and is situated on the south coast, between the districts of Adur to the east and Arun to the west. The borough is a growing resort at the foot of the Sussex Downs with five miles of beach at its southernmost point. The borough is divided by the railway line, which runs east–west, parallel to the coastline. Covering some 3,244 hectares, and with a population of some 99,565, Worthing has a population density of almost 31 persons per hectare. The borough is unparished.

16 The electorate of the borough is 78,314 (February 2001). The Borough Council presently has 36 members who are elected from 12 wards, most of which are urban, with the two northernmost wards being relatively rural. Each of the wards are represented by three councillors. The Borough Council is elected by thirds.

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

18 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,175 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,206 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration since the last review, the number of electors per councillor in two of the 12 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and one ward by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Durrington ward where each councillor represents 27 per cent more electors than the borough average. However, while there is a generally high level of electoral equality in Worthing, the existing arrangements provide for an imbalance in the allocation of councillors either side of the railway line.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Worthing*

Table 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Broadwater	3	6,460	2,153	-1	6,591	2,197	0
2	Castle	3	6,106	2,035	-6	5,988	1,996	-10
3	Central	3	5,704	1,901	-13	5,949	1,983	-10
4	Durrington	3	8,289	2,763	27	9,276	3,092	40
5	Gaisford	3	6,533	2,178	0	6,502	2,167	-2
6	Goring	3	6,751	2,250	3	6,743	2,248	2
7	Heene	3	6,359	2,120	-3	6,504	2,168	-2
8	Marine	3	6,427	2,142	-2	6,390	2,130	-3
9	Offington	3	6,349	2,116	-3	6,292	2,097	-5
10	Salvington	3	6,525	2,175	0	6,449	2,150	-3
11	Selden	3	6,221	2,074	-5	6,247	2,082	-6
12	Tarring	3	6,590	2,197	1	6,493	2,164	-2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>78,314</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>79,424</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,175</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Central ward are relatively over-represented by 13 per cent, while electors in Durrington ward are relatively under-represented by 27 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

19 At the start of this review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Worthing Borough Council.

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

#### **Worthing Borough Council**

21 The Borough Council proposed increasing the current council size from 36 to 37 members, in order to address the under-representation in the Durrington area, serving 13 wards, one more than at present. The proposals were based on minimal change to existing ward boundaries. There would be a mix of 11 three-member wards and two two-member wards. The Borough Council proposed retaining all existing ward names. The Borough Council's scheme provided for improved electoral equality with no ward estimated to vary by more than 5 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The Borough Council's submission also contained copies of representations received from interested parties during its own consultation exercise. It was noted in the Borough Council's submission that the Liberal Democrat councillors on the Working Party voted against the recommendation to submit the scheme as the Borough Council's official submission.

#### **Worthing Liberal Democrat Group**

22 Worthing Liberal Democrat Group (the Liberal Democrats) proposed a reduction in council size from 36 to 35 members, representing 15 wards. They stated that they find no reason to propose a significant increase or decrease in council size. Their proposals would provide for a mixed pattern of two and three-member wards. The Liberal Democrats proposed new ward names for most of the borough. The Liberal Democrats' scheme also provided for improved electoral equality with no ward estimated to vary by more than 6 per cent from the borough average by 2006. However, they stated that "in the event that the commission feels that this variance is inadvisable, a modification ... is proposed" and provided an alternative boundary between the proposed Downs and Salvington & Offington wards which would result in no ward being estimated to vary by more than 5 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The Liberal Democrats' submission also contained copies of representations received during their own consultation exercise.

#### **Other Representations**

23 A local resident proposed a reduction in the existing council size from 36 to 30 members, serving 10 three-member wards. He proposed retaining most of the existing ward names. This scheme also provided for improved electoral equality with no ward estimated to vary by more than 4 per cent from the borough average by 2006. (These figures were estimates, as advice

from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of the modifications to ward boundaries mentioned above was not obtained.)

24 West Sussex County Council objected to the Borough Council's scheme as it considered that the scheme would not allow for coterminosity between county divisions and borough ward boundaries when the County Council is reviewed later this year. It stated that the Liberal Democrats' scheme "seemed to be more in line with our preferences and would assist with the county's own review next year".

25 Worthing Labour Party objected to the Borough Council's scheme as it considered that it did not reflect local communities. It expressed support for the Liberal Democrats' proposals which it stated "provide a ward structure that fits in more with the existing local communities".

26 Finally, a local resident proposed that the borough should comprise a uniform pattern of single-member wards in an attempt to counter voter apathy and provide for "a more democratic system of elections of Local Government Council/Borough representatives".

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

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

28 As described earlier, our primary aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Worthing is 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 of the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

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

### **Electorate Forecasts**

32 Since 1975 there has been an increase of approximately 7 per cent in the electorate of Worthing borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 1 per cent from 78,314 to 79,424 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Durrington ward, although a notable amount of growth is also expected in Central ward. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Borough Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

33 At Stage One, the Liberal Democrats questioned the Borough Council’s projected electorate, with particular reference to the development expected in the West Durrington area. They stated that “the WBC [Worthing Borough Council] proposal does not give exact

projections for the proposed new Durrington wards for 2006, so it is not possible to determine whether these wards fall inside or outside the 5% variance limit.” We have sought clarification from the Borough Council on this issue, and are content to accept the Borough Council’s projected electorate figures. We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having looked at the Borough Council’s figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

## **Council Size**

34 As explained earlier, we start by assuming 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.

35 Worthing Borough Council presently has 36 members. The Borough Council, having put its scheme out to public consultation, proposed a council of 37 members, an increase of one. It stated that “the existing number of Councillors, at 36, was appropriate for the new structure [of internal political management] and would continue to provide effective and convenient local government. Accordingly, it was agreed that, for the purposes of the Review of Ward Boundaries, the Council’s submission should be based on a largely similar number of Councillors.” The addition of an extra councillor and the division of the existing Durrington ward into two two-member wards would correct the allocation of councillors north and south of the railway line, which at present is unbalanced, and therefore results in a revised council size of 37.

36 The Liberal Democrats, who also put their scheme out for public consultation, proposed a reduction in council size from 36 to 35. They stated that, with the move to a cabinet system of internal political management, they believed that “the current council size is efficient, appropriate and reasonable”. They did not consider that a significant increase or decrease in council size was necessary. Under the Liberal Democrats’ proposed council size of 35, the imbalance of representation either side of the railway line would also be rectified.

37 A local resident proposed a reduction in council size to 30, arguing that “even though the population has grown, changes in working practices mean that the Council should be able to maintain effective management with a reduced number of Councillors”. In addition, he considered that “this reduction would generally be in line with the reviews already completed in East Sussex authorities”. He also contended that the reduction was justified because the greater use of information technology had improved communications, and that the introduction of the modernised political structure meant that fewer members were required. His proposed council size also corrects the imbalance of representation either side of the railway line.

38 Finally, a local resident stated that he understood “that there is a move toward less numbers of representatives at local council level” and that he did not support this, although he acknowledged that this would not affect his preference for single-member wards.

39 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One regarding council size and have noted that there is a disparity of opinion regarding the appropriate council size for Worthing. Notwithstanding the reasonable levels of electoral equality achieved, the borough-wide proposal from a local resident, which proposed a significant

reduction in council size, has not been subject to scrutiny or consultation on a wider scale within the borough. In contrast, there is a broad agreement between the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats that a change in council size is necessary, in order to rectify the current imbalance of councillors north and south of the railway line and to accommodate the significant growth expected in Durrington ward, but that any change should be kept to a minimum. While all three of these proposals would improve electoral equality, we are not aware of any wide support for the significant change in council size as proposed by the local resident. We have not been persuaded by the argument provided that a reduction of six councillors is justified and furthermore, as our *Guidance* states, we do not accept that changes should be made to the council size of an authority simply to make it more consistent with that of a neighbouring area. We will only seek equality of representation *within* a principal local authority area, not *between* areas.

40 On balance, we conclude that there is broad consensus between the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats that the existing council size be broadly retained. However, neither the Borough Council nor the Liberal Democrats provided any further argumentation for either of their proposed minor changes in council size. As stated earlier, both schemes achieved good levels of electoral equality, while addressing the current imbalance of representation north and south of the railway line. However, while we are aware of the view that an option based on minimal change is not necessarily the most appropriate basis for re-warding, in assessing both schemes in their entirety, we consider that the Borough Council's scheme utilises more identifiable boundaries than those in the Liberal Democrats' scheme, being based upon strong geographical features such as main arterial roads. Furthermore, we consider that the Liberal Democrats' scheme is significantly weaker in three areas than that of the Borough Council and as such, weakens the scheme as a whole. Their proposed Downs ward in the north of the borough comprises two large residential areas which are only connected by a narrow path in the north of the ward, and are otherwise distinctly separate from each other. They also propose that the boundary between their proposed Northbrook and Maybridge wards follows Palatine Road, which does not give those properties between Palatine Road and Littlehampton Road direct access to the remainder of the proposed Northbrook ward. Furthermore, they propose dividing two seafront wards into four wards, which we do not consider to be a good reflection of community identity.

41 Accordingly, we have decided to base our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme of 37 members. While we acknowledge that both schemes have merit we have not been persuaded that the Liberal Democrats' proposals would provide for the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. In addition, we recognise that there has been limited public interest in this review, providing us with little evidence in relation to the communities in Worthing. We have therefore based our conclusions on the appropriateness and strength of boundaries which, as detailed above, we consider to be a better reflection of the identities and interests of the local community under the Borough Council's proposals.

42 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 37 members.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

43 Having carefully considered all the submissions received, we note that there is consensus between all three borough-wide schemes that the railway line is a natural boundary that should not be breached.

44 There was an absence of consensus, however, on the subject of single and multi-member wards in Worthing. The Borough Council, in proposing to retain most of the existing wards, proposed 11 three-member wards, with two two-member wards serving the existing Durrington area. The Liberal Democrats stated that “although we would have preferred to maintain a uniform pattern of ward size across the authority, we felt that as long as the elector–councillor ratio was preserved, it was more important to draw boundaries along lines that reflected existing communities.” However, in proposing a mixed pattern of two and three-member wards in their scheme, they “rejected one-member wards due to the belief that this could lead to choice being reduced and channels of communication being narrowed for electors, and to members being isolated and overworked”. The local resident who submitted a borough-wide scheme proposed a uniform pattern of three-member wards, stating that “to have a mixture of 2 and 3 member wards might be acceptable in a district covering a large area, but is not acceptable in a compact area like Worthing.”

45 West Sussex County Council stated that “it would be preferable to have two member wards” and as such, expressed a preference for the Liberal Democrats’ scheme, to help achieve its aim of coterminosity between borough wards and county divisions when the county review is carried out later this year. However, the purpose of this review is to secure the best electoral arrangements for Worthing at the current time and by 2006, rather than in anticipation of what will be the best electoral arrangements for West Sussex County Council in the future. Finally, a local resident advocated a uniform pattern of single-member wards in Worthing, which he believed “would lead to ... a more democratic system of election” and “would to some measure help to lessen ‘voter apathy’ at local elections.” We are not prescriptive on this issue however, on balance we note that there is a general consensus for a mixed pattern of two and three-member wards.

46 Having proposed a council size of 37, our capacity to endorse the local resident’s proposals based on a 30-member scheme is limited. We recognise that the scheme did achieve good electoral equality (as far as can be confirmed by the unofficial figures) but, as discussed earlier, we have not been persuaded that there would be sufficient public support for such a considerable reduction in council size.

47 As stated earlier, we are of the view that the schemes submitted by both the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats have merit; however, in view of the strong boundaries and good levels of electoral equality achieved by the Borough Council’s proposals, we have based our recommendations on the Borough Council’s scheme, which we consider would provide for a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the other schemes submitted at Stage One. We encourage further views on our proposals at Stage Three. However, we propose making minor boundary amendments to seven of the proposed 13 wards to provide for more clearly identifiable boundaries and improved levels of electoral equality. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Durrington, Offington and Salvington wards
- (b) Castle and Tarring wards
- (c) Broadwater and Gaisford wards
- (d) Goring and Marine wards
- (e) Central, Heene and Selden wards

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

### **Durrington, Offington and Salvington wards**

49 These three wards are situated in the north and west of the borough and are each represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 27 per cent above the borough average in Durrington ward (40 per cent above by 2006), 3 per cent below in Offington ward (5 per cent below by 2006) and equal to the average in Salvington ward (3 per cent below by 2006).

50 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing three-member Offington ward. It then proposed dividing the existing Durrington ward into two two-member wards and amending the boundary between Durrington and Salvington wards in order to achieve good levels of electoral equality. The area in the north-east of the existing Durrington ward, broadly those properties to the east of Ivydore Avenue and to the north of Bramble Lane, would be transferred to a revised three-member Salvington ward. The remainder of the existing Durrington ward would be split into two wards. Those properties broadly to the south of New Road, to the west of Pond Lane Recreation Ground and to the north of the centre of Edmonton Road, Chesley Close, the northern part of Halifax Drive and Shelby Road, together with those properties broadly to the south of the centre of Columbia Drive and to the west of Durrington Lane, would form part of the proposed two-member Northbrook ward. The remainder of the existing Durrington ward, reflecting the boundary amendment with Salvington ward, would form a revised two-member Durrington ward. The Borough Council stated that by dividing the existing Durrington ward into two wards of “approximately equal electorate” the electoral imbalance in this area would be addressed.

51 Under the Borough Council’s proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the borough average in Durrington ward (5 per cent above by 2006), 17 per cent below in Northbrook ward (5 per cent above by 2006), equal to the average in Offington ward (2 per cent below by 2006) and 7 per cent above in Salvington ward (5 per cent above by 2006).

52 The Liberal Democrats proposed combining the northern parts of the existing Offington and Salvington wards to create a new two-member Downs ward, with Arundel Road and Crockhurst Hill forming most of its southern boundary. The Liberal Democrats stated that the two communities to be combined under this proposal “have more congruence of interest and identity with each other than with the areas to the south, from which they are separated by the major arterial route of the A27 trunk road”. From Offington Corner, the Liberal Democrats’ preferred option would result in the boundary following the rear of properties on Hurston Close, Mayfield Close and the Golf Cottages on Worthing Golf Course. However, they also proposed an alternative option, which would achieve better electoral equality, under which the

boundary would follow the centre of Findon Road and then the rear of properties on Hurston Close, Mayfield Close and the Golf Cottages on Worthing Golf Course.

53 The Liberal Democrats also proposed dividing the existing Durrington ward. That part of the ward broadly to the west of Ivydore Avenue, Pond Lane Recreation Ground, Edmonton Road, Sherbrooke Close, Hudson Close and Durrington Lane would form the proposed three-member Northbrook ward. It would also be extended southwards to incorporate that part of the existing Castle ward north of the centre of Palatine Road. The remainder of the existing Durrington ward would form a revised two-member Durrington ward, along with the south-western part of the existing Salvington ward. The eastern boundary of the revised Durrington ward would follow the rear of properties on the eastern side of Cotswold Road, Beechwood Avenue, Stone Lane, Mardale Road and A'Becket Gardens. The Liberal Democrats stated that this would produce a "cohesive and distinct neighbourhood which will support and be supported by local community identifications".

54 The Liberal Democrats proposed that the remainder of the existing Salvington ward and the south-western part of the existing Offington ward, less the areas broadly to the north of Broomfield Avenue and bounded by Carnegie Road and South Farm Road and between Broomfield Road and the rear of Poulter's Lane, would together form the proposed two-member Salvington & Offington ward. Its western boundary would be the eastern boundary of the revised Durrington ward. Its southern boundary would follow that of the existing Salvington ward and then along the rear of properties on the south side of Poulter's Lane. The eastern boundary of this proposed ward would follow the rear of properties on South Farm Road, along the centre of Warren Road, along the rear of properties on Hillside Avenue, Hill Barn Lane and First Avenue.

55 Finally in this area, the Liberal Democrats proposed that part of the remainder of the existing Offington ward, the area broadly to the north of Upper Brighton Road, and the northern part of the existing Broadwater ward form a new two-member Broadwater North ward. The proposed southern boundary would follow along the centre of Broadwater Street West, along the rear of properties on the south side of Southfield Road and Penfold Road, and then along the centre of Dominion Way West in the industrial area in the west of the ward. The remaining parts of Offington ward would form part of new Becket and Broadwater South wards, as detailed below.

56 Under the Liberal Democrats' scheme, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the borough average in Broadwater North ward, both now and by 2006, 9 per cent above in Downs ward (6 per cent above by 2006) or 3 per cent above using the least preferred option (4 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent above in Durrington ward (3 per cent above by 2006), 8 per cent below in Northbrook ward (2 per cent above by 2006) and equal to the average in Salvington & Offington ward (2 per cent below by 2006) or 6 per cent above using the least preferred option (2 per cent above by 2006).

57 West Sussex County Council and Worthing Labour Party supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

58 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. As stated earlier, we do not consider that the Liberal Democrats' proposed Downs ward is a good reflection of community identity, bringing together as it does two distinct residential areas

separated by the area known as The Gallops. Nor do we consider that their proposed Northbrook ward adequately reflects community identity, as the area to the south of Littlehampton Road does not have direct access to the remainder of the proposed ward. Therefore, given the stronger boundaries and better reflection of community identity provided by the Borough Council's scheme in this area, we have decided to adopt the Borough Council's proposals as part of our draft recommendations. However, we propose a number of minor amendments in order to provide more identifiable boundaries and improved electoral equality in a number of areas.

59 We propose making minor amendments to the boundary between the Borough Council's proposed Durrington and Northbrook wards in order to avoid the arbitrary division of a number of roads. First, we propose that the boundary to the south-west of Pond Lane Recreation Ground should follow the rear of properties on Tavy Road to avoid dividing a cul-de-sac unnecessarily. This would result in the transfer of properties on Edmonton Road, Chesley Close and Halifax Drive to our proposed Durrington ward. We also propose a minor boundary amendment involving two properties on New Road. Additionally, we propose two small amendments to the boundary between the proposed Durrington and Salvington wards. We propose that the western boundary of our proposed Salvington ward follows the rear of properties on Bramble Crescent in order to give those properties vehicular access to the remainder of the ward. Further south, we propose that the properties on Roedean Road currently in the existing Durrington ward be transferred to the revised Salvington ward to unite the whole road in the same ward and in order to improve electoral equality.

60 We also propose two minor amendments to the boundary between the proposed Salvington and Offington wards, in order that the six properties on Mill Lane currently in Offington ward be transferred to our proposed Salvington ward, where they have their vehicular access and in order that part of the existing boundary to be retained in The Gallops area adheres to firm ground detail, affecting no electors. One further amendment to our proposed Offington ward would be that its southern boundary would follow the rear of properties on Broomfield Avenue, currently in Gaisford ward, and then along the centre of Ardsheal Road in order to transfer the properties in the 'triangular' area in the south of Offington ward to our proposed Gaisford ward, in order to create a more identifiable boundary. This ward will be discussed in detail below.

61 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 7 per cent above the borough average in Durrington ward (5 per cent above by 2006), 18 per cent below in Northbrook ward (3 per cent above by 2006), 3 per cent below in Offington ward (5 per cent below by 2006) and 8 per cent above in Salvington ward (5 per cent above by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Castle and Tarring wards**

62 These two wards are situated in the west of the borough, north of the railway line and are both represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent below the borough average in Castle ward (10 per cent below by 2006) and 1 per cent above in Tarring ward (2 per cent below by 2006).

63 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed modifying the boundary between these two wards, but retaining the other boundaries in their entirety. The new boundary between the two

wards would follow southwards along the centre of Ringmer Road from its northern boundary. Both wards would retain their existing names and continue to each be represented by three councillors.

64 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the borough average in Castle ward (4 per cent below by 2006) and 1 per cent above in Tarring ward (2 per cent below by 2006).

65 As described earlier, the Liberal Democrats proposed transferring part of the existing Castle ward to its proposed Northbrook ward. Most of the remainder of the existing Castle ward (the area to the west of the centre of The Boulevard, which the Liberal Democrats stated forms a "stronger boundary") would form its proposed two-member Maybridge ward. It was argued that The Boulevard is a "major local distributor road with a divided carriage way for much of its length, and housing of distinct and different character on each side". The remainder of the existing Castle ward would be combined with the majority of the existing Tarring ward (the area to the west of the centre of Rectory Road and South Street) to form its proposed three-member West Tarring ward. The remainder of the existing Tarring ward would form part of a new two-member Becket ward, to be discussed below.

66 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the borough average in Maybridge ward (2 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent below in West Tarring ward (5 per cent below by 2006).

67 West Sussex County Council and Worthing Labour Party supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

68 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. As stated earlier, we do not consider the transfer of the area between Littlehampton Road and Palatine Road to the proposed Northbrook ward under the Liberal Democrats' proposals to be a good reflection of community identity as those properties do not have direct access to the remainder of the ward. Therefore, given the stronger boundaries of these two wards achieved by the Borough Council's proposals and the better reflection of community identity, we have decided to adopt the Borough Council's revised Castle and Tarring wards in their entirety.

69 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Castle and Tarring wards would be the same as under the Borough Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Broadwater and Gaisford wards**

70 These two wards are situated in the east of the borough, north of the railway line and both are represented by three councillors. The number of electors is 1 per cent below the borough average in Broadwater ward (equal to the average by 2006) and equal to the average in Gaisford ward (2 per cent below by 2006).

71 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing Broadwater and Gaisford wards.

72 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the borough average in Broadwater ward, both now and by 2006 and 3 per cent above in Gaisford ward (1 per cent above by 2006).

73 As detailed earlier, the Liberal Democrats proposed a new two-member Becket ward. This ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Tarring ward (those properties to the east of the centre of South Street), part of the remainder of the existing Offington ward (those properties to the south of Poulter's Lane) and approximately half of the existing Gaisford ward (the area to the west of those properties on the west side of South Farm Road). Its proposed three-member Broadwater South ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Gaisford ward, the remainder of the existing Offington ward and the remainder of the existing Broadwater ward, broadly to the south of Southfield Road, Penfold Road and Dominion Way West. The remainder of the existing Broadwater ward would form part of a new two-member Broadwater North ward, as detailed above.

74 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the borough average in Becket ward (3 per cent above by 2006) and 3 per cent below in Broadwater South ward (4 per cent below by 2006).

75 West Sussex County Council and Worthing Labour Party supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

76 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. As already indicated, we are of the view that on balance, the proposals submitted by the Borough Council are, on the whole, a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the Liberal Democrats' proposals, and therefore propose basing our draft recommendations for this area on the Borough Council's proposals. However, we propose making two minor amendments. As stated earlier, we propose modifying the boundary between the Borough Council's proposed Offington and Gaisford wards in order to achieve a more identifiable boundary, a better reflection of community identity, and better electoral equality. We consider that the transfer of the area bounded by Ardsheal Road, Broadwater Street West, Carnegie Road and South Farm Road is a logical one, and provides a stronger boundary than the existing boundary which the Borough Council proposed retaining. As a consequence, we also propose that those properties on the southern side of Broomfield Avenue be transferred to our proposed Offington ward to improve electoral equality. We propose retaining the existing Broadwater ward, as proposed by the Borough Council.

77 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the borough average in Broadwater ward, both now and by 2006 and 6 per cent above in Gaisford ward (4 per cent above by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Goring and Marine wards**

78 These two wards are situated in the west of the borough, south of the railway line on the coast and both are represented by three councillors. The number of electors is 3 per cent above the borough average in Goring ward (2 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent below in Marine ward (3 per cent below by 2006).

79 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing Goring and Marine wards.

80 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the borough average in Goring ward (5 per cent above by 2006) and 1 per cent above in Marine ward (1 per cent below by 2006).

81 The Liberal Democrats proposed extending the existing Goring ward eastwards to include those properties from the existing Marine ward broadly to the west of Elm Grove, Wallace Avenue and Bernard Road. They then proposed dividing the area into two, so that the dividing boundary would run west-east along the centre of Fernhurst Drive and along the rear of properties on the south side of Ilex Way and Goring Road. The northern ward would be named Goring North ward and would be represented by two councillors, and the southern ward would be named Goring-by-Sea ward and would also be represented by two councillors. The Liberal Democrats argued that "Goring Road forms a major route through the community, and marks an interface between these two sub-communities".

82 The remainder of the existing Marine ward would be extended eastwards to include the majority of the existing Heene ward, so that the eastern boundary would run along the rear of properties on the eastern side of Shakespeare Road and Wordsworth Road. Again, this area would be divided into two, so that the dividing boundary would run along the centre of Lansdowne Road and Richmond Road. The northern ward would be named Heene North ward and would be represented by two councillors, and the southern ward would be named Heene South ward and would also be represented by two councillors.

83 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent above the borough average in Goring-by-Sea ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 2 per cent below in Goring North ward (4 per cent below by 2006), equal to the average in Heene North ward, both now and by 2006 and 4 per cent above in Heene South ward (3 per cent above by 2006).

84 West Sussex County Council and Worthing Labour Party supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

85 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. As stated earlier, we do not consider the Liberal Democrats' proposals to divide the area broadly covered by the existing Goring, Marine and Heene wards into four new wards would be an adequate reflection of the identities and interests of the local community. In the Liberal Democrats' own submission, they identified the existing Goring ward as having "a strong community identity", and as such, we do not consider the decision to enlarge and then divide the ward to be an appropriate reflection of community identity. Therefore, having considered the Borough Council's scheme, we propose retaining the existing three-member Goring and Marine wards, as proposed by the Borough Council. We consider that these wards already utilise strong boundaries and provide a good reflection of local communities.

86 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be the same as under the Borough Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Central, Heene and Selden wards**

87 These three wards are situated in the centre and east of the borough, south of the railway line on the coast and are each currently represented by three councillors. The number of electors is 13 per cent below the borough average in Central ward (10 per cent below by 2006), 3 per cent below in Heene ward (2 per cent below by 2006) and 5 per cent below in Selden ward (6 per cent below by 2006).

88 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed modifying the boundary between the existing Heene and Central wards so that the boundary continues to follow the centre of Shakespeare Road as far as Richmond Road, where it would follow the centre of that road until rejoining the existing boundary. It also proposed retaining the existing Selden ward. Each of these wards would retain their existing names and would continue to be represented by three councillors.

89 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillors would be 7 per cent below the borough average in Central ward (4 per cent below by 2006), 3 per cent below in Heene ward (2 per cent below by 2006) and 2 per cent below in Selden ward (3 per cent below by 2006).

90 As described earlier, the Liberal Democrats proposed that the majority of the existing Heene ward form two new wards, Heene North and Heene South. The remainder of the existing Heene ward would be joined with the majority of the existing Central ward to form a revised three-member Central ward. This would incorporate the area broadly to the west of Broadwater Road, south of Newland Road and along the rear of properties on the western side of Park Road. The remainder of the existing Central ward would be joined with the existing Selden ward to form a revised three-member Selden ward, which it is argued is necessary "in the interests of maintaining electoral equality".

91 Under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the borough average in Central ward (1 per cent above by 2006) and 1 per cent below in Selden ward, both now and by 2006.

92 West Sussex County Council and Worthing Labour Party supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals.

93 We have carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. As stated earlier, we have not been persuaded to adopt the Liberal Democrats' proposed Goring North, Goring-by-Sea, Heene North and Heene South wards, and as such, are limited in our ability to adopt their proposed Central and Selden wards. Having considered the Borough Council's proposals, which provide for revised Central and Heene wards, while retaining the existing Selden ward, we consider that these wards utilise strong boundaries and have been appropriately adjusted to improve electoral equality. The proposed Central and Selden wards are also broadly similar to those proposed by the Liberal Democrats. However, we propose two minor amendments between the revised Central ward and the existing Selden ward to tie the boundary to firm ground detail. We propose that Chesswood School is transferred to our proposed Selden ward, and that the boundary continues to follow the centre of Homefield Road, instead of cutting through the hospital grounds. These amendments would have a negligible effect on electoral equality.

94 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the borough average in Central ward (4 per cent below by 2006), 3 per cent below in Heene ward (2 per cent below by 2006) and 2 per cent below in Selden ward (3 per cent below by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Electoral Cycle**

95 At Stage One, a local resident, in proposing single-member wards for Worthing, stated that “each ‘new ward’ would only call on the area to vote on a three year cycle”. He stated that this would lead to a more democratic system and less voter apathy. However, under existing legislation, we are only able to recommend elections-by-thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas on a four year cycle. Under the election-by-thirds system, one third of councillors in each ward retires or seeks re-election in years one, two and three; in two-tier areas, year four is the year in which county council elections are held. It is therefore not within our powers to recommend elections based upon a three year cycle. Notwithstanding this comment, at present, the majority view appears to be that the present electoral cycle should be retained and we therefore propose retaining the existing electoral cycle of elections-by-thirds for Worthing Borough Council.

## **Conclusions**

96 Having considered all the evidence and submissions received during the first stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be an increase in council size from 36 to 37;
- there should be 13 wards;
- the boundaries of nine of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one, and three wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- elections should continue to be held by thirds.

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

- in the north of the borough we propose minor boundary amendments to the Borough Council’s proposed Durrington, Northbrook, Offington and Salvington wards to provide for more clearly identifiable boundaries;
- we propose that properties on the south side of Broomfield Avenue be transferred to our proposed Offington ward, and that properties in the Ardsheal Road/Carnegie Road area be transferred to our proposed Gaisford ward;
- the boundary between the Borough Council’s proposed Central and Selden ward should be tied to firm ground detail surrounding Chesswood School and the hospital.

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

*Table 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	36	37	36	37
Number of wards	12	13	12	13
Average number of electors per councillor	2,175	2,117	2,206	2,147
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	2	1	1	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	1	0

99 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Worthing Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from two to one. By 2006 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 5 per cent from the borough average.

**Draft Recommendation**  
 Worthing Borough Council should comprise 37 councillors serving 13 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inside the back cover. The Borough Council should continue to hold elections-by-thirds.

*Map 2: Draft Recommendations for Worthing*

## 5 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

100 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Worthing contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 22 April 2002. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

101 Express your views by writing directly to us:

Review Manager  
Worthing 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](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)

[www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)

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



# Appendix A

## Code of Practice on Written Consultation

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

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

*Table A1: LGCE compliance with Code criteria*

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