

Final recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements  
for Thanet in Kent

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

*May 2001*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Thanet in Kent.

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)

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





## Local Government Commission for England

9 May 2001

Dear Secretary of State

On 9 May 2000 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Thanet under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in November 2000 and undertook a 10-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 145) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Thanet.

We recommend that Thanet District Council should be served by 56 councillors representing 23 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that whole-council elections should continue to be held every four years.

The Local Government Act 2000 contains provisions relating to changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as Orders are made implementing those arrangements we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the District Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Malcolm Grant'.

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



## SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Thanet on 9 May 2000. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 14 November 2000, after which we undertook a 10-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

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

- **In 12 of the 27 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district and six wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **By 2005 electoral equality is not expected to have improved, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 14 wards and by more than 20 per cent in five wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 145–146) are that:

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

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

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

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

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

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an Order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 19 June 2001:

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

Figure 1: The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for Thanet

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Beacon Rd (in Broadstairs)	2	3,279	1,640	-5	3,302	1,651	-7
2 Birchington North	2	3,323	1,662	-4	3,365	1,683	-5
3 Birchington South	3	5,032	1,677	-3	5,092	1,697	-4
4 Bradstowe (in Broadstairs)	2	3,330	1,665	-4	3,417	1,709	-4
5 Central Harbour (in Ramsgate)	3	5,447	1,816	5	5,546	1,849	4
6 Cliffsend & Pegwell (in Ramsgate)	2	3,529	1,765	2	3,644	1,822	3
7 Cliftonville East (in Margate)	3	5,137	1,712	-1	5,214	1,738	-2
8 Cliftonville West (in Margate)	3	5,204	1,735	0	5,495	1,832	3
9 Dane Valley (in Margate)	3	5,369	1,790	3	5,398	1,799	1
10 Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,402	1,801	4	5,582	1,861	5
11 Garlinge (in Margate)	2	3,621	1,811	5	3,630	1,815	2
12 Kingsgate (in Broadstairs)	1	1,636	1,636	-6	1,688	1,688	-5
13 Margate Central (in Margate)	2	3,471	1,736	0	3,628	1,814	2
14 Nethercourt (in Ramsgate)	2	3,553	1,777	3	3,615	1,808	2
15 Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	3,447	1,724	-1	3,458	1,729	-3
16 Northwood (in Ramsgate)	3	4,994	1,665	-4	4,999	1,666	-6
17 St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	3	5,450	1,817	5	5,578	1,859	5
18 Salmestone (in Margate)	2	3,700	1,850	7	3,715	1,858	5
19 Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	3,451	1,726	0	3,723	1,862	5

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
20 Thanet Villages	3	4,676	1,559	-10	4,848	1,616	-9
21 Viking (in Broadstairs)	3	5,566	1,855	7	5,635	1,878	6
22 Westbrook (in Margate)	2	3,333	1,667	-4	3,386	1,693	-5
23 Westgate-on-Sea (in Margate)	3	5,064	1,688	-3	5,370	1,790	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>97,014</b>	–	–	<b>99,328</b>	–	–
<b>Averages</b>	–	–	<b>1,732</b>	–	–	<b>1,774</b>	–

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Thanet District Council.*

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

*2 Some small changes to the forecast electorates of the proposed Eastcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards have arisen as a result of further analysis at Stage Three.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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

2 This was our first review of the electoral arrangements of Thanet. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1976 (Report No. 160). The electoral arrangements of Kent County Council were last reviewed in November 1980 (Report No. 402). We completed a directed electoral review of Medway in 1996. We commenced a periodic electoral review of Medway in 2000, and intend reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we have had 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.

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 have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000), which 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, so far as practicable, 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 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one, half of the 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. 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 Orders 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 the two-tier district areas, and our current *Guidance*.

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

11 Stage Three began on 14 November 2000 with the publication of our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Thanet in Kent*, and ended on 22 January 2001. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

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

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

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

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

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Thanet*

Figure 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Beacon Road (in Broadstairs)	2	3,122	1,561	-13	3,139	1,570	-15
2 Birchington East	2	4,971	2,486	38	5,051	2,526	37
3 Birchington West	2	3,384	1,692	-6	3,406	1,703	-7
4 Bradstowe (in Broadstairs)	2	3,192	1,596	-11	3,248	1,624	-12
5 Cecil (in Margate)	1	1,589	1,589	-12	1,609	1,609	-13
6 Central Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	4,906	1,635	-9	5,089	1,696	-8
7 Central Westcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,474	1,825	2	5,621	1,874	2
8 Cliftonville (in Margate)	3	6,315	2,105	17	6,546	2,182	19
9 Dane Park (in Margate)	2	3,521	1,761	-2	3,551	1,776	-3
10 Ethelbert (in Margate)	1	1,608	1,608	-10	1,690	1,690	-8
11 Kingsgate (in Broadstairs)	1	1,931	1,931	7	2,020	2,020	10
12 Margate West (in Margate)	3	5,055	1,685	-6	5,086	1,695	-8
13 Marine (in Margate)	1	1,949	1,949	8	1,963	1,963	7
14 Minster	2	2,578	1,289	-28	2,661	1,331	-28
15 Newington (in Ramsgate)	2	3,248	1,624	-10	3,258	1,629	-11
16 Northdown Park (in Margate)	2	4,174	2,087	16	4,228	2,114	15
17 Northwood (in Ramsgate)	3	4,994	1,665	-7	4,999	1,666	-9
18 Pier (in Margate)	1	1,974	1,974	10	2,111	2,111	15
19 Pierremont (in Broadstairs)	2	2,854	1,427	-21	2,892	1,446	-21
20 St Lawrence (in Ramsgate)	2	3,524	1,762	-2	3,560	1,780	-3

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 St Peter's (in Broadstairs)	2	4,904	2,452	36	5,026	2,513	37
22 Salmestone (in Margate)	2	3,633	1,817	1	3,647	1,824	-1
23 Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	2,832	1,416	-21	3,104	1,552	-16
24 Southwood (in Ramsgate)	2	3,925	1,963	9	4,042	2,021	10
25 Thanet Parishes	1	1,468	1,468	-18	1,528	1,528	-17
26 Upton (in Broadstairs)	2	4,508	2,254	25	4,545	2,273	24
27 Westgate-on-Sea (in Margate)	3	5,381	1,794	0	5,708	1,903	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>97,014</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>99,328</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,839</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Thanet District Council.*

Note: *The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2000, electors in Minster ward were relatively over-represented by 28 per cent, while electors in Birchington East ward were relatively under-represented by 38 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

### 3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

16 We received 18 representations during Stage One, including district-wide schemes from the District Council, North & South Thanet Conservative Associations ('the Conservatives'), Councillor Hudson (Birchington West ward) and a local resident, Mr John Cox. We also received representations from Dr Stephen Ladyman, Member of Parliament for Thanet South, a member of Thanet District Council, Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party, and from parish and town councils in the district.

17 In formulating our draft recommendations we noted that there was a lack of local consensus regarding the appropriate number of councillors to serve on Thanet District Council. As a result, a public meeting was held on 7 September 2000 at the Council Offices in Margate to collect evidence specifically regarding the issue of council size. In the light of the representations received and the evidence presented to us at the public meeting, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Thanet in Kent*.

18 Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, and provided a mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards. However, we moved away from the Council's scheme in a number of areas, in order to reflect local community identities and interests and improve electoral equality further. In particular, we proposed a new three-member Thanet Villages ward covering the rural area of the district. We proposed that:

- Thanet District Council should be served by 56 councillors, compared with the current 54, representing 23 wards, four fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified, while one ward should retain its existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for Birchington parish and the town of Broadstairs & St Peter's.

**Draft Recommendation**

Thanet District Council should comprise 56 councillors, serving 23 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

19 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all 23 of the proposed wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This improved level of electoral equality was forecast to continue, with all 23 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the average in 2005.



## 4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

20 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report we received 17 representations. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Thanet District Council and the Commission.

### **Thanet District Council Labour Group**

21 Thanet District Council Labour Group ('the Labour Group') expressed broad support for the Commission's draft recommendations for ward boundaries in Thanet, but made more detailed comments on several areas. It objected to the proposed single-member Kingsgate ward, and argued that the District Council's Stage One scheme should be adopted in Broadstairs. The Labour Group also opposed the new three-member Thanet Villages ward, arguing that the constituent areas of the proposed ward share no community ties. It proposed that the District Council's Stage One scheme for Birchington and the rural part of the district should be adopted.

### **Thanet District Council Electoral Services Officer**

22 The Electoral Services Officer (ESO) for Thanet District Council made a number of comments in relation to the Commission's draft recommendations for Thanet. The ESO objected to the Commission's proposals for the rural area of the district, arguing that the inclusion of parts of the unparished Westgate, Salmestone and Margate areas in the proposed Thanet Villages ward would not reflect local community ties, and would not be conducive to convenient and effective local government. She asserted that no suitable venues for polling stations exist in this area, and argued that electors from this area may be required to vote at different venues for different elections. The ESO argued that the Council's original proposal for the rural part of the district should be adopted. She also objected to the proposed single-member Kingsgate ward, and proposed a number of amendments to the boundary between Kingsgate and Beacon Road wards.

23 The Council's ESO also noted that, under our draft recommendations, the primary polling venue for Sir Moses Montefiore ward would be transferred to Eastcliff ward, and argued that the District Council's original proposal for this area should be adopted. She also proposed a minor amendment to the boundary between Salmestone and Garlinge wards in order to more accurately reflect ground detail, and put forward a number of changes to proposed ward names. The ESO also argued that the district should be served by no more than 55 councillors, as originally proposed by the Council.

### **Kent County Council**

24 Kent County Council broadly supported the Commission's draft recommendations for Thanet.

## **Parish Councils**

25 We received eight representations from parish and town councils, local community organisations and their members. Acol Parish Council, Monkton Parish Council, St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council and a councillor for St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council supported the proposed three-member Thanet Villages ward. Minster Parish Council proposed dividing the proposed Thanet Villages ward to form a two-member ward comprising Manston and Minster parishes and a single-member ward comprising Acol, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes and the Lydden and Woodchurch areas. Birchington Parish Council supported the proposed Birchington North and Birchington South wards, and Broadstairs Town Council made no comment on the draft recommendations. Clifftend Residents' Association opposed the two-member Clifftend & Pegwell ward and proposed enlarging the Thanet Villages ward to include the Clifftend area, arguing that Clifftend shares closer community ties with the rural Thanet Villages ward than with the Pegwell area.

## **Other Representations**

26 We received six further representations in response to our draft recommendations from local residents. A resident of Cliftonville proposed enlarging the proposed Esplanade ward to include the current Ethelbert ward area, arguing that the Ethelbert area shares greater community ties with Cliftonville than with the commercial and historical centre of Margate. He proposed renaming the revised three-member ward Cliftonville West ward, and renaming the proposed Cliftonville & Northdown ward as Cliftonville East ward. A resident of Ramsgate put forward alternative warding arrangements for the rural area of the district, proposing a two-member ward comprising Acol and Minster parishes and the unparished Woodchurch area, a single-member ward comprising Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes and a single-member ward comprising Manston parish and the unparished areas of Clifftend and Lydden.

27 A second resident of Ramsgate opposed our proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward, arguing that the ward would combine two distinct areas either side of the Broadstairs to Canterbury railway line. He also objected to the proposed increase in council size for the district. Two residents of Cliftonville also opposed the proposed increase in council size. A resident of Broadstairs proposed abolishing Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council.

## 5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Thanet is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

31 Our *Guidance* states that 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, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity and interests. Regard must be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

### **Electorate Forecasts**

32 At Stage One the District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 2 per cent from 97,014 to 99,328 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expects most of the growth to be in Sir Moses Montefiore and Westgate-on-Sea wards. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

33 We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

## Council Size

34 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 carefully look at arguments why this might not be the case.

35 Thanet District Council currently has 54 members. At Stage One, the District Council proposed increasing council size to 55, while both the Conservatives and Councillor Hudson proposed a significant reduction in council size to 40 members. Mr Cox proposed a greater reduction to 27 members. Dr Stephen Ladyman MP supported a reduction in council size to 27 members, while Councillor Thomas (Birchington West ward) supported a council size of 40.

36 Having considered the representations received at Stage One, it was clear that there was no local consensus on the issue of council size in Thanet. At the end of Stage One, we considered that we required further information and evidence from the parties concerned before reaching conclusions on the most appropriate council size for Thanet. We therefore appointed an independent Assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE, to conduct a public meeting in the area and report to us with his findings. The public meeting was held on 7 September 2000 at the Council Offices in Margate. A note of the proceedings is available from the Commission's offices on request.

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

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

39 In their Stage One submission the Conservatives proposed a reduction in council size to 40 members, arguing that changes to the council structure in Thanet, including the abolition of the committee system, would mean that fewer councillors would in future be required in order "to fulfil the work commitment". At the public meeting Councillor Ezekiel, on behalf of the Conservatives, argued that, in light of recent changes to the Council's political management structure, members should consider the opportunity to streamline their own structure. He

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

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

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

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

43 The four district-wide submissions which we received at Stage One proposed a wide range of council sizes. The independent Assessor, Mr Trevor Hardy OBE, considered the submissions received at Stage One and the other representations received which related specifically to the issue of council size, together with the evidence presented at the public meeting. Taking account of all the views expressed, the Assessor considered that there was little objective evidence to support a reduction in council size of the scale envisaged by some respondents. He considered that we should use the District Council's proposal for a 55-member council as the basis for our draft recommendations.

44 In our draft recommendations report we considered the evidence presented to us at Stage One and Mr Hardy's report. While we accepted that the experience of councillors' workloads may differ across the district, we were not persuaded that the new structure has reduced levels of members' workloads to such an extent that a reduction in council size on the scale proposed would be desirable. Moreover, we noted that we received no significant evidence from those proposing to reduce the size of the council as to the benefits which would accrue from a smaller council size. We recognised that the new structure is still evolving, and considered that once it has become more settled, greater clarity may be brought to the issue of council size and the future role of councillors in Thanet. However, based on the arguments and evidence presented to us at Stage One, we were not persuaded that the proposed reduction in council size would lead to more

convenient and effective local government or would better reflect the identities and interests of local communities.

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

46 At Stage Three we received six further representations in relation to council size. The District Council itself did not express a view on council size at Stage Three. The Labour Group stated that it supported a small increase in council size to 55, as proposed by the Council at Stage One. The Council's ESO noted that, while the Council's Stage One proposal had proposed a small increase in council size, the other district-wide schemes had proposed reducing the council size. She opposed the Commission's proposal to further increase council size to 56, and argued that "the district would be better served by a Council size no greater than 55". Minster Parish Council stated that it accepted the proposal to increase the size of the council to 56. A resident of Ramsgate also objected to the proposed increase in council size, arguing that "we are not served well with the numbers that we have already". Two residents of Cliftonville argued that, in the light of the introduction of a cabinet structure of political management and reductions in councillors' workloads, a reduction in council size would be appropriate.

47 Having considered all the evidence received, we are content to confirm our draft recommendation for a council size of 56 as final. While we recognise that there has been some opposition to the proposed increase in council size, we have not been persuaded that there is significant support within Thanet for alternative warding arrangements based on a council size of 55. We consider that, from the evidence submitted to us, there is a significant degree of local support for warding arrangements based on an increase in council size to 56. We remain of the view that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would be best met by a council size of 56.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

48 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the four district-wide schemes for electoral arrangements in Thanet. From these representations, some considerations emerged which informed our draft recommendations. As outlined above, our proposals for Thanet were based

on a council size of 56, which we considered to be the most appropriate council size for the district, having regard to the evidence submitted and to the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area. Given this preliminary conclusion on the most appropriate council size for Thanet, we were unable to adopt in their entirety any of the schemes submitted at Stage One. However, we noted that there were some areas of consensus regarding community boundaries and, wherever possible, we attempted to reflect those areas of agreement. While our draft recommendations were based largely on the District Council's proposals, we sought to build on those proposals in several areas in order to improve electoral equality further and reflect community identities and interests in the district.

49 At Stage Three our draft recommendations received a degree of local support and we propose substantially endorsing them, subject to a number of minor modifications. While we recognise that there has been some localised opposition to our proposals, we note that opposition has been confined to a limited number of wards. In the light of the further evidence we have received at Stage Three we have decided to move away from our draft recommendations in several areas in order to better reflect community identities and interests and create more clearly identifiable boundaries. For district warding purposes the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

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

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

### **Birchington East, Birchington West, Minster and Thanet Parishes wards**

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

52 At Stage One the District Council proposed combining the parishes of St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre with the part of Birchington to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line, Alpha Road, Epple Road and the A28 Canterbury Road, to form a new three-member Birchington Rural ward. It argued that “it would be appropriate to link the southern part of Birchington, which is partly rural, to the rural parishes of Sarre and St Nicholas-at-Wade”. The remaining parts of the current Birchington East and Birchington West wards would be combined to form a new two-member Birchington Coastal ward. The Council also proposed combining the remainder of the current Thanet Parishes ward, comprising Acol and Monkton parishes, with Minster ward and Manston parish to form a new two-member Thanet Villages ward, noting that “these villages have been joined because of their common interests in London (Manston) Airport and Manston Business Park”. Broadstairs, St Peter’s & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council’s proposals.

53 The Conservatives proposed enlarging Birchington West ward to include the part of Birchington East ward to the west of Park Avenue, Kings Road and Brunswick Road and St Nicholas-at-Wade parish. They proposed a revised two-member Birchington East ward comprising the remaining part of Birchington East ward, Acol parish and the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the south of the A28 Canterbury Road and the west of Linksfield Road. Under the Conservatives’ proposals Manston, Monkton and Sarre parishes would be combined with Minster ward and the Cliffsend area of Southwood ward to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road to form a new two-member Villages ward.

54 Councillor Hudson proposed combining St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes with Birchington West ward and the part of the current Birchington East ward to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line and the west of Albion Road to form a new two-member Birchington West, St Nicholas & Sarre ward. Under his proposals, the remaining part of the current Birchington East ward would form a revised two-member Birchington East ward. Councillor Hudson also proposed a new two-member The Villages ward comprising the parishes of Acol, Manston, Minster and Monkton and the Cliffsend area of Southwood ward to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road.

55 Mr Cox proposed combining the whole of Birchington parish (Birchington East and Birchington West wards) with Minster ward and the current Thanet Parishes ward to form a new three-member Thanet Parishes ward.

56 We received nine further representations in relation to this area. Birchington Parish Council requested that there be no change to the existing boundaries of Birchington East and Birchington West wards, and proposed combining the small rural villages of Acol, Cliffsend, Manston, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre to form a single ward. Councillor P Francis (Birchington Parish Council) opposed the proposal to combine St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes with part of Birchington. St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council also objected to this proposal, and proposed combining all of the district’s rural communities in a single ward. Councillor Tapp (St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council) opposed the Council’s proposed Birchington Rural ward, while Councillors Bolton and Tweedale (St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council) also expressed opposition to the proposal to include St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes in a enlarged Birchington ward. Minster Parish Council requested that the current two-member Minster and single-member Thanet Parishes wards be retained.

57 In our draft recommendations report we were not persuaded that proposals to combine either St Nicholas-at-Wade or Sarre parishes with part of Birchington would appropriately reflect the identities and interests of the rural communities. We noted that Birchington is a large and distinct coastal village which is more urban in character than St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre, and we considered that the smaller parishes retain considerably stronger ties with the remaining rural parishes of the district. We were also mindful of the concerns expressed by representatives of the rural communities regarding linkage with more urban areas and adequate levels of representation. We also concurred with the view of the District Council that the villages of Acol, Monkton, Minster and Manston parish share common interests relating to the development of London (Manston) Airport and Manston Business Park, and would benefit from being combined in one ward.

58 In the light of these concerns we proposed a new three-member Thanet Villages ward comprising Acol, Manston, Minster, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes. In order to unite the district's rural communities within a single ward and provide for improved electoral equality, we also proposed including the small settlements of Woodchurch and Lydden, which are located on the southern periphery of the current Westgate-on-Sea and Salmestone wards respectively, in the proposed Thanet Villages ward. While we considered including the settlement of Cliffsend in the new ward, we considered that such an option would lead to an unacceptable degree of under-representation for the rural area.

59 We also concurred with the District Council's proposal to increase the number of councillors for the Birchington area from four to five. We proposed combining the parts of Birchington East and Birchington West wards to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line to form a new two-member Birchington North ward, while the remaining parts of Birchington East and Birchington West wards would form a new three-member Birchington South ward.

60 At Stage Three we received a number of representations in relation to our proposals for this area. The Labour Group opposed the proposed Thanet Villages ward, arguing that "there is not a common link between the ward", and that Manston and Minster parishes share stronger community ties with Ramsgate than with the other rural parishes of the district. It also asserted that the proposal to include the unparished Lydden and Woodchurch areas in the Thanet Villages ward would not reflect community identities and interests in this area, and argued that the District Council's original Stage One proposal for the rural part of the district should be adopted as part of our final recommendations. The Council's ESO also objected to the inclusion of Lydden and Woodchurch in the Thanet Villages ward, arguing that the proposed ward would not reflect local community identities and interests. She also noted that "in practical terms there is no suitable venue within this unparished area to designate as a polling station". The ESO argued that St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes share close links with Birchington parish, and also proposed adopting the Council's original proposals for this area. The County Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations.

61 Acol, Birchington, Monkton and St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre parish councils and a parish councillor from St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council expressed support for the proposed Thanet Villages ward. Monkton Parish Council stated that the proposal would "result in better representation for the parishes, and the preserving of our specific identity", while Councillor Tweedale (St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council) noted that "uniting the Thanet villages

will create posts for locally residential councillors, who will have a greater topographical knowledge, more of a grounding in rural ways, traditions and requirements, and be better suited to solving rural issues". Birchington Parish Council also supported the proposed Birchington North and Birchington South wards.

62 Minster Parish Council proposed alternative warding arrangements for the rural area of the district which would combine Manston and Minster parishes to form a new two-member Thanet Villages East ward, while the remaining areas (Acol, Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes and the unparished Lydden and Woodchurch areas) would be combined to form a single-member Thanet Villages West ward. It argued that while the smaller parishes look towards Birchington, Manston and Minster parishes look more towards Ramsgate, and noted that Manston and Minster parishes both share a postal address with Ramsgate. Cliffsend Residents' Association opposed the proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell ward, and requested that the Cliffsend area be included in a revised Thanet Villages ward. It argued that Cliffsend is distinct and separate from both Pegwell and Ramsgate, and stated that "our residents share a common interest in the development of the airport, along with Acol, Monkton, Minster and Manston". St Nicolas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council also noted that "Cliffsend is the only rural village outside the proposed Thanet Villages ward", and proposed a four-member Thanet Villages ward including the Cliffsend area.

63 We received one further representation in relation to this area, from a resident of Ramsgate who proposed a two-member ward comprising Acol and Minster parishes and the Woodchurch area, a single-member ward comprising Monkton, St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes, and a single-member ward comprising Manston parish and the Cliffsend and Lydden areas.

64 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose confirming our draft recommendations for this area as final. We remain content that our proposals for this part of the district would provide the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and we have not been persuaded that the District Council's original proposal would better reflect local community identities in this area. In particular, as stated in our draft recommendations report, we consider that the rural areas of Thanet share close community ties, and we consider that they should be linked together in a single ward. We also note that our proposals have received considerable support from the parishes which would form part of the proposed Thanet Villages ward, and that Birchington Parish Council has expressed support for the proposed Birchington North and Birchington South wards.

65 While we note the concerns expressed by the Council's ESO regarding polling station venues in the unparished Lydden and Woodchurch areas, we consider that these areas share closer community ties with the rural parishes of the district than with Margate and Westgate, and we have not been persuaded to amend our draft recommendations to retain these areas within the more urban wards to the north. We also recognise the concerns expressed by Cliffsend Residents' Association regarding the inclusion of the Cliffsend area in the proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell ward. However, as we noted in our draft recommendations report, we have been unable to identify alternative warding arrangements which would provide a reasonable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. The combined electorate of the proposed Thanet Villages ward and the Cliffsend area would entitle it to between three and four councillors in five years' time, and we have been unable to create two wards with acceptable levels of electoral

equality in this area, given the electorates of the parishes in question. Similarly, while we have considered alternative warding arrangements to combine Manston and Minster parishes to form a two-member ward, we note that such a ward would have 15 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2005.

66 Under our final recommendations, the three-member Thanet Villages ward would have 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average initially, improving to 9 per cent fewer than the average by 2005. The two-member Birchington North and three-member Birchington South wards would have 4 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (5 per cent and 4 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). Our proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

### **Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards**

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

68 At Stage One the District Council proposed transferring the Queensdown area of Salmestone ward to a revised three-member Westgate-on-Sea ward, thereby uniting the properties on Woodchurch Road within a single ward. It also proposed a new three-member Westbrook & Garlinge ward comprising the current Margate West ward less the area to the south of Shottendane Road, and the part of the current Westgate-on-Sea ward to the east of The Grove and Quex Road. The Council noted that, "in order to create a distinct boundary", it had proposed moving the boundary between Salmestone and Westbrook & Garlinge wards to the centre of Shottendane Road. It also proposed a revised two-member Marine ward, comprising the current Marine ward plus the part of Pier ward to the south of King Street and west of Trinity Square. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

69 The Conservatives proposed combining the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the south of the A28 Canterbury Road and the west of Linkfield Road with Acol parish and part of Birchington East ward to form a revised two-member Birchington East ward. Under their proposals, the remaining part of the current Westgate-on-Sea ward would be combined with Briary Close and a small part of Canterbury Road (currently in Margate West ward) to form a new two-member Westgate ward. The boundaries of the current Margate West ward would remain unchanged, other than the transfer of Briary Close and Canterbury Road as detailed above, but the ward would be represented by two councillors, rather than three as at present. Finally, under the Conservatives' proposals, Marine ward would be combined with part of Salmestone ward to form a new two-member Hartsdown ward, as detailed below.

70 Councillor Hudson proposed combining the current Margate West and Marine wards with the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the north of the A28 Canterbury Road and the east of Roxburgh Road to form a revised three-member Margate West ward. The remaining part of the current Westgate-on-Sea ward would be combined with the Queensdown area of Salmestone ward to form a revised two-member Westgate-on-Sea ward. Mr Cox proposed combining the current Margate West, Marine and Westgate-on-Sea wards to form a revised three-member Margate West ward.

71 In our draft recommendations report we considered that Westgate-on-Sea forms a distinct and discrete community to the west of Margate town, and proposed largely retaining the existing three-member Westgate-on-Sea ward. However, in order to improve electoral equality, we proposed transferring the area to the north of the A28 Canterbury Road and the east of The Grove to a new Westbrook ward, and the area to the south of Canterbury Road and the east of Quex Road to a new Garlinge ward. As discussed previously, we also proposed transferring the Woodchurch area of Westgate-on-Sea ward to a new Thanet Villages ward.

72 We considered that All Saints' Avenue and Margate Railway Station form a significant boundary between the central and seafront area of Margate and west Margate, and proposed retaining the existing boundary between Marine and Pier wards. We also noted that there was some consensus among the district-wide submissions received at Stage One to largely retain this boundary. We proposed combining the parts of Margate West and Marine wards to the north of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line and the A28 Canterbury Road to form a new two-member Westbrook ward, which would also include part of Westgate-on-Sea ward, as detailed above. Under our draft recommendations the remaining parts of Margate West and Marine wards would be combined with the part of Westgate-on-Sea ward to the south of Canterbury Road and the east of Quex Road to form a new two-member Garlinge ward. We considered that the District Council's proposal to utilise Shottendane Road as a boundary had some merit, and we proposed transferring the parts of Margate West and Westgate-on-Sea wards to the south of Shottendane Road, incorporating all properties with sole access from Shottendane Road, to the proposed Thanet Villages ward. We also proposed transferring Tivoli Park Avenue and the Mere Gate area of Marine ward to Salmestone ward, as detailed below.

73 At Stage Three we received a number of representations in relation to our proposal to include the unparished Woodchurch area in the proposed Thanet Villages ward, as detailed above. While it broadly supported our draft recommendations for the remainder of the district, the Labour Group argued that the proposal to include the unparished Woodchurch area in the Thanet Villages ward would not reflect community identities and interests in this area. The District Council's ESO also opposed the inclusion of Woodchurch in the Thanet Villages ward, and noted that the unparished area contains no suitable venue for a polling station. Acol, Birchington, Monkton and St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre parish councils and a parish councillor from St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council expressed support for the proposed Thanet Villages ward, while Minster Parish Council proposed including Woodchurch in a new single-member Thanet Villages West ward. A resident of Ramsgate proposed combining Woodchurch with Acol and Minster parishes.

74 The District Council's ESO also noted that the boundary between the proposed Garlinge and Salmestone wards would run through the middle of properties which are currently being

developed on the south side of Hartsdown Road, and proposed amending the boundary accordingly. The County Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations.

75 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose confirming our draft recommendations as final, subject to one minor amendment. As discussed previously, we are content that our proposed Thanet Villages ward would provide separate representation for the rural part of the district, and would maintain a reasonable level of electoral equality. In particular, we consider that the Woodchurch area shares closer community ties with the rural parishes of the district than with Westgate, and we have not been persuaded to retain the area within a more urban ward to the north. While we are content to confirm our proposed Westbrook and Westgate-on-Sea wards as final without modification, we propose amending the boundary between Garlinge and Salmestone wards as proposed by the District Council's ESO. Under our final recommendations, the boundary would follow Shottendane Road eastwards and run to the rear of Shottendane Farm and Shottendane Nursing Home and then north along Hartsdown Road. This change would affect no electors.

76 Under our final recommendations the two-member Garlinge and Westbrook wards would have 5 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (2 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). The three-member Westgate-on-Sea ward would have 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average initially, improving to 1 per cent more than the average by 2005.

### **Cecil, Ethelbert, Pier and Salmestone wards**

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

78 At Stage One the District Council proposed combining the part of Pier ward to the south of King Street and west of Trinity Square with the current Marine ward to form a revised Marine ward. It also proposed a new three-member Esplanade ward, comprising the remaining part of Pier ward, the part of Ethelbert ward to the north of Dane Road, the part of Cliftonville ward to the west of Cornwall Gardens, and the part of Dane Park ward to the north of Dane Road and the west of Wyndham Avenue and Lower Northdown Avenue. The Council noted that, owing to the extent of socio-economic problems in the area, both Ethelbert and Pier wards are the subject of special funding. It proposed combining the remaining part of Ethelbert ward with Cecil ward and the part of the current Dane Park ward to the north of College Road and the west of Fitzroy Avenue and Laleham Road to form a revised two-member Dane Park ward. As detailed above, part of Margate West ward would be transferred to the revised Salmestone ward and the Queensdown area would be united within the revised Westgate-on-Sea ward. Broadstairs, St

Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

79 The Conservatives proposed combining the part of Salmestone ward to the north of Beatrice Road and the west of Ramsgate Road with the current Ethelbert and Pier wards and the part of Cecil ward to the west of Victoria Road and the north of Cowper Road and Milton Avenue to form a new two-member Margate Central ward. They proposed combining the remaining part of Salmestone ward with Marine ward to form a new two-member Hartsdown ward, and the remaining part of Cecil ward would be transferred to a revised Dane Park ward, as detailed below.

80 Councillor Hudson proposed combining Cecil, Ethelbert and Pier wards with the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the west of Godwin Road, the part of Dane Park ward to the west of Cliftonville Avenue and Dane Road, and the part of Salmestone ward to the north of College Road to form a new three-member Margate Central ward. The remaining part of Salmestone ward would form part of a new Margate South ward, as detailed below. Mr Cox proposed combining Cecil, Dane Park, Pier and Salmestone wards to form a new three-member Margate Town ward. Ethelbert ward would be transferred to a revised Cliftonville ward, as detailed below.

81 In our draft recommendations report we proposed retaining the boundary between the current Marine and Pier wards, as detailed above. We considered that the primarily commercial town centre area is distinct from the largely residential community in Marine ward, and we were not persuaded to put forward the District Council's proposed Marine ward. We also noted that both Councillor Hudson and the Conservatives proposed retaining the town centre within a single ward. In the light of the proposals and evidence received at Stage One we proposed combining Cecil, Ethelbert and Pier wards to form a new three-member Margate Central ward, which would cover the central area of Margate town to the north of the railway line, encompassing the historic and commercial centre of the town. We considered that the current Salmestone ward reflects community ties in the area of Margate to the south of the railway line well, and we therefore proposed largely retaining the existing ward. However, as outlined above, we proposed transferring the more rural Lydden area from the current Salmestone ward to the proposed Thanet Villages ward. We also proposed incorporating the Tivoli Park Avenue and Mere Gate areas, currently in Marine ward, within the revised two-member Salmestone ward.

82 At Stage Three a resident of Cliftonville proposed transferring the area covered by the current Ethelbert ward from the proposed Margate Central ward to a revised Esplanade ward. He argued that this proposal would "separate the commercial and historical centre of Margate old town from the 'Hotel-land' areas of Cliftonville" and would better reflect the western boundary of the Cliftonville community. Under his proposals, the revised Margate Central ward would be represented by two councillors rather than three. The enlarged Esplanade ward would be represented by three councillors and would be renamed Cliftonville West ward.

83 As detailed above, we also received a number of representations in relation to our proposal to include the unparished Lydden area in the proposed Thanet Villages ward at Stage Three. The Labour Group asserted that the proposal would not reflect community identities and interests in the rural area, although it expressed broad support for our draft recommendations for the remaining part of the district. The District Council's ESO also argued that the proposed ward would not reflect local community identities, and noted that the unparished area contains no

suitable venue for a polling station. As detailed above, Acol, Birchington, Monkton and St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre parish councils and a parish councillor from St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council expressed support for the proposed Thanet Villages ward, while Minster Parish Council proposed including Lydden in a new single-member Thanet Villages East ward. A resident of Ramsgate proposed combining Lydden with Cliffsend and Manston parish. The County Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations.

84 As discussed previously, we have not been persuaded to amend our proposed Thanet Villages ward to retain the unparished Lydden area within Salmestone ward. We are content that our proposed Thanet Villages ward would provide the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in the rural area of the district, and have proposed confirming the three-member ward as final. We also propose confirming the two-member Salmestone ward as final, subject to a minor amendment to the boundary with the proposed Garlinge ward, as detailed above.

85 We have also considered the proposal to transfer the Ethelbert area from Margate Central ward to a revised Esplanade ward. In the light of the arguments put forward in support of the proposal, we have been persuaded that the Ethelbert area shares closer community ties with the larger Cliftonville community than with the historic and commercial centre of the town. We are content that the proposal would more appropriately reflect the diverse nature of the various communities in Margate, and note that the proposal would continue to provide improved levels of electoral equality, both now and in five years' time. We propose transferring the area covered by the current Ethelbert ward to a revised Esplanade ward, to be renamed Cliftonville West ward. As detailed below, the proposed Cliftonville West ward would also include the part of the current Cecil ward to the north of Lausanne Road and the Royal School for Deaf Children, thereby uniting both sides of Thanet Road and those properties adjoining Addington Road within the revised ward. The revised Margate Central ward would be represented by two councillors.

86 Under our final recommendations the two-member Salmestone ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average initially, improving to 5 per cent more than the average by 2005. The revised Margate Central ward would also be represented by two councillors, and would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole (2 per cent more than the average by 2005).

### **Cliftonville, Dane Park and Northdown Park wards**

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

88 At Stage One the District Council proposed a new three-member Esplanade ward comprising parts of Pier and Ethelbert wards as detailed above, the part of Cliftonville ward to the west of Cornwall Gardens and the part of Dane Park ward to the north of Dane Road and the west of

Wyndham Avenue and Lower Northdown Avenue. It proposed combining the remaining parts of the current Cliftonville and Dane Park wards with the part of Northdown Park ward to the north of Northdown Park Road and St Mary's Avenue to form a new three-member Palm Bay ward. The Council noted that properties to the south of Northdown Park Road share similar characteristics with properties in the western part of Cliftonville ward. It also proposed a new two-member Dane Valley ward comprising the remaining part of Northdown Park ward and the part of the current Dane Park ward to the south of College Road and east of Fitzroy Avenue and Laleham Road. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

89 The Conservatives proposed combining Northdown Park ward with the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the east of Princess Margaret Avenue and to the south of Saltwood Gardens, Pluckley Gardens, Egerton Drive and Summerfield Road to form a new two-member Northdown ward. Under their proposals the current Dane Park ward would be combined with the part of Cecil ward to the east of Victoria Road and south of Cowper Road and Milton Avenue and the part of the current Cliftonville ward to the west of Sewyn Road to form a revised two-member Dane Park ward. The remaining part of Cliftonville ward would form a revised two-member Cliftonville ward.

90 As detailed above, Councillor Hudson proposed transferring the part of the current Cliftonville ward to Margate Central ward, and under his proposals the remaining part of Cliftonville ward would be combined with the part of Dane Park ward to the east of Cliftonville Avenue and north of Northdown Park Road and the part of Northdown Park ward to the north of Northdown Park Road and St Mary's Avenue to form a revised three-member Cliftonville ward. The remaining parts of Dane Park and Northdown Park wards would be combined with the part of Salmestone ward to the south of College Road to form a new three-member Margate South ward. Mr Cox proposed combining the current Cliftonville, Ethelbert and Northdown Park wards to form a revised three-member Cliftonville ward, while Dane Park ward would form part of the proposed Margate Town ward, as detailed above.

91 In our draft recommendations report we noted that there was some agreement among respondents as to the extent of community boundaries in this area, and considered that District Council's proposed Palm Bay ward had some merit. We therefore proposed adopting the Council's proposals as the basis for our draft recommendations in this area. We proposed renaming the Council's proposed Palm Bay ward as Cliftonville & Northdown ward, and also proposed uniting the whole of Cornwall Gardens within the three-member Cliftonville & Northdown ward. We also proposed amending the western boundary of the ward to run to the east of Laleham Gardens and then east along the centre of Northdown Park Road. Under our draft recommendations, the remaining part of Northdown Park ward, to the south of Northdown Park Road, would be combined with the part of Dane Park ward to the south of Addiscombe Road and Northdown Park Road to form a new three-member Dane Valley ward. The remaining parts of the current Cliftonville and Dane Park wards would be combined to form a new two-member Esplanade ward.

92 We received a number of representations in relation to our proposals for this area at Stage Three. As detailed above, a resident of Cliftonville proposed transferring the area covered by the current Ethelbert ward from the proposed Margate Central ward to a revised Esplanade ward.

Under his proposals the enlarged Esplanade ward would be renamed Cliftonville West ward, and he also proposed renaming Cliftonville & Northdown ward as Cliftonville East ward. He also proposed amending the proposed Dane Valley ward to include Dane Park from the proposed Esplanade ward. The District Council's ESO noted that various esplanades form parts of several wards in Margate, and proposed renaming Esplanade ward as Walpole Bay ward in order to avoid confusion. The Labour Group and the County Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations, but made no specific comments in relation to this area.

93 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose broadly confirming our draft recommendations for this area as final, subject to a number of amendments. As detailed above, we have proposed transferring the area covered by the current Ethelbert ward from Margate Central ward to a revised Esplanade ward, to be renamed Cliftonville West ward. We are content that the Ethelbert area, to the east of the commercial centre of Margate, shares close community ties with the more residential Cliftonville community, and consider that the proposal would more appropriately reflect local community identities and interests than our draft recommendations for this area. Under our final recommendations, the proposed Cliftonville West ward would also include the part of the current Cecil ward to the north of Lausanne Road and the Royal School for Deaf Children, as detailed above, while Dane Park would be transferred to the proposed Dane Valley ward. We also propose renaming the three-member Cliftonville & Northdown ward as Cliftonville East ward.

94 Under our final recommendations the three-member Dane Valley ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average initially, improving to 1 per cent more than the average by 2005. The three-member Cliftonville East ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average (2 per cent fewer than the average by 2005), while Cliftonville West ward, also represented by three councillors, would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole (3 per cent more than the average by 2005).

### **Beacon Road, Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards**

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

96 At Stage One the District Council proposed combining Beacon Road ward with the part of the current St Peter's ward to the north of the A255 Broadstairs Road to form a revised three-member St Peter's ward. In the east the Council proposed a new three-member Foreland ward, comprising the current Kingsgate ward, the part of Bradstowe ward to the west of Belmont Road and north of Rectory Road and the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway. The remaining part of Bradstowe ward would form part of a new Viking ward, as detailed below. Both

Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party and Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council expressed support for the Council's proposals for the Broadstairs area.

97 The Conservatives proposed a new two-member North Foreland ward, comprising the current Kingsgate ward and the part of Beacon Road ward to the east of Beacon Road, The Oaks and Cedar Close and south of Churchfields, Trinity Square and Elmwood Close. The remaining part of Beacon Road ward would be combined with Bradstowe ward, the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway and the part of St Peter's ward to the north of the High Street and east of Poplar Road, Victoria Road and Alderney Gardens to form a new two-member Broadstairs Eastcliff ward.

98 Councillor Hudson proposed a new two-member Broadstairs North ward comprising the current Beacon Road and Kingsgate wards. He also proposed combining Bradstowe ward with Pierremont ward and part of Upton ward to form a new Broadstairs East ward, as detailed below. Mr Cox proposed combining the current Beacon Road, Kingsgate and St Peter's wards to form a revised three-member St Peter's ward, and transferring Bradstowe ward to a new Broadstairs ward, as detailed below.

99 In our draft recommendations report we proposed largely retaining the current warding arrangements in this area, subject to some minor amendments to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality. We considered that existing warding arrangements in this area reflect local community identities well, and in particular noted that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line forms a significant barrier between north Broadstairs and the St Peter's area to the south. We considered that Reading Street and the more historic St Peter's community form distinct and discrete areas which share only limited communication links, and therefore proposed retaining the existing boundary between Beacon Road and St Peter's wards.

100 We also proposed enlarging the current two-member Beacon Road ward to include Lerryn Gardens, Rose Tower Court and Elmwood Farm from the current Kingsgate ward, and the eastern side of Callis Court Road and Bairds Hill from Bradstowe ward. In order to improve electoral equality we proposed enlarging the two-member Bradstowe ward to include the part of Kingsgate ward to the south of Guy Close and Francis Road. The remaining part of Kingsgate ward would form a revised single-member Kingsgate ward. We considered that the High Street forms an easily identifiable community boundary between the northern and southern parts of Broadstairs, and proposed retaining it as the southern boundary of Bradstowe ward.

101 We received a number of representations in relation to our proposals for this area at Stage Three. The Labour Group opposed our proposal to broadly retain the existing Bradstowe and Kingsgate wards, arguing that the single-member Kingsgate ward would be inappropriate, and that "there should not be single member wards". It argued that the Kingsgate area would be more appropriately linked with Bradstowe ward "as the majority of the area is made up of larger privately owned properties with many residential/nursing homes". The Labour Group also objected to the proposal to retain the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line as the boundary between Beacon Road and St Peter's wards, and argued that the District Council's original proposals for the northern part of Broadstairs should be adopted.

102 The District Council's ESO also opposed the single-member Kingsgate ward, noting that the Council's Electoral Matters Working Party "considered that two and three member wards would better reflect the needs of electors in the District". She also noted that the proposed ward would contain only one suitable venue for a polling station, and argued that electors would face practical administrative problems in the event of this venue becoming unavailable. The ESO argued that the proposed Kingsgate ward would not reflect local community ties in the northern part of Broadstairs, and proposed retaining Lerryn Gardens, Rosetower Court and Elmwood Farm within the current Beacon Road ward. Kent County Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations, while Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council made no comment on our proposals for Broadstairs.

103 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose confirming our draft recommendations for this area as final without amendment. We note the concerns expressed by the Labour Group and the District Council's ESO in relation to our proposed single-member Kingsgate ward. However, as our *Guidance* makes clear, we are not prescriptive and make no judgement as to the advantages or disadvantages of single- or multi-member wards, but seek to put forward proposals which reflect the characteristics of the local area. We consider that the Kingsgate community is both geographically and socially isolated from the northern part of Broadstairs town, and are content that the proposed single-member Kingsgate ward would provide the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area. We are also content that Lerryn Gardens, Rosetower Court and Elmwood Farm share closer community ties with the Reading Street community in Beacon Road ward than with the more isolated Kingsgate area, and we have not been persuaded to amend our draft recommendations to retain these areas in the proposed Kingsgate ward.

104 We have not been persuaded that the District Council's Stage One proposals for the northern part of Broadstairs town would provide a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our proposed Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards, and we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. As discussed previously, we consider that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line forms a strong community boundary in Broadstairs, and we note that the Council's original proposals would combine distinct areas either side of the railway line which share few transport or communication links.

105 Under our final recommendations, the two-member Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards would have 5 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (7 per cent and 4 per cent fewer than the average by 2005). The single-member Kingsgate ward would have 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average initially, improving to 5 per cent by 2005.

### **Pierremont, St Peter's and Upton wards**

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

represented by two councillors, has 21 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average, both now and in five years' time.

107 At Stage One the District Council proposed transferring part of Upton ward to a new Foreland ward and combining part of the current St Peter's ward with Beacon Road ward to form a revised St Peter's ward, as detailed above. It proposed a new two-member Viking ward comprising the existing Pierremont ward, the part of Upton ward to the east of Rosemary Avenue and Salisbury Avenue and the part of Bradstowe ward to the east of Belmont Road and south of Rectory Road. The remaining part of Upton ward, less the unparished area to the south of Park Avenue, would be combined with the part of the current St Peter's ward to the south of the A255 Broadstairs Road and Dane Park Road to form a new three-member Bromstone ward. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals in relation to this area. Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council expressed support for the District Council's proposals for the Broadstairs area, but proposed renaming the Council's Viking ward as Pierremont ward.

108 As detailed above, the Conservatives proposed transferring parts of the existing St Peter's and Upton wards to a new Broadstairs Eastcliff ward. They proposed combining the remaining part of St Peter's ward with the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road, comprising Dorothy Drive, Hopes Lane, Donnahay Road, Helmdon Close, Violet Avenue and the northern part of Pysons Road, to form a new two-member Bromstone ward. The Conservatives also proposed combining the part of Upton ward to the south of The Broadway and north of West Dumpton Lane with the part of Pierremont ward to the west of Dumpton Park Drive and north of West Cliff Road to form a new two-member Broadstairs Viking Bay ward. The remaining part of Upton ward would be transferred to a new Whitehall ward, and the remaining part of Pierremont ward would be transferred to a new Cliffside ward, as detailed below.

109 Councillor Hudson proposed combining the existing St Peter's ward with the part of Upton ward to the west of St Peter's Park Road, Gladstone Road and Salisbury Road and north of West Dumpton Lane to form a new two-member Broadstairs West ward. The part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue would be transferred to a new Dumpton ward, as detailed below, and the remaining part of Upton ward would be combined with Bradstowe and Pierremont wards to form a new three-member Broadstairs East ward. Under Mr Cox's proposals, the existing St Peter's ward would form part of a revised St Peter's ward, as detailed above, while Bradstowe, Pierremont and Upton wards would be combined to form a new three-member Broadstairs ward.

110 In our draft recommendations report we proposed transferring the part of the current Upton ward to the north of The Broadway to an enlarged three-member St Peter's ward comprising the Fairfield, Westwood and St Peter's communities. As discussed previously, we considered that the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line forms a significant boundary between north Broadstairs and the St Peter's area. We also considered that the part of Upton ward to the north of The Broadway would be more appropriately linked with the current St Peter's ward than with the Bradstowe area to the north-east of the railway line, as proposed by both the District Council and the Conservatives.

111 We also noted that there was some consensus among district-wide submissions to transfer the unparished West Dumpton area of Upton ward from Broadstairs to a Ramsgate ward. We considered that district boundaries in this area should be coterminous with the boundary of Broadstairs & St Peter's parish, and proposed transferring the West Dumpton area to a revised Sir Moses Montefiore ward, as detailed below. In order to address the high levels of electoral inequality in Pierremont and Upton wards, we proposed combining the remaining part of Upton ward with the current Pierremont ward to form an enlarged three-member Pierremont ward.

112 At Stage Three the Labour Group objected to the proposal to retain the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line as the boundary between Beacon Road and St Peter's wards, and argued that the District Council's original proposals for the northern part of Broadstairs should be adopted. The District Council's ESO noted that the proposed Pierremont ward is substantially changed from the existing ward, and proposed alternative names of Viking ward or Dumpton ward in order to avoid confusion. The County Council also broadly supported our draft recommendations.

113 Having carefully considered the representations received, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final, subject to one minor modification. As discussed previously, we consider that the District Council's proposed Foreland and St Peter's wards would combine distinct areas either side of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line which share few communication links. We have not been persuaded that the Council's proposals would provide a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations, and confirm our proposed St Peter's ward as final. In the light of the comments made by the Council's ESO, we propose renaming the enlarged three-member Pierremont ward as Viking ward. We accept that our proposals would result in significant changes to the boundaries of the existing Pierremont ward, and consider that the proposed amendment to the ward name would help to avoid confusion for the electorate of the new ward.

114 Under our final recommendations the three-member Viking ward would have 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average initially, improving to 5 per cent more than the average by 2005. The three-member St Peter's ward would have 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the average, both now and in five years' time.

### **Central Eastcliff, Central Westcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards**

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

116 At Stage One the District Council proposed transferring the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and the east of West Dumpton Lane to a revised two-member Sir Moses Montefiore ward. The Council proposed combining the existing Central Eastcliff ward, less the

part to the west of Chatham Street, with the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the north of Station Approach Road to form a new three-member Eastcliff ward. The eastern boundary of the proposed Eastcliff ward would also be amended to follow the East Gully of the Royal Harbour. It also proposed a new three-member Central Harbour ward comprising the remaining part of Central Eastcliff ward, the part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of Grange Road and the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the east of Wilfred Road and south of Station Approach Road. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

117 The Conservatives proposed a new two-member Cliffside ward comprising the part of Pierremont ward to the south of West Cliff Road and east of Dumpton Park Drive, the part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward to the east of Dumpton Road and Dumpton Park Road, and the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the north of St Luke's Avenue and Victoria Road and east of Bellevue Road and the Plains of Waterloo. The remaining part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward and the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the west of Hollicondane Road would be transferred to a new Whitehall ward, as detailed below. The remaining part of Central Eastcliff ward would be combined with the part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of the High Street, Cannon Road, North Avenue and Addington Street to form a new two-member Ramsgate Central ward. Finally, the remaining part of the current Central Westcliff ward would be combined with the part of Southwood ward to the east of the A256 Sandwich Road and the south of the A253 Canterbury Road and London Road to form a revised two-member Central Westcliff ward.

118 Councillor Hudson proposed a new three-member Dumpton ward comprising the existing Sir Moses Montefiore ward plus the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue, the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road and south of Pysons Road and the part of Central Eastcliff ward to the east of Margate Road and north of Boundary Road and Hereson Road. The remaining part of Central Eastcliff ward would be combined with the part of St Lawrence ward to the south of Park Road and the part of Central Westcliff ward to the east of Grange Road to form a new three-member Ramsgate Central ward. The remaining part of the existing Central Westcliff ward would form part of a new Nethercourt & Chilton ward, as detailed below. Mr Cox proposed combining the current Central Eastcliff and Central Westcliff wards to form a new three-member Ramsgate Central ward. Sir Moses Montefiore ward would be transferred to a new Ramsgate Moses & Northwood ward, as detailed below.

119 In our draft recommendations report we proposed broadly basing our proposals on the District Council's Central Harbour, Eastcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards. As detailed above, we proposed transferring the West Dumpton area from the current Upton ward in Broadstairs to a revised Sir Moses Montefiore ward. We noted that the West Dumpton area is a distinct community which shares no communication links with the Northwood area and we were therefore not persuaded to put forward the Council's proposal to divide West Dumpton between the proposed Northwood and Sir Moses Montefiore district wards. In order to improve electoral equality in the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward we also proposed transferring the part of the current ward to the south of College Road and Cecilia Road to a new Eastcliff ward.

120 We also proposed largely adopting the District Council's Central Harbour and Eastcliff wards. However, we considered that the A254 Margate Road forms a strong and easily identifiable boundary which clearly delineates communities in east Ramsgate, and proposed

retaining the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Margate Road within the proposed Central Harbour ward. We also proposed uniting both sides of Wilfred Road and Nursery Close within Central Harbour ward. We considered that the Council's proposal to unite all of the Royal Harbour and ferry terminal area within a single ward has some merit, and put forward the amended boundary as part of our draft recommendations.

121 At Stage Three the District Council's ESO noted that, under our draft recommendations, the primary polling venue for Sir Moses Montefiore ward, the Newlands School in Dumpton Lane, would be transferred to the proposed Eastcliff ward. In order to address this problem, the ESO argued that the Council's original proposal for Sir Moses Montefiore ward should be adopted. The ESO also noted that, under our draft recommendations, "the majority of the area known as St Lawrence is now situated in the proposed Central Harbour ward", and argued that the Council's original proposal for this area should be adopted. The Labour Group expressed broad support for our draft recommendations, but made no specific comments in relation to this area, while the County Council also broadly supported our proposals. A resident of Ramsgate opposed the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward, arguing that "the railway line has created a natural barrier between Ramsgate and Broadstairs", and that the proposed ward would combine two areas either side of this boundary.

122 Having carefully considered the representations received, we are content to largely confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final. While we recognise the concerns expressed by the District Council's ESO regarding the location of polling stations in the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward, we do not accept that the Council's original proposals would better reflect community identities and interests in this area. As detailed above, we consider that West Dumpton is a discrete area which shares no communication links with the Northwood area to its west, and is physically separated from Northwood by open farmland. In the light of the comments made by the Council's ESO, however, we propose amending the southern boundary of the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward in order to retain the Newlands School within the two-member Sir Moses Montefiore ward. Similarly, as discussed below, we do not accept that the Council's proposed St Lawrence ward would provide a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area, and we are therefore content to confirm our proposed Central Harbour ward as final, without amendment.

123 Under our final recommendations, the two-member Sir Moses Montefiore ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the district as a whole, and 5 per cent more than the average in five years' time. The three-member Central Harbour and Eastcliff wards would have 5 per cent and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively (4 per cent and 5 per cent more than the average by 2005).

### **St Lawrence and Southwood wards**

124 St Lawrence and Southwood wards lie to the south of the London Victoria to Ramsgate railway line in Ramsgate, and are each represented by two councillors. St Lawrence ward comprises the Nethercourt Estate and the Ramsgate Station area to the west of the A254 Margate Road and north of Park Road, together with Manston parish. Southwood ward includes the Chilton area of Ramsgate and the settlement of Cliffsend. St Lawrence ward has 2 per cent fewer

electors per councillor than the district average, while Southwood ward has 9 per cent more than the average (3 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more than the average by 2005).

125 At Stage One the District Council proposed a new two-member Cliffsend & Pegwell ward comprising the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Grange Road, together with the current Southwood ward less the part to the north of London Road, Rawdon Road and Queen Bertha Road. The remaining part of Southwood ward would be combined with the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the west of Wilfred Road to form a revised two-member St Lawrence ward. Manston parish would be transferred to a new Thanet Villages ward, as detailed above. The Council noted that it had been mindful of any possible future changes to parishing arrangements in the area, and had therefore not proposed dividing Cliffsend village between district wards. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

126 As detailed above, the Conservatives proposed transferring the part of Southwood ward to the west of the A256 Sandwich Road, comprising the Cliffsend area, to the new two-member Villages ward. The part of Southwood ward to the south of the A253 Canterbury Road and London Road would be transferred to a revised Central Westcliff ward. Manston parish, currently in St Lawrence ward, would also be transferred to the new Villages ward, as detailed above. The Conservatives proposed a revised two-member St Lawrence ward comprising the remaining part of Southwood ward together with the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the west of the A254 Margate Road.

127 Councillor Hudson proposed a new three-member Nethercourt & Chilton ward comprising the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Grange Road, the part of Southwood ward to the east of the A256, and the Nethercourt area of St Lawrence ward. Manston parish and the Cliffsend area to the west of Sandwich Road would be transferred to the proposed The Villages ward, as detailed above. Mr Cox proposed combining Newington, St Lawrence and Southwood wards to form a new three-member Ramsgate North ward.

128 In our draft recommendations report we considered that the District Council's proposals for this area would provide the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and we largely adopted the proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell and St Lawrence wards, subject to some minor amendments. We proposed a new two-member Cliffsend & Pegwell ward, comprising the part of Central Westcliff ward to the west of Grange Road and the part of Southwood ward to the south of London Road, Norman Road and Edith Road. While we recognised that Cliffsend is a relatively self-contained rural community, we noted that it shares strong communication links with the Pegwell area via the A253 Canterbury Road.

129 We also proposed some amendments to the District Council's proposed St Lawrence ward in order to better reflect local ties in the north of the ward. We considered that the Manston Road area shares few community ties with the Nethercourt area, and proposed transferring the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the north of Manston Road to a revised Newington ward, as detailed below. We also proposed uniting both sides of Wilfred Road and Nursery Close within the new Central Harbour ward, as detailed above.

130 At Stage Three the Labour Group broadly supported our draft recommendations, but made no specific comments in relation to this area. The District Council's ESO argued that, under our draft recommendations, "the majority of the area known as St Lawrence is now situated in the proposed Central Harbour ward" and that our proposal "severs the community links within this area". The ESO therefore proposed adopting the Council's original proposal for this area. The County Council also expressed broad support for our draft recommendations.

131 Cliffsend Residents' Association opposed our proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell ward, arguing that the Cliffsend area shares stronger community ties with the more rural parished part of the district than with the Pegwell area. It noted that "we abut the London (Manston) Airport and our residents share a common interest in the development of the airport, along with Acol, Monkton, Minster and Manston", and proposed including the Cliffsend area in the new Thanet Villages ward. St Nicolas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council also noted that "Cliffsend is the only rural village outside the proposed Thanet Villages ward", and proposed a four-member Thanet Villages ward including the Cliffsend area. A resident of Ramsgate proposed a new single-member ward comprising Cliffsend, Lydden and Manston parish.

132 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose broadly confirming our draft recommendations for this area as final. While we note the concerns expressed by the District Council's ESO in relation to our proposed St Lawrence ward, we have not been persuaded that the Council's original proposals for this area would provide a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations. We note that our proposals would provide improved electoral equality in the revised St Lawrence ward, and we are content that the part of the current St Lawrence ward to the east of Newington Road shares good communication and transport links with the remaining part of the proposed Central Harbour ward. We do, however, accept that the name St Lawrence may not reflect the communities covered by the proposed ward, and propose renaming the two-member ward as Nethercourt ward.

133 We have also considered the comments made by Cliffsend Residents' Association, St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council and the resident of Ramsgate regarding the inclusion of the Cliffsend area in the proposed Cliffsend & Pegwell ward. As discussed previously, while we recognise the concerns expressed by these respondents, we have been unable to identify alternative warding arrangements which would provide a reasonable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area. We remain content that Cliffsend shares good communication and transport links with the Pegwell area, and are confirming the proposed two-member Cliffsend & Pegwell ward as final.

134 Under our final recommendations the two-member Nethercourt ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average initially, improving to 2 per cent more than the average by 2005. Cliffsend & Pegwell ward, also represented by two councillors would have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (3 per cent more than the average by 2005).

## **Newington and Northwood wards**

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

136 At Stage One the District Council proposed a new three-member Newington & Whitehall ward comprising the current Newington ward together with the part of Northwood ward to the south of Allenby Road and west of the A254 Margate Road. The remaining part of Northwood ward would be combined with the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and west of Dumpton Lane to form a revised two-member Northwood ward. Broadstairs, St Peter's & Ramsgate Liberal Democrat Party expressed support for the District Council's proposals.

137 The Conservatives proposed enlarging the current two-member Newington ward to include the part of Northwood ward to the north of Allenby Road and west of Margate Road and Northwood Road. They also proposed transferring the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road, comprising Dorothy Drive, Hopes Lane, Donnahay Road, Helmdon Close, Violet Avenue and the northern part of Pysons Road, would be transferred to a new Bromstone ward, as detailed above. The remaining part of Northwood ward would be combined with the part of Upton ward to the south of Park Avenue and the part of Sir Moses Montefiore ward to the west of Dumpton Lane and Dumpton Park Road to form a new two-member Whitehall ward.

138 Councillor Hudson proposed transferring the part of Northwood ward to the east of the A254 Margate Road and south of Pysons Road to a new Dumpton ward, as detailed above. The remaining part of Northwood ward would be combined with Newington ward to form a new three-member Newington & Haine ward. Mr Cox proposed a new three-member Ramsgate Moses & Northwood ward comprising the current Northwood and Sir Moses Montefiore wards. Newington ward would form part of a proposed Ramsgate North ward, as detailed above.

139 In our draft recommendations report we proposed largely retaining the current Newington and Northwood wards. We considered that the existing wards reflect local community ties well, and would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality under a council size of 56. In particular, we considered that the Newington Estate area forms a distinct and discrete community to the west of Newington Road, and we were not persuaded that the District Council's proposed Newington & Whitehall and Northwood wards would appropriately reflect local identities and interests in this area. We proposed retaining the existing three-member Northwood ward without amendment, and proposed transferring the Manston Road area from St Lawrence ward to the revised two-member Newington ward, as detailed above.

140 At Stage Three the Labour Group broadly supported our draft recommendations, but made no specific comments in relation to this area. As detailed above, the District Council's ESO argued that the Council's original proposal for the Northwood area should be adopted. The County Council also expressed broad support for our draft recommendations.

141 Having carefully considered the representations received, we propose confirming our draft recommendations for this area as final, without amendment. As detailed above, we have not been persuaded that the District Council's proposed Northwood ward would better reflect community identities and interests in the West Dumpton area than our draft recommendations, and we remain content that our proposed Newington and Northwood wards would provide the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area.

142 Under our final recommendations the two-member Newington and three-member Northwood wards would have 1 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (3 per cent and 6 per cent fewer than the average by 2005).

## **Electoral Cycle**

143 At Stage One the Conservatives proposed that the whole council be elected in 2003, with elections by halves every second year following 2003. However, we noted that, until such time as the Secretary of State makes an Order under the Local Government Act 2000, we can only continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas. We therefore proposed no change to the Council's present system of whole council elections every four years.

144 At Stage Three no further comments were received in relation to the electoral cycle of the Council, and we confirm our draft recommendation as final.

## **Conclusions**

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

- We propose transferring the area covered by the current Ethelbert ward to a revised Esplanade ward, to be renamed Cliftonville West ward.
- We propose transferring Dane Park from Esplanade ward to the proposed Dane Valley ward.
- We propose amending the boundary between Eastcliff and Sir Moses Montefiore wards in order to retain the Newlands School within the proposed Sir Moses Montefiore ward.
- We propose renaming Cliftonville & Northdown ward as Cliftonville East ward, renaming the revised Esplanade ward as Cliftonville West ward, renaming Pierremont ward as Viking ward and renaming St Lawrence ward as Nethercourt ward.

146 We conclude that, in Thanet:

- there should be an increase in council size from 54 to 56;
- there should be 23 wards, four fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 26 of the existing wards should be modified;
- the Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

147 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2000 and 2005 electorate figures.

*Figure 4: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

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

148 As Figure 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from the district average from 12 to none. This level of electoral equality is expected to continue, with no ward forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent by 2005. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

**Final Recommendation**

Thanet District Council should comprise 56 councillors serving 23 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A, including the large map inserted inside the back cover of this report. The Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

## Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

149 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 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, in our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for the parish of Birchington and the town of Broadstairs & St Peter's in order to reflect our proposed district wards.

150 The parish of Birchington is currently served by 10 councillors representing two parish wards, Birchington East and Birchington West. Birchington East parish ward is currently represented by six parish councillors, while Birchington West parish ward is represented by four parish councillors. In our draft recommendations report, we proposed amending the boundary between the two parish wards in Birchington to reflect the new Birchington North and Birchington South district wards. We proposed that Birchington North parish ward should return four parish councillors, while Birchington South parish ward should return six parish councillors.

151 In response to our draft recommendations, Birchington Parish Council supported our proposal to create new Birchington North and Birchington South parish wards. As detailed above, the Labour Group and the District Council's ESO objected to our proposed Thanet Villages district ward, and argued that the Council's original proposal to combine part of Birchington parish with St Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre parishes should be adopted.

152 Having considered all the evidence received, we have confirmed our draft recommendations for district warding arrangements in Birchington as final. We therefore also propose confirming our draft recommendations for warding Birchington parish as final.

### **Final Recommendation**

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

153 Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council is currently served by 15 councillors representing six town council wards. Beacon Road, Bradstowe, St Peter's and Upton town council wards are each represented by three councillors, while Pierremont town council ward is represented by two councillors and Kingsgate town council ward is represented by a single councillor. In our draft recommendations report we proposed revised Beacon Road, Bradstowe, Kingsgate, Pierremont and St Peter's town council wards to reflect the proposed district wards in Broadstairs. We proposed that Pierremont and St Peter's wards should return four town councillors each, Beacon Road and Bradstowe wards should return three town councillors each and Kingsgate ward should return one town councillor.

154 In response to our draft recommendations, the Labour Group objected to our proposed Beacon Road, Kingsgate and St Peter’s district wards, and argued that the District Council’s original proposal for this area should be adopted. The Council’s ESO opposed the proposed Kingsgate district ward, and also proposed renaming the proposed Pierremont ward as Viking ward. Broadstairs & St Peter’s Town Council made no comment on our draft recommendations. A resident of Broadstairs proposed abolishing Broadstairs & St Peter’s Town Council and transferring responsibility for the town to the district councillors for the town.

155 Having considered all the evidence received, we have largely confirmed our draft recommendations for district warding arrangements in Broadstairs as final. While we note the proposal to abolish Broadstairs Town Council, we are unable to consider proposals to either create or abolish parish or town councils as part of this review. In light of the evidence received at Stage Three, we have proposed renaming Pierremont ward as Viking ward, and we therefore propose renaming Pierremont town council ward as Viking town council ward. We propose confirming our draft recommendations for the remaining parts of Broadstairs & St Peter’s Town Council as final.

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

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

**Final Recommendation**  
Parish and town council elections should continue to take place every four years and should be held at the same time as elections for the district ward of which they are part.

*Map 2: The Commission's Final Recommendations for Thanet*



## 6 NEXT STEPS

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

158 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 19 June 2001.

159 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

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



## APPENDIX A

### **Final Recommendations for Thanet: Detailed Mapping**

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

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Map A2 and the large map inserted inside the back cover of this report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed boundary between Birchington North and Birchington South wards.

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

*Map A1: Final Recommendations for Thanet: Key Map*

*Map A2: Proposed Ward Boundaries in Birchington*



## APPENDIX B

### Draft Recommendations for Thanet

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of only four wards, where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other changes from draft to final recommendations, which are not included in Figures B1 and B2, are that we propose renaming Cliftonville & Northdown ward as Cliftonville East ward, renaming the revised Esplanade ward as Cliftonville West ward, renaming Pierremont ward as Viking ward and renaming St Lawrence ward as Nethercourt ward. We also propose transferring Dane Park from Esplanade ward to Dane Valley ward and amending the boundary between Garlinge and Salmestone wards, although these changes would affect no electors.

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

Ward name	Constituent areas
Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	Central Eastcliff ward (part); Sir Moses Montefiore ward (part)
Esplanade (in Margate)	Cliftonville ward (part); Dane Park ward (part)
Margate Central (in Margate)	Cecil ward; Ethelbert ward; Pier ward
Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	Marine ward (part); Salmestone ward (part)

*Figure B2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: 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 %
Eastcliff (in Ramsgate)	3	5,402	1,801	4	5,643	1,881	6
Esplanade (in Margate)	2	3,507	1,754	1	3,716	1,858	5
Margate Central (in Margate)	3	5,171	1,724	-1	5,410	1,803	2
Sir Moses Montefiore (in Ramsgate)	2	3,451	1,726	0	3,662	1,831	3

*Source:* Electorate figures are based on information provided by Thanet District Council.

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



## APPENDIX C

### 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, 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.

#### *Commission 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	The Commission complies with this requirement
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose	The Commission complies 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	The Commission complies 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	The Commission complies 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	The Commission consults 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	The Commission complies with this requirement
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated	The Commission complies with this requirement