

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire

January 2001

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.

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Ashchurch, Bishop's Cleeve, Churchdown and Tewkesbury is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Tewkesbury on 27 June 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 Tewkesbury:

- **in 22 of the 27 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough and 15 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 23 wards and by more than 20 per cent in 15 wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 69-70) are that:

- **Tewkesbury Borough Council should have 38 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 22 wards, instead of 27 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of five, 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 borough councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 15 of the proposed 22 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in 21 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2005.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the re-distribution of councillors for the parishes of Ashchurch, Bishop's Cleeve, Churchdown and Tewkesbury.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 9 January 2001. 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 5 March 2001:

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Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas | Map reference |
|----|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff | 2 | Ashchurch ward (part – the proposed Rural parish ward of Ashchurch parish); Tewkesbury Newtown ward (part – Walton Cardiff parish) | Large map |
| 2 | Badgeworth | 1 | Coombe Hill ward (part – the parishes of Boddington and Staverton); Crickley ward (the parishes of Badgeworth and Great Witcombe) | Map 2 |
| 3 | Bishop's Cleeve East | 2 | Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North and Bishop's Cleeve South wards (part – the proposed East parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish) | Large map |
| 4 | Bishop's Cleeve South | 1 | Bishop's Cleeve South ward (part – the proposed South parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish) | Large map |
| 5 | Bishop's Cleeve West | 2 | Bishop's Cleeve North and Bishop's Cleeve South wards (part – the proposed West parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish) | Large map |
| 6 | Brockworth | 3 | Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield and Brockworth Westfield wards (Brockworth parish) | Map 2 |
| 7 | Churchdown Brookfield | 2 | Churchdown Brookfield and Churchdown Pirton wards (part – the proposed Brookfield parish ward of Churchdown parish) | Large map |
| 8 | Churchdown St Johns | 3 | Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards (part – the proposed St Johns parish ward of Churchdown parish) | Large map |
| 9 | Cleeve Hill | 2 | Cleeve Hill ward (part – the parishes of Prescott, Southam and Woodmancote) | Map 2 |
| 10 | Coombe Hill | 2 | Coombe Hill ward (part – the parishes of Deerhurst, Elmstone Hardwicke, Leigh and Uckington); De Winton ward (part – the parishes of Longford, Norton, Sandhurst and Twigworth) | Map 2 |
| 11 | Highnam with Haw Bridge | 2 | Haw Bridge ward (the parishes of Ashleworth, Chaceley, Forthampton, Hasfield, Maisemore and Tirley); Highnam ward (the parishes of Highnam and Minsterworth) | Map 2 |
| 12 | Hucclecote | 1 | Horsbere ward (part – Hucclecote parish) | Map 2 |
| 13 | Innsworth with Down Hatherley | 1 | Churchdown Parton ward (part – the proposed RAF Innsworth parish ward of Churchdown parish); De Winton ward (part – Down Hatherley parish); Innsworth ward (Innsworth parish) | Map 2 |
| 14 | Isbourne | 1 | Dumbleton ward (part – the parishes of Buckland, Dumbleton, Snowhill, Stanton and Toddington); Gotherington ward (part – Teddington parish) | Map 2 |

| Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas | Map reference |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 15 Northway | 2 | Ashchurch ward (part – the proposed Northway parish ward of Ashchurch parish) | Large map |
| 16 Oxenton Hill | 1 | Coombe Hill ward (part – Stoke Orchard parish); Gotherington ward (part – the parishes of Gotherington and Oxenton) | Map 2 |
| 17 Shurdington | 1 | <i>Unchanged:</i> Shurdington ward (Shurdington parish) | Map 2 |
| 18 Tewkesbury Newtown | 1 | Ashchurch ward (part – the proposed Newtown parish ward of Ashchurch parish); Tewkesbury Newtown ward (part – the proposed Newtown parish ward of Tewkesbury parish) | Large map |
| 19 Tewkesbury Prior's Park | 2 | Tewkesbury Prior's Park ward (part – the proposed Prior's Park parish ward of Tewkesbury parish) | Large map |
| 20 Tewkesbury Town with Mitton | 2 | Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior's Park and Tewkesbury Town wards (part – the proposed Town with Mitton parish ward of Tewkesbury parish) | Large map |
| 21 Twyning | 1 | Tewkesbury Mitton ward (part – the proposed Mitton North parish ward of Tewkesbury parish); Twyning ward (Twyning parish) | Map 2 |
| 22 Winchcombe | 3 | Dumbleton ward (part – Stanway parish); Gotherington ward (part – Alderton parish); Winchcombe ward (part – the parishes of Gretton, Hawling, Sudeley and Winchcombe) | Map 2 |

Notes: 1 The whole borough is parished.

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

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Tewkesbury

| | 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 | Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff | 2 | 1,147 | 574 | -63 | 3,132 | 1,566 | -8 |
| 2 | Badgeworth | 1 | 1,764 | 1,764 | 12 | 1,782 | 1,782 | 5 |
| 3 | Bishop's Cleeve East | 2 | 3,012 | 1,506 | -4 | 3,269 | 1,635 | -4 |
| 4 | Bishop's Cleeve South | 1 | 1,649 | 1,649 | 5 | 1,653 | 1,653 | -3 |
| 5 | Bishop's Cleeve West | 2 | 3,164 | 1,582 | 1 | 3,356 | 1,678 | -1 |
| 6 | Brockworth | 3 | 4,949 | 1,650 | 5 | 5,338 | 1,779 | 5 |
| 7 | Churchdown Brookfield | 2 | 3,353 | 1,677 | 7 | 3,402 | 1,701 | 0 |
| 8 | Churchdown St Johns | 3 | 5,110 | 1,703 | 8 | 5,253 | 1,751 | 3 |
| 9 | Cleeve Hill | 2 | 3,400 | 1,700 | 8 | 3,411 | 1,706 | 1 |
| 10 | Coombe Hill | 2 | 3,664 | 1,832 | 17 | 3,699 | 1,850 | 9 |
| 11 | Highnam with Haw Bridge | 2 | 3,526 | 1,763 | 12 | 3,623 | 1,812 | 7 |
| 12 | Hucclecote | 1 | 1,017 | 1,017 | -35 | 1,525 | 1,525 | -10 |
| 13 | Innsworth with Down Hatherley | 1 | 1,728 | 1,728 | 10 | 1,732 | 1,735 | 2 |
| 14 | Isbourne | 1 | 1,695 | 1,695 | 8 | 1,740 | 1,740 | 8 |
| 15 | Northway | 2 | 3,616 | 1,808 | 15 | 3,618 | 1,809 | 7 |
| 16 | Oxenton Hill | 1 | 1,250 | 1,250 | -20 | 1,609 | 1,609 | -5 |
| 17 | Shurdington | 1 | 1,542 | 1,542 | -2 | 1,598 | 1,598 | -6 |
| 18 | Tewkesbury Newtown | 1 | 1,616 | 1,616 | 3 | 1,620 | 1,620 | -4 |
| 19 | Tewkesbury Prior's Park | 2 | 3,110 | 1,555 | -1 | 3,132 | 1,566 | -8 |
| 20 | Tewkesbury Town with Mitton | 2 | 3,264 | 1,632 | 4 | 3,667 | 1,834 | 8 |

| | 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 (%) |
|----|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 21 | Twyning | 1 | 1,410 | 1,410 | -10 | 1,458 | 1,458 | -14 |
| 22 | Winchcombe | 3 | 4,690 | 1,563 | 0 | 4,827 | 1,609 | -5 |
| | Totals | 38 | 59,676 | - | - | 64,444 | - | - |
| | Averages | - | - | 1,570 | - | - | 1,696 | - |

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

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the six districts in Gloucestershire 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 Tewkesbury. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in February 1980 (Report No. 368). The electoral arrangements of Gloucestershire County Council were last reviewed in May 1982 (Report No. 424). We expect to review 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 B).

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 Gloucestershire 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 27 June 2000, when we wrote to Tewkesbury Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, the Members of the European Parliament for the South West Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 3 October 2000.

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

14 Stage Three began on 9 January 2001 and will end on 5 March 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 borough of Tewkesbury is situated in the north of Gloucestershire and covers some 77,300 hectares. The borough is largely rural in character and includes a considerable amount of Green Belt land. It is entirely parished, with a total of 49 parishes. The three main towns are Bishop's Cleeve, Churchdown and Tewkesbury which comprise 13 per cent, 15 per cent and 9 per cent of the borough's total electorate respectively. The rivers Avon and Severn converge at Tewkesbury and the borough spreads across the Severn Vale, taking in part of the Cotswolds Escarpment. The area is largely residential, based on its proximity to the adjoining towns of Cheltenham and Gloucester. The M5 motorway bisects the Borough and connects the area to Birmingham, Bristol and South Wales.

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

18 The borough of Tewkesbury has an electorate of 59,676 (February 2000), and this is forecast to increase to 64,444 by 2005. The Council presently has 36 members who are elected from 27 wards, 11 of which are relatively urban with the remainder being predominantly rural. One ward is represented by three councillors, seven are each represented by two councillors and 19 are single-member wards. The whole Council is elected every four years.

19 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Tewkesbury borough, with around 19 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments. The most notable increase has been in Bishop's Cleeve North ward.

20 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,658 electors, which the borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,790 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 22 of the 27 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, 15 wards by more than 20 per cent and eight wards by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Bishop's Cleeve North ward where the councillor represents 134 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Tewkesbury

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 | Ashchurch | 2 | 4,466 | 2,233 | 35 | 4,471 | 2,236 | 25 |
| 2 | Bishop's Cleeve East | 1 | 1,305 | 1,305 | -21 | 1,307 | 1,307 | -27 |
| 3 | Bishop's Cleeve North | 1 | 3,885 | 3,885 | 134 | 4,328 | 4,328 | 142 |
| 4 | Bishop's Cleeve South | 1 | 2,635 | 2,635 | 59 | 2,643 | 2,643 | 48 |
| 5 | Brockworth Glebe | 1 | 951 | 951 | -43 | 953 | 953 | -47 |
| 6 | Brockworth Moorfield | 1 | 1,207 | 1,207 | -27 | 1,236 | 1,236 | -31 |
| 7 | Brockworth Westfield | 1 | 1,194 | 1,194 | -28 | 1,194 | 1,194 | -33 |
| 8 | Churchdown Brookfield | 2 | 2,557 | 1,279 | -23 | 2,606 | 1,303 | -27 |
| 9 | Churchdown Parton | 2 | 3,566 | 1,783 | 8 | 3,690 | 1,845 | 3 |
| 10 | Churchdown Pirton | 2 | 2,567 | 1,284 | -23 | 2,586 | 1,293 | -28 |
| 11 | Cleeve Hill | 2 | 2,925 | 1,463 | -12 | 2,934 | 1,467 | -18 |
| 12 | Coombe Hill | 2 | 2,621 | 1,311 | -21 | 2,982 | 1,491 | -17 |
| 13 | Crickley | 1 | 1,031 | 1,031 | -38 | 1,043 | 1,043 | -42 |
| 14 | De Winton | 1 | 2,404 | 2,404 | 45 | 2,435 | 2,435 | 36 |
| 15 | Dumbleton | 1 | 1,610 | 1,610 | -3 | 1,665 | 1,665 | -7 |
| 16 | Gotherington | 1 | 1,877 | 1,877 | 13 | 1,911 | 1,911 | 7 |
| 17 | Haw Bridge | 1 | 1,564 | 1,564 | -6 | 1,582 | 1,582 | -12 |
| 18 | Highnam | 1 | 1,962 | 1,962 | 18 | 2,041 | 2,041 | 14 |
| 19 | Horsbere | 1 | 2,614 | 2,614 | 58 | 3,480 | 3,480 | 94 |
| 20 | Innsworth | 1 | 1,151 | 1,151 | -31 | 1,151 | 1,151 | -36 |
| 21 | Shurdington | 1 | 1,542 | 1,542 | -7 | 1,598 | 1,598 | -11 |
| 22 | Tewkesbury Mitton | 1 | 1,326 | 1,326 | -20 | 1,610 | 1,610 | -10 |

| | 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 (%) |
|----|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 23 | Tewkesbury Newtown | 1 | 1,913 | 1,913 | 15 | 3,899 | 3,899 | 118 |
| 24 | Tewkesbury Prior's Park | 2 | 3,170 | 1,585 | -4 | 3,192 | 1,596 | -11 |
| 25 | Tewkesbury Town | 1 | 1,987 | 1,987 | 20 | 2,106 | 2,106 | 18 |
| 26 | Twyning | 1 | 1,301 | 1,301 | -22 | 1,349 | 1,349 | -25 |
| 27 | Winchcombe | 3 | 4,345 | 1,448 | -13 | 4,452 | 1,484 | -17 |
| | Totals | 36 | 59,676 | - | - | 64,444 | - | - |
| | Averages | - | - | 1,658 | - | - | 1,790 | - |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Tewkesbury 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 2000, electors in Brockworth Glebe ward were relatively over-represented by 43 per cent, while electors in Bishop's Cleeve North ward were relatively under-represented by 134 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

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

22 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received eight representations during Stage One, including a borough-wide scheme from the Borough Council, all of which may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

Tewkesbury Borough Council

23 The Borough Council proposed a council of 38 members, two more than at present, serving 22 wards, compared to the existing 27. It proposed 10 single-member wards, eight two-member wards, and four three-member wards. Overall, change was proposed to all but two of the existing wards. However, the Council did not provide any argumentation in support of its warding proposals.

24 Under the Borough Council's proposals there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by more than 10 per cent in eight wards. This level of electoral equality is expected to improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor projected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average in two wards by 2005. The Borough Council's proposals are summarised in Appendix A.

Parish Councils

25 We received representations from three parish councils. Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council put forward a four- and a five-member scheme for the parish of Bishop's Cleeve and opposed the Borough Council's proposals for this area. It argued that Bishop's Cleeve should be warded separately to the surrounding parishes. Churchdown Parish Council proposed combining the Borough Council's proposed Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards in a new Churchdown St Johns ward. Innsworth Parish Council proposed combining Innsworth parish with RAF Innsworth, in Churchdown parish, to form a new Innsworth ward.

Other Representations

26 We received a further four representations, one from a local political party and three from local councillors. Winchcombe & Bishop's Cleeve Labour Party Branch argued that Bishop's Cleeve and Winchcombe should each be warded separately to the surrounding rural parishes. It also supported a scheme of single-member wards, particularly for rural wards. A local councillor objected to the Borough Council's scheme and proposed that Bishop's Cleeve should be represented by five single-member wards and should be warded separately to the surrounding

parishes. Another local councillor wrote on behalf of two other borough councillors in support of the Borough Council's proposed Churchdown Brookfield ward and its proposal to combine RAF Innsworth with Innsworth parish. However, he objected to its proposals for Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton and proposed that the two wards should be combined in a new Churchdown St Johns ward. A further local councillor argued that the existing electoral arrangements should be retained, with a few modifications to allow for development in certain parts of the borough. He supported the Borough Council's proposal to increase the number of councillors representing Bishop's Cleeve, however he objected to their proposal to combine the town with surrounding parishes. He supported the Borough Council's proposals for Brockworth and Hucclecote, and he proposed that the Walton Cardiff area should be represented by an extra councillor.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

27 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Tewkesbury 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”.

28 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.

29 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.

30 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

31 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 7 per cent from 59,676 to 64,444 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expects most of the growth to be in Tewkesbury Newtown ward, although a significant amount is also expected in the more rural Horsbere ward. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

32 A local councillor raised some concerns regarding the necessity of submitting electoral projections before the results of the borough’s most recent local plan were known. While we note the councillor’s concerns, we accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the Borough Council’s figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

Council Size

33 As already 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.

34 Tewkesbury Borough Council presently has 36 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 38 members which it considered the best option in order to “achieve the aims of the review”. It proposed additional councillors for areas which have experienced significant development since the last review. Under their proposals for a 38-member council, the Borough Council has been able to provide wards with good levels of electoral equality, while utilising parish boundaries and easily identifiable natural boundaries and reflecting community identities and interests as much as possible. We have not received any further representations regarding council size at Stage One, however, we note that representations made to the Borough Council during its consultation period generally supported a 38-member scheme.

35 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 38 members.

Electoral Arrangements

36 In view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Council’s proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we have concluded that we should base our recommendations on the Borough Council’s scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements. Its proposals would minimise the number of wards crossing parish boundaries and combine areas which share good transport and community links. However, to improve electoral equality further and to offer more clearly identifiable boundaries while having regard to local community identities and interests, we have decided to move away from the Borough Council’s proposals in Bishop’s Cleeve and the surrounding areas, Churchdown and Tewkesbury.

37 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed a mix of single-, two- and three-member wards, a pattern which we have adopted as our draft recommendations. It argued that while a scheme of two-member wards might assist should biannual elections be introduced in future, it considered that the aim of achieving good levels of electoral equality, clearly identifiable ward boundaries and reflecting community identities and interests should take preference. It argued that these aims could not be met under a scheme of two-member wards. We received three representations favouring predominantly single-member wards. Bishop’s Cleeve Parish Council expressed a preference for single-member wards, but did not provide supporting argumentation. Winchcombe & Bishop’s Cleeve Labour Party Branch proposed that the borough should be represented by single-member wards, particularly in the rural areas, in order to “provide the maximum accountability between the councillor and the electorate”, to minimise the geographical size of wards, and to represent distinct areas separately, but did not supply a scheme. A local councillor

raised concerns regarding multi-member wards in rural areas, stating that single-member wards limit the geographical size of wards and ensure “better representation”. While we have noted this opposition to multi-member wards in rural areas, we have not received evidence to persuade us that multi-member wards would offer worse community representation than single-member wards. We consider that our proposals would offer the best possible representation of community identities and interests across the borough, while having regard to electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

38 For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Ashchurch, Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park, Tewkesbury Town and Twynning wards;
- (b) Coombe Hill, Crickley, De Winton, Haw Bridge, Highnam and Shurdington wards;
- (c) Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield, Brockworth Westfield, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Horsbere and Innsworth wards;
- (d) Bishop’s Cleeve East, Bishop’s Cleeve North, Bishop’s Cleeve South, Cleeve Hill, Dumbleton, Gotherington and Winchcombe wards.

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

Ashchurch, Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park, Tewkesbury Town and Twynning wards

40 The existing wards of Ashchurch, Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park, Tewkesbury Town and Twynning cover the north-west of the borough. Ashchurch ward (comprising the parish of Ashchurch) and Tewkesbury Prior’s Park ward (comprising Prior’s Park parish ward of Tewkesbury parish) are each represented by two councillors, while Tewkesbury Mitton ward (comprising Mitton parish ward of Tewkesbury parish), Tewkesbury Newtown ward (comprising Newtown parish ward of Tewkesbury parish), Tewkesbury Town ward (comprising Town ward of Tewkesbury parish) and Twynning ward (comprising Twynning parish) are each represented by a single councillor. Under current arrangements for a 36-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Ashchurch, Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park, Tewkesbury Town and Twynning wards varies from the borough average by 35 per cent, 20 per cent, 15 per cent, 4 per cent, 20 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve marginally in Ashchurch, Tewkesbury Mitton and Tewkesbury Town wards to vary by 25 per cent, 10 per cent and 18 per cent from the borough average in 2005 respectively. The level of electoral equality in Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park and Twynning wards is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, to vary by 118 per cent, 11 per cent and 25 per cent respectively.

41 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed allocating additional councillors to this area to address the current under-representation. It proposed that this area should comprise six wards,

with the proposed wards of Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff, Northway, Prior's Park and Tewkesbury Town with Mitton each being represented by two councillors, and the proposed wards of Newtown and Twyning each being represented by a single councillor. It proposed that Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff ward should comprise the majority of Ashchurch parish, less those parts to the north-west of the railway line, the A438 and the M5, together with Walton Cardiff parish. It put forward a Northway ward, comprising that part of Ashchurch ward bounded by the railway line, the A438 and the M5, and a Newtown ward combining the remainder of Ashchurch parish and that part of Tewkesbury parish to the north-east of the Ashchurch Road and Oldfield, including Northway Lane. It proposed retaining the existing boundaries of Tewkesbury Prior's Park ward to form a new Prior's Park ward and forming a new Tewkesbury Town with Mitton ward from the remainder of Tewkesbury parish, less that part to the north-west of the River Avon. It suggested that the remainder of Tewkesbury parish should be combined with Twyning parish to form a new Twyning ward.

42 Under the Borough Council's scheme for a 38-member council, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff, Newtown, Northway, Prior's Park, Tewkesbury Town with Mitton and Twyning wards varying from the borough average by 63 per cent, 3 per cent, 15 per cent, 1 per cent, 2 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff and Northway wards to vary from the borough average by 8 per cent and 7 per cent in 2005. The level of electoral equality in Newtown, Northway, Prior's Park, Tewkesbury Town with Mitton and Twyning wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary from the borough average by 4 per cent, 6 per cent, 6 per cent and 14 per cent in 2005.

43 We received one further representation about this area at Stage One from a local councillor, who suggested that the Walton Cardiff area should be represented by an extra councillor in order to allow for development in the area.

44 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we consider that the Borough Council's proposals would offer the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. They would also result in increased representation for the Walton Cardiff area, as proposed by a local councillor, and would respect the existing community divisions in this area. However, in order to utilise a more clearly identifiable boundary between Prior's Park and Tewkesbury Town with Mitton wards, we propose transferring that part of Tewkesbury parish to the north of the River Swilgate and Link Road to Tewkesbury Town with Mitton ward. In addition, we propose prefixing the proposed names of the Tewkesbury town wards with the name of Tewkesbury for clarity.

45 Under our draft recommendations for a 38-member council, the level of electoral equality in Tewkesbury Prior's Park and Tewkesbury Town with Mitton wards would vary from the borough average by 1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate marginally over the next five years, to vary from the borough average by 8 per cent in each ward in 2005. In the remaining wards, the electoral variances would be as detailed above, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Coombe Hill, Crickley, De Winton, Haw Bridge, Highnam and Shurdington wards

46 The existing wards of Coombe Hill, Crickley, De Winton, Haw Bridge, Highnam and Shurdington cover the rural western part of the borough. Coombe Hill ward (comprising the parishes of Boddington, Deerhurst, Elmstone Hardwicke, Leigh, Staverton and Uckington) is represented by two councillors, while Crickley ward (comprising the parishes of Badgeworth and Great Witcombe), De Winton ward (comprising the parishes of Down Hatherley, Longford, Norton, Sandhurst and Twigworth), Haw Bridge ward (comprising the parishes of Ashleworth, Chaceley, Forthampton, Hasfield, Maisemore and Tirley), Highnam ward (comprising the parishes of Highnam and Minsterworth) and Shurdington ward (comprising Shurdington parish) are each represented by a single councillor. Under current arrangements for a 36-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Coombe Hill, Crickley, De Winton, Haw Bridge, Highnam and Shurdington wards varies from the borough average by 21 per cent, 38 per cent, 45 per cent, 6 per cent, 18 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve marginally in Coombe Hill, De Winton and Highnam wards to vary by 17 per cent, 36 per cent and 14 per cent in 2005 respectively. The level of electoral equality in Crickley, Haw Bridge and Shurdington wards is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, to vary by 42 per cent, 12 per cent and 11 per cent in 2005 respectively.

47 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed reducing the number of councillors representing this area, and proposed that this area should comprise four wards, with the proposed wards of Coombe Hill and Highnam with Haw Bridge each being represented by two councillors, and the proposed wards of Badgeworth and Shurdington each being represented by a single councillor. It proposed that Badgeworth ward should comprise the parishes of Badgeworth, Boddington, Great Witcombe and Staverton while Coombe Hill ward would include the parishes of Deerhurst, Elmstone Hardwicke, Leigh, Longford, Norton, Sandhurst, Twigworth and Uckington. It put forward a new Highnam with Haw Bridge ward to include the parishes to the east of the River Severn: Ashleworth, Chaceley, Forthampton, Hasfield, Highnam, Maisemore, Minsterworth and Tirley. It also proposed retaining the existing boundaries of Shurdington ward.

48 Under the Borough Council's scheme for a 38-member council, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Badgeworth, Coombe Hill, Highnam with Haw Bridge and Shurdington wards varying from the borough average by 12 per cent, 17 per cent, 12 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Badgeworth, Coombe Hill and Highnam with Haw Bridge wards to vary from the borough average by 5 per cent, 9 per cent and 7 per cent in 2005. The level of electoral equality in Shurdington ward is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary from the borough average by 6 per cent in 2005.

49 We did not receive any further representations regarding this area at Stage One. However, we have given careful consideration to possible alternative options for this area and we have concluded that the Borough Council's proposals offer the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. The Borough Council's proposals respect parish boundaries and shared community interests, and offer minimal disruption to the existing wards. While we have some concerns regarding the geographical size of the proposed Highnam with Haw Bridge ward, we

have noted that the parishes in this ward share transport links and have similar community interests. Also, the only alternative warding arrangements for this area would involve either disregard for the distinct boundary of the River Severn, additional parish warding or high levels of electoral equality. Similarly, we note that alternative arrangements for Badgeworth and Coombe Hill would either result in high levels of electoral equality or additional parish warding, which we do not consider would be in the best interests of reflecting community identity. We are therefore adopting the Borough Council's proposals as our draft recommendations for this area without amendment. The electoral variances would be as detailed above, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield, Brockworth Westfield, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Horsbere and Innsworth wards

50 The existing wards of Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield, Brockworth Westfield, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Horsbere and Innsworth cover the more urban south-western part of the borough. Churchdown Brookfield ward (comprising Brookfield parish ward of Churchdown parish), Churchdown Parton ward (comprising Parton parish ward of Churchdown parish) and Churchdown Pirton ward (comprising Pirton parish ward of Churchdown parish) are each represented by two councillors, while Brockworth Glebe ward (comprising the Glebe parish ward of Brockworth parish), Brockworth Moorfield ward (comprising Moorfield ward of Brockworth parish), Brockworth Westfield ward (comprising Westfield parish ward of Brockworth parish), Horsbere ward (comprising Horsbere ward of Churchdown parish and Hucclecote parish) and Innsworth ward (comprising Innsworth parish) are each represented by a single councillor. Under current arrangements for a 36-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield, Brockworth Westfield, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Horsbere and Innsworth wards varies from the borough average by 43 per cent, 27 per cent, 28 per cent, 23 per cent, 8 per cent, 23 per cent, 58 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve marginally in Churchdown Parton ward to vary by 3 per cent from the borough average in 2005. The level of electoral equality in Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield, Brockworth Westfield, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Pirton, Horsbere and Innsworth wards is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, to vary by 47 per cent, 31 per cent, 33 per cent, 27 per cent, 28 per cent, 94 per cent and 36 per cent in 2005 respectively.

51 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed reducing the representation of this area to 10 councillors, and suggested that this area should comprise six wards, with the proposed Brockworth ward being represented by three councillors, the proposed wards of Churchdown Brookfield and Churchdown Parton each being represented by two councillors, and the proposed wards of Churchdown Pirton, Hucclecote and Innsworth with Down Hatherley each being represented by a single councillor. It proposed that Brockworth ward should comprise the parish of Brockworth, and that Churchdown Brookfield ward should comprise that part of Churchdown parish to the south of the A40. It put forward a Churchdown Parton ward, comprising that part of Churchdown parish to the north-east of RAF Innsworth, the Sports Ground, Parton Manor School, Cheltenham Road, Heathden Road, Parton Road, and the A40. It proposed that the

remainder of Churchdown parish, excluding RAF Innsworth, should form a Churchdown Pirton ward. It put forward a Hucclecote ward, comprising Hucclecote parish and an Innsworth with Down Hatherley ward, comprising the parishes of Down Hatherley and Innsworth together with RAF Innsworth from Churchdown parish.

52 Under the Borough Council's scheme for a 38-member council, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Brockworth, Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Hucclecote and Innsworth with Down Hatherley wards varying from the borough average by 5 per cent, 7 per cent, 6 per cent, 13 per cent, 35 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Churchdown Parton, Churchdown Pirton, Hucclecote and Innsworth with Down Hatherley wards to vary from the borough average by 2 per cent, 6 per cent 10 per cent and 2 per cent in 2005, while equalling the borough average in Churchdown Brookfield ward. Brockworth ward would continue to have an electoral variance of 5 per cent from the borough average.

53 Churchdown Parish Council supported the Borough Council's proposals, except for its proposals for the north of Churchdown. It argued that the proposed wards of Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton should be united in a single Churchdown St Johns ward. It considered that the similar ward names of Parton and Pirton are "confusing" and argued that a larger three-member ward would aid the reflection of community identity in this area. It also argued that the existing boundary between Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards is "ill-defined and confusing". Innsworth Parish Council proposed that, should change be necessary, Innsworth parish should be combined in a ward with RAF Innsworth.

54 A local councillor wrote on behalf of two other borough councillors in support of the Borough Council's proposed Churchdown Brookfield ward, and in support of its proposal to combine RAF Innsworth with Innsworth parish. He argued that these proposals would address the "ill-defined" boundary between the existing Churchdown Brookfield and Churchdown Pirton wards, and would remove the "confusing anomaly" resulting in RAF Innsworth being included in a Churchdown ward under current warding arrangements. However, he objected to the Borough Council's proposed Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards, which he claimed share an "irrational boundary". He proposed that the two wards should be combined in a new Churchdown St Johns ward. He argued that there is no identifiable boundary between Parton and Pirton and stated that the majority of services for the whole of this area are centred in the proposed Pirton ward. He also raised concerns regarding local confusion between the names of Parton and Pirton. A further local councillor supported the Borough Council's proposal to include Brockworth and Hucclecote parishes in separate wards, and to address the high level of electoral inequality in this area by increasing the area's level of representation on the Borough Council.

55 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we consider that the Borough Council's proposals have merit and have received support. We consider that their proposals to respect parish boundaries where possible offer the best representation of community identities and interests, while we judge that the proposal to combine part of Churchdown parish with Down Hatherley and Innsworth is justified, given that RAF Innsworth is a distinct and

separate area which is well connected by road to Innsworth village. However, we agree that the Borough Council's proposals for Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards use boundaries which are not very clear, and we share local concerns that confusion may be caused by the similarity of the proposed ward names. Therefore, we have been persuaded to adopt the proposals of Churchdown Parish Council and a local councillor to combine the two wards to form a new Churchdown St Johns ward. Under our draft recommendations for a 38-member council, the level of electoral equality in Churchdown St Johns ward would vary from the borough average by 8 per cent. This level of electoral equality would improve over the next five years to vary by 3 per cent from the borough average in 2005. Otherwise, we are adopting the Borough Council's proposals as our draft recommendations as detailed above, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve South, Cleeve Hill, Dumbleton, Gotherington and Winchcombe wards

56 The existing wards of Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve South, Cleeve Hill, Dumbleton, Gotherington and Winchcombe cover the east of the borough. Winchcombe ward (comprising the parishes of Gretton, Hawling, Prescott, Sudeley and Winchcombe) is represented by three councillors, Cleeve Hill ward (comprising the parishes of Southam and Woodmancote) is represented by two councillors, and Bishop's Cleeve East ward (comprising East parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish), Bishop's Cleeve North ward (comprising North parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish), Bishop's Cleeve South ward (comprising South parish ward of Bishop's Cleeve parish), Dumbleton ward (comprising the parishes of Buckland, Dumbleton, Snowhill, Stanton, Stanway and Toddington) and Gotherington ward (comprising the parishes of Alderton, Gotherington, Oxenton and Teddington) are each represented by a single councillor. Under current arrangements for a 36-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve South, Cleeve Hill, Dumbleton, Gotherington and Winchcombe wards varies from the borough average by 21 per cent, 134 per cent, 59 per cent, 12 per cent, 3 per cent, 13 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve marginally in Bishop's Cleeve South and Gotherington wards to vary by 48 per cent and 7 per cent from the borough average in 2005. The level of electoral equality in Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Cleeve Hill, Dumbleton and Winchcombe is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, to vary by 27 per cent, 142 per cent, 18 per cent, 7 per cent and 17 per cent in 2005 respectively.

57 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should comprise six wards, with the proposed Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard, Winchcombe and Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South wards each being represented by three councillors, while the proposed wards of Bishop's Cleeve Central, Isbourne and Oxenton Hill would each be represented by a single councillor. It proposed that Bishop's Cleeve Central ward should comprise the existing Bishop's Cleeve East ward and those parts of the existing Bishop's Cleeve North and Bishop's Cleeve South wards bounded by Orchard Road and Two Hedges Road. It proposed that Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard ward should comprise the remainder of the existing Bishop's Cleeve North ward together with Stoke Orchard parish and that Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South ward should comprise the remainder of the existing Bishop's Cleeve South ward together with Woodmancote parish. It proposed that Isbourne ward should comprise the parishes

of Buckland, Dumbleton, Snowhill, Stanton, Teddington and Toddington, while Oxenton Hill ward should combine the parishes of Alderton, Gotherington, Oxenton and Prescott. It also put forward a Winchcombe ward comprising the parishes of Gretton, Hawling, Southam, Stanway, Sudeley and Winchcombe.

58 Under the Borough Council's scheme for a 38-member council, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Bishop's Cleeve Central, Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard, Isbourne, Oxenton Hill, Winchcombe and Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South wards varying from the borough average by 1 per cent, 13 per cent, 9 per cent, 6 per cent, 10 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard and Winchcombe wards to vary from the borough average by 4 per cent in each ward in 2005. The level of electoral equality in Bishop's Cleeve Central, Isbourne and Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South wards is projected to deteriorate marginally to vary by 6 per cent, 11 per cent and 8 per cent in 2005 respectively, while Oxenton Hill ward would continue to have an electoral variance of 6 per cent from the borough average.

59 Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council proposed a scheme of five single-member wards for Bishop's Cleeve. It also put forward an alternative scheme for four single-member wards should a reduced council size be adopted, however, this would result in significantly high levels of electoral inequality under a 38-member scheme, with the proposed wards of Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve South and Bishop's Cleeve West wards varying by 23 per cent, 25 per cent, 25 per cent and 25 per cent from the borough average respectively. It argued that Bishop's Cleeve parish requires further representation at borough level in order to address the significant under-representation of the borough under current arrangements. It opposed the Borough Council's proposals to combine parts of Bishop's Cleeve with Stoke Orchard and Woodmancote. It argued that Bishop's Cleeve should be warded separately as it is a "large self-contained community" which is more urban in nature than the surrounding rural parishes. It also asserted that the parish of Woodmancote is a "distinct community". It raised concerns that the proposed three-member wards would be "too large to provide the necessary accountability". As a result of its proposals for Bishop's Cleeve to be warded separately to the surrounding parishes, the Parish Council also proposed alternative warding arrangements for the south-eastern part of the borough.

60 Under its proposals for a five-ward Bishop's Cleeve, under a 38-member council, Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council proposed that Bishop's East ward should comprise the existing Bishop's Cleeve East ward and those parts of Bishop's Cleeve North and Bishop's Cleeve South ward bounded by Cheltenham Road, Church Road, Prior Lane, School Road, Tobyfield Road and Two Hedges Road. It proposed that Bishop's Cleeve North ward should comprise those parts of the existing Bishop's Cleeve North ward to the north-east of Bramble Chase, Cherry Blossom Way, Church Road, Evesham Road, Honeysuckle Way, Prior Lane, School Road and The Withers, and that the remainder of the existing Bishop's Cleeve North ward, less those parts to the south of Stoke Road, and to the east of Cheltenham and Tobyfield Roads, should form a new Bishop's Cleeve North West ward. It put forward a Bishop's Cleeve West ward, comprising the remainder of the existing Bishop's Cleeve North ward, and that part of the existing Bishop's Cleeve South ward to the north of Eagle Star Insurance, Delphinium Drive and Voxwell Lane. The remainder of the existing Bishop's Cleeve South ward would form a new Bishop's Cleeve South ward.

61 Given that Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council's proposals to ward Bishop's Cleeve separately would have a consequential effect on the surrounding rural wards, it also put forward proposals for the south-east of the borough. It proposed an unnamed ward comprising the parishes of Prescott, Southam and Woodmancote, a new Oxenton Hill ward, comprising the parishes of Gotherington, Oxenton and Stoke Orchard, and a Winchcombe ward comprising the parishes of Alderton, Gretton, Hawling, Stanway, Sudeley and Winchcombe.

62 Under Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council's proposals for a 38-member council with five members representing Bishop's Cleeve, there would be improved levels of electoral equality. The number of electors per councillor in Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve South, the unnamed and Oxenton Hill wards would vary by 2 per cent, 1 per cent, 8 per cent and 20 per cent while equalling the borough average in Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve North West, Bishop's Cleeve West and Winchcombe wards. This level of electoral equality would deteriorate marginally in Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North, Bishop's Cleeve North West, Bishop's Cleeve South, Bishop's Cleeve West and Winchcombe wards to vary from the borough average by 9 per cent, 8 per cent, 3 per cent, 6 per cent, 8 per cent and 5 per cent respectively in 2005. The level of electoral equality in the unnamed and Oxenton Hill wards would improve over the next five years to vary by 1 per cent and 5 per cent respectively in 2005.

63 Winchcombe & Bishop's Cleeve Labour Party Branch opposed the Borough Council's proposals to combine Bishop's Cleeve and Winchcombe with surrounding parishes in large multi-member wards. It argued that the "distinctive characters" of the communities in the two towns would best be served by warding them separately from the surrounding more rural parishes in order to represent the different interests of local residents in the rural and more urban areas. It also proposed that these areas should be represented by single-member wards in order to provide "maximum accountability" and to minimise the geographical size of rural wards. However, it did not put forward specific warding proposals.

64 A local councillor objected to the Borough Council's proposals and suggested that Bishop's Cleeve should be represented by five single-member wards to give the town the correct level of representation on the Borough Council and to ward the town separately to the surrounding rural parishes. However, he did not put forward specific warding proposals. He raised concerns that the Borough Council's proposal to combine parts of Bishop's Cleeve with Stoke Orchard and Woodmancote would adversely affect the reflection of the town's community identity and would affect the representation of the town's residents' interests. A further local councillor supported the Borough Council's proposal to increase the number of councillors representing Bishop's Cleeve, but he objected to its proposal to combine the town with surrounding parishes.

65 Having carefully considered the representations received a Stage One, we have noted that there is local opposition to Bishop's Cleeve parish being combined with surrounding parishes. We consider that Bishop's Cleeve is of a significantly different character to Stoke Orchard, Woodmancote and surrounding areas, and therefore we propose that the town be warded separately. We consider that Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council's five-ward proposal for the town has merit, given that it would divide the town into identifiable wards and would provide Bishop's Cleeve with the correct level of representation on the Borough Council under a 38-member scheme. However, in order to provide clearer community representation and improved electoral equality we propose combining the Parish Council's proposed Bishop's Cleeve East and Bishop's

Cleeve North wards to form a Bishop's Cleeve East ward, and the proposed Bishop's Cleeve North-West and Bishop's Cleeve West wards in a new Bishop's Cleeve West ward. We also suggest modifying the proposed boundaries of the three Bishop's Cleeve wards in order to provide improved levels of electoral equality and more clearly identifiable boundaries. We proposed that the boundary between the proposed Bishop's Cleeve East and Bishop's Cleeve West wards should be modified to include all the properties on Tobyfield Road in Bishop's Cleeve East ward. We also propose that the northern boundary of Bishop's Cleeve South ward should be drawn along Two Hedges Road and the back of properties on Delphinium Drive and Voxwell Lane.

66 As a result of putting forward separate warding arrangements for Bishop's Cleeve, we are unable to adopt the Borough Council's proposal for the south-east of the borough, which is based on the combination of Bishop's Cleeve with Woodmancote. Also, while we note that there is support for such a move, it is not possible to ward Winchcombe separately without resulting in significantly higher levels of electoral equality or requiring further parish warding, which we do not consider would be in the interests of community identity. Additionally, Winchcombe is a small town which shares close transport links and community interests with surrounding parishes and, therefore, we consider that it should be combined with the surrounding rural parishes. We are content to accept Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council's options for the south-east of the borough, given that it put forward proposals which combine well-connected parishes, which are of a similar rural character and which share similar community interests. We suggest that the Parish Council's proposed unnamed ward, comprising the parishes of Prescott, Southam and Woodmancote, should be named Cleeve Hill ward, after the existing ward which contains these parishes.

67 Under our draft recommendations for a 38-member council, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve South, Bishop's Cleeve West, Cleeve Hill, Isbourne and Oxenton Hill wards varying from the borough average by 4 per cent, 5 per cent, 1 per cent, 8 per cent, 8 per cent and 20 per cent respectively, while equalling the borough average in Winchcombe ward. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Bishop's Cleeve South, Cleeve Hill and Oxenton Hill wards to vary from the borough average by 3 per cent, 1 per cent and 5 per cent in 2005 respectively. The level of electoral equality in Winchcombe ward is projected to deteriorate marginally to vary by 5 per cent from the borough average, while Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve West and Isbourne wards would continue to have electoral variances of 4 per cent, 1 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. Our draft recommendations are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Electoral Cycle

68 At Stage One we received no proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the borough. Accordingly, we make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

Conclusions

69 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 36 to 38 members;
- there should be 22 wards;
- the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of five wards;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council every four years.

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

- in Bishop's Cleeve we propose creating new Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve South and Bishop's Cleeve West wards;
- we propose adopting Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council's proposals for Cleeve Hill, Oxenton Hill and Winchcombe wards;
- we propose combining the Borough Council's proposed Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton wards, to form a Churchdown St Johns ward;
- we propose a minor modification between the boundaries of the Borough Council's proposed Prior's Park and Tewkesbury Town with Mitton wards;
- we propose that all wards in Tewkesbury town should be prefixed with the name of Tewkesbury.

71 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 | 36 | 38 | 36 | 38 |
| Number of wards | 27 | 22 | 27 | 22 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 1,658 | 1,570 | 1,790 | 1,696 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average | 22 | 7 | 23 | 2 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average | 15 | 1 | 15 | 0 |

72 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Tewkesbury Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from 22 to seven. By 2005 only one ward is forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough.

Draft Recommendation
 Tewkesbury Borough Council should comprise 38 councillors serving 22 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on 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

73 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 parishes of Ashchurch, Bishop’s Cleeve, Churchdown and Tewkesbury to reflect the proposed borough wards.

74 The parish of Ashchurch is currently unwarded and is served by 15 councillors. As a result of our proposals for this area at borough level, we propose that the parish should be warded into three wards, Newtown, Northway and Rural. These wards should be coterminous with the boundaries of the proposed borough wards of Tewkesbury Newtown, Northway and Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff respectively, and should be represented by one, 12 and two councillors respectively, in order to offer a fair representation of the parish ward electorates. We received no

representations about the parish warding arrangements at Stage One and we would welcome the views of residents in response to our proposals.

Draft Recommendation
Ashchurch Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Newtown (returning one councillor), Northway (returning 12 councillors) and Rural (returning two councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

75 The parish of Bishop’s Cleeve is currently served by 15 councillors representing three wards: East, North and South, each returning five councillors. At Stage One, Bishop’s Cleeve Parish Council argued that the current parish council size is “about right” to achieve the convenient and effective running of the Parish Council. Under its proposed five-ward scheme it proposed that each of the five wards should be represented by three members, retaining the existing council size.

76 However, we have proposed two two-member and one single-member ward for Bishop’s Cleeve and as a result of our proposals at borough level, we propose that the existing parish wards of Bishop’s Cleeve should be abolished, to be replaced by three wards: East, South and West. These wards should be coterminous with the boundaries of the proposed borough wards of Bishop’s Cleeve East, Bishop’s Cleeve South and Bishop’s Cleeve West respectively. In line with their proportion of the electorate, we propose that East and West wards should each be represented by six parish councillors, while South ward should be represented by three. We received no further representations regarding the parish electoral arrangements at Stage One and we would welcome representations in response to our proposals.

Draft Recommendation
Bishop’s Cleeve Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: East and West (each returning six councillors) and South (returning three councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

77 The parish of Churchdown is currently divided into three parish wards: Churchdown Brookfield, Churchdown Parton and Churchdown Pirton, each returning seven councillors.

78 As a result of our draft recommendations at borough level, we propose that the existing parish wards of Churchdown should be abolished to be replaced by three new wards: Brookfield, RAF Innsworth and St Johns. These wards should be coterminous with the boundaries of the proposed borough wards of Churchdown Brookfield, Innsworth with Down Hatherley and Churchdown St Johns respectively. In line with their proportion of the electorate, we propose that

the three wards should be represented respectively by eight, one and 12 parish councillors. We received no representations regarding the parish electoral arrangements at Stage One and we would welcome representations in response to our proposals.

Draft Recommendation
Churchdown Parish Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Brookfield (returning eight councillors), RAF Innsworth (returning one councillor) and St Johns (returning 12 councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

79 The parish of Tewkesbury is currently divided into four parish wards: Tewkesbury Mitton and Tewkesbury Newtown, each returning three councillors, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park, returning six councillors, and Tewkesbury Town, returning four councillors.

80 As a result of our draft recommendations at borough level, we propose that the existing parish wards of Tewkesbury should be abolished to be replaced by four new wards: Mitton North, Newtown, Prior’s Park and Town with Mitton. These wards should be coterminous with the boundaries of the proposed borough wards of Twyning, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Prior’s Park and Tewkesbury Town with Mitton respectively. In line with their proportion of the electorate, we propose that the four wards should be represented respectively by one, three, six and six parish councillors. We received no representations regarding the parish electoral arrangements at Stage One and we would welcome representations in response to our proposals.

Draft Recommendation
Tewkesbury Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Mitton North (returning one councillor), Newtown (returning three councillors), Prior’s Park and Town with Mitton (each returning six councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

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

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 Borough Council.

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

Map 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Tewkesbury

5 NEXT STEPS

83 We are putting forward draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for consultation. We will take fully into account all representations received by 5 March 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 Borough Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

84 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Review Manager
Tewkesbury 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

85 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

Tewkesbury Borough Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure A1: Tewkesbury Borough Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas |
|----|--|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff | 2 | Ashchurch ward (part); Tewkesbury Newtown ward (part – Walton Cardiff parish) |
| 2 | Badgeworth | 1 | Coombe Hill ward (part – the parishes of Boddington and Staverton); Crickley ward (the parishes of Badgeworth and Great Witcombe) |
| 3 | Bishop's Cleeve Central | 1 | Bishop's Cleeve East, Bishop's Cleeve North and Bishop's Cleeve South wards (part) |
| 4 | Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard | 3 | Bishop's Cleeve North ward (part); Coombe Hill ward (part – Stoke Orchard parish) |
| 5 | Brockworth | 3 | Brockworth Glebe, Brockworth Moorfield and Brockworth Westfield wards (Brockworth parish) |
| 6 | Churchdown Brookfield | 2 | Churchdown Brookfield and Churchdown Pirton wards (part) |
| 7 | Churchdown Parton | 2 | Churchdown Parton ward (part) |
| 8 | Churchdown Pirton | 1 | Churchdown Pirton ward (part) |
| 9 | Coombe Hill | 2 | Coombe Hill ward (part – the parishes of Elmstone Hardwicke, Deerhurst, Leigh and Uckington); De Winton ward (part – the parishes of Longford, Norton, Sandhurst and Twigworth) |
| 10 | Highnam with Haw Bridge | 2 | Haw Bridge ward (the parishes of Ashleworth, Chaceley, Forthampton, Hasfield, Maisemore and Tirley); Highnam ward (the parishes of Highnam and Minsterworth) |
| 11 | Hucclecote | 1 | Horsbere ward (part – Hucclecote parish) |
| 12 | Innsworth with Down Hatherley | 1 | Churchdown Parton ward (part); De Winton ward (part – Down Hatherley parish); Innsworth ward (Innsworth parish) |
| 13 | Isbourne | 1 | Dumbleton ward (part – the parishes of Buckland, Dumbleton, Snowhill, Stanton and Toddington); Gotherington ward (part – Teddington parish) |
| 14 | Newtown | 1 | Ashchurch ward (part); Tewkesbury Newtown ward (part) |
| 15 | Northway | 2 | Ashchurch ward (part) |

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas |
|----|--|------------------------------|---|
| 16 | Oxenton Hill | 1 | Gotherington ward (part – the parishes of Alderton, Gotherington and Oxenton); Winchcombe ward (part – Prescott parish) |
| 17 | Prior's Park | 2 | <i>Unchanged:</i> Tewkesbury Prior's Park ward (Prior's Park parish ward of Tewkesbury parish) |
| 18 | Shurdington | 1 | <i>Unchanged:</i> Shurdington ward (Shurdington parish) |
| 19 | Tewkesbury Town with Mitton | 2 | Tewkesbury Mitton, Tewkesbury Newtown, Tewkesbury Priors Park and Tewkesbury Town wards (part) |
| 20 | Twyning | 1 | Tewkesbury Mitton ward (part); Twyning ward (Twyning parish) |
| 21 | Winchcombe | 3 | Cleeve Hill ward (part – Southam parish); Dumbleton ward (part – Stanway parish); Winchcombe ward (part – the parishes of Gretton, Hawling, Sudeley and Winchcombe) |
| 22 | Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South | 3 | Bishop's Cleeve South ward (part); Cleeve Hill ward (part – Woodmancote parish) |

Figure A2: Tewkesbury Borough Council's Proposals: 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 (%) |
|----|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Ashchurch with Walton Cardiff | 2 | 1,147 | 574 | -63 | 3,132 | 1,566 | -8 |
| 2 | Badgeworth | 1 | 1,764 | 1,764 | 12 | 1,782 | 1,782 | 5 |
| 3 | Bishop's Cleeve Central | 1 | 1,588 | 1,588 | 1 | 1,590 | 1,590 | -6 |
| 4 | Bishop's Cleeve North with Stoke Orchard | 3 | 4,117 | 1,372 | -13 | 4,907 | 1,636 | -4 |
| 5 | Brockworth | 3 | 4,949 | 1,650 | 5 | 5,338 | 1,779 | 5 |
| 6 | Churchdown Brookfield | 2 | 3,353 | 1,677 | 7 | 3,402 | 1,701 | 0 |
| 7 | Churchdown Parton | 2 | 3,339 | 1,670 | 6 | 3,463 | 1,732 | 2 |
| 8 | Churchdown Pirton | 1 | 1,771 | 1,771 | 13 | 1,790 | 1,790 | 6 |
| 9 | Coombe Hill | 2 | 3,664 | 1,832 | 17 | 3,699 | 1,850 | 9 |
| 10 | Highnam with Haw Bridge | 2 | 3,526 | 1,763 | 12 | 3,623 | 1,812 | 7 |
| 11 | Hucclecote | 1 | 1,017 | 1,017 | -35 | 1,525 | 1,525 | -10 |
| 12 | Innsworth with Down Hatherley | 1 | 1,728 | 1,728 | 10 | 1,732 | 1,732 | 2 |
| 13 | Isbourne | 1 | 1,695 | 1,695 | 9 | 1,740 | 1,740 | 11 |
| 14 | Newtown | 1 | 1,616 | 1,616 | 3 | 1,620 | 1,620 | -4 |
| 15 | Northway | 2 | 3,616 | 1,808 | 15 | 3,618 | 1,809 | 7 |
| 16 | Oxenton Hill | 1 | 1,623 | 1,623 | -6 | 1,657 | 1,657 | -6 |
| 17 | Prior's Park | 2 | 3,170 | 1,585 | 1 | 3,192 | 1,596 | -6 |
| 18 | Shurdington | 1 | 1,542 | 1,542 | -2 | 1,598 | 1,598 | -6 |
| 19 | Tewkesbury Town with Mitton | 2 | 3,204 | 1,602 | 2 | 3,607 | 1,804 | 6 |

| | 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 | Twynning | 1 | 1,410 | 1,410 | -10 | 1,458 | 1,458 | -14 |
| 21 | Winchcombe | 3 | 5,167 | 1,722 | 10 | 5,286 | 1,762 | 4 |
| 22 | Woodmancote with Bishop's Cleeve South | 3 | 4,670 | 1,557 | -1 | 4,685 | 1,562 | -8 |
| | Totals | 38 | 59,676 | - | - | 64,444 | - | - |
| | Averages | - | - | 1,570 | - | - | 1,696 | - |

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

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

APPENDIX B

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: the Commission's Role

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

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

- (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.

