

Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Doncaster

Report to The Electoral Commission

August 2003

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What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to The Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to The Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clarke CBE
Robin Gray
Joan Jones CBE
Ann M Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

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

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Doncaster.

Summary

We began a review of Doncaster's electoral arrangements on 8 May 2002. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 11 February 2003, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation. We now submit final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations that we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.**

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

- **in 15 of the 21 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough and six wards vary by more than 20%;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 14 wards and by more than 20% in seven wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 160 – 161) are that:

- **Doncaster Borough Council should have 63 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified and one ward should retain its existing boundaries, resulting in no change to the number of wards.**

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

- **In one of the proposed 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to improve further with the number of electors per councillor in no ward expected to vary by more than 10% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Adwick upon Dearne, Brodsworth, Conisbrough Parks, Hatfield and Rossington;**
- **an increase in the number of councillors for Auckley Parish Council;**
- **a minor amendment to the boundary between the Moorends and Town parish wards of Thorne parish.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to The Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 8 October 2003, The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Adwick	3	part of Adwick ward, part of Bentley Central ward	2 and 6
2 Armthorpe	3	the parish of Armthorpe	7
3 Askern Spa	3	the parishes of Askern, Burghwallis, Norton and Owston, part of Adwick ward	1 and 2
4 Balby	3	part of Balby ward	6
5 Bentley	3	part of Bentley Central ward, part of Bentley North Road ward	2, 3, 6 and 7
6 Bessacarr & Cantley	3	Part of Bessacarr ward, part of Town Field ward	6 and 7
7 Central	3	part of Balby ward, part of Bessacarr ward; Central ward, part of Town Field ward	6
8 Conisbrough & Denaby	3	part of Conisbrough ward	5 and 6
9 Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun	3	the parishes of Barnby Dun with Kirk Sandall and Edenthorpe	3 and 7
10 Edlington & Warmsworth	3	the parishes of Edlington and Warmsworth, the proposed Conisbrough Parks North parish ward of Conisbrough Parks parish, unparished part of Southern Parks ward and part of Conisbrough ward	6 and 9
11 Finningley	3	the parishes of Auckley, Blaxton, Cantley and Finningley and a non-parished area of Doncaster from the existing South East ward	7 and 8
12 Great North Road	3	Part of Bentley Central ward; part of Bentley North Road ward, the Cusworth and Stadium parish wards of Sprotbrough & Cusworth parish, the proposed Scawsby parish ward of Brodsworth parish	6
13 Hatfield	3	the Dunsville and Duncroft parish wards of Hatfield parish and the proposed Hatfield parish ward of Hatfield parish	3 and 7
14 Mexborough	3	Mexborough ward, the proposed Adwick upon Dearne South parish ward of Adwick upon Dearne parish	5
15 Rossington	3	unchanged; the parish of Rossington	6, 7 and 10
16 Sprotbrough	3	the parishes of Barnburgh, Cadeby, Clayton with Frickley, Hampole, Hickleton, High Melton, Hooton Pagnell, Marr and Sprotborough & Cusworth; the proposed Adwick upon Dearne North parish ward of Adwick upon Dearne parish, the proposed Brodsworth parish ward of Brodsworth parish; part of Bentley North Road ward	1, 2, 5 and 6
17 Stainforth & Moorends	3	the parishes of Fenwick, Fishlake, Kirk Bramwith, Moss, Sykehouse, Stainforth, Thorpe in Balne and the Moorends parish ward of Thorne parish	2,3 and 4
18 Thorne	3	the Town parish ward of Thorne parish, the proposed Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward of Hatfield parish	3, 4, 7 and 8
19 Torme Valley	3	the parishes of Austerfield, Bawtry, Braithwell, Loversall, Stainton, Tickhill, Wadworth, the proposed Conisbrough Parks South parish ward of Conisbrough Parks parish	5, 6, 7, 9 and 10
20 Town Moor	3	Part of Bessacarr ward; part of Intake ward, part of Town Field ward; part of Wheatley ward	6 and 7
21 Wheatley	3	Wheatley ward, part of Intake ward, part of Town Field ward	6 and 7

Notes:

- 1) Doncaster, Conisbrough and Mexborough urban areas are the only unparished parts of the borough.
- 2) The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.

Table 2: Final recommendations for Doncaster

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Adwick	3	10,881	3,627	5	11,448	3,816	7
2	Armthorpe	3	9,935	3,312	-4	10,328	3,443	-3
3	Askern Spa	3	10,077	3,359	-3	10,873	3,624	2
4	Balby	3	9,975	3,325	-4	10,754	3,585	1
5	Bentley	3	9,905	3,302	-4	10,407	3,469	-3
6	Bessacarr & Cantley	3	10,836	3,612	5	11,179	3,726	5
7	Central	3	11,059	3,686	7	11,062	3,687	4
8	Conisbrough & Denaby	3	9,927	3,309	-4	10,745	3,582	1
9	Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun	3	10,629	3,543	3	10,903	3,634	2
10	Edlington & Warmsworth	3	10,738	3,579	4	10,891	3,630	2
11	Finningley	3	11,564	3,855	12	11,592	3,864	9
12	Great North Road	3	11,391	3,797	10	11,383	3,794	7
13	Hatfield	3	10,057	3,352	-3	10,264	3,421	-4
14	Mexborough	3	11,023	3,674	6	11,392	3,797	7
15	Rossington	3	10,059	3,353	-3	10,135	3,378	-5
16	Sprotbrough	3	9,341	3,114	-10	9,670	3,223	-9
17	Stainforth & Moorends	3	9,520	3,173	-8	9,658	3,219	-10
18	Thorne	3	10,397	3,466	0	11,009	3,670	3
19	Torne Valley	3	9,898	3,299	-5	10,330	3,443	-3
20	Town Moor	3	10,443	3,481	1	10,342	3,447	-3
21	Wheatley	3	10,016	3,339	-3	9,930	3,310	-7
	Totals	63	217,671	-	-	224,295	-	-
	Averages	-	-	3,455	-	-	3,560	-

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

1 Introduction

1 This report contains our final recommendations for the electoral arrangements for the borough of Doncaster. We are reviewing the four metropolitan boroughs in South Yorkshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. The programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Doncaster. Doncaster's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1978 (Report no. 284).

3 In making final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
 - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.
- the general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1996 and the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
 - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
 - promote equality of opportunity; and
 - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Doncaster was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews*. This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the borough.

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of the council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit to the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure

must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could lead to an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

9 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 8 May 2002, when we wrote to Doncaster Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified South Yorkshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Yorkshire Association of Parish & Town Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the borough, the Members of the European Parliament for the Yorkshire & Humber region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 27 August 2002. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

10 Stage Three began on 11 February 2003 with the publication of the report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Doncaster*, and ended on 7 April 2003. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

2 Current electoral arrangements

11 Doncaster is a metropolitan authority covering 57,000 hectares with a population of 292,877. Founded by the Romans at the lowest crossing point of the River Don, Doncaster is at the centre of an extensive road and rail network, with the historic Great North Road running through the heart of the town. The borough features large areas of unspoiled and attractive countryside with numerous small villages of charm and character.

12 The borough contains 43 parishes, but Doncaster town itself is unparished. The electorate of the borough is 217,671 (December 2001). The Council presently has 63 members who are elected from 21 wards, 11 of which are relatively urban in the Doncaster and Mexborough areas and the remainder being predominantly rural. All wards are three-member wards.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 3,455 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 3,560 by the year 2006 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 15 of the 21 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average, in six wards by more than 20% and in two wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in South East ward where the councillor represents 41% more electors than the borough average.

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

Map 1: Existing wards in Doncaster

Table 3: Existing electoral arrangements

	Ward name	No. of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Adwick	3	11,962	3,987	15	12,517	4,172	17
2	Armthorpe	3	13,711	4,570	32	14,132	4,711	32
3	Askern	3	8,438	2,813	-19	9,326	3,109	-13
4	Balby	3	10,402	3,467	0	11,214	3,738	5
5	Bentley Central	3	8,456	2,819	-18	8,965	2,988	-16
6	Bentley North Road	3	8,710	2,903	-16	9,023	3,008	-16
7	Bessacarr	3	10,836	3,612	5	11,179	3,726	5
8	Central	3	7,469	2,490	-28	7,454	2,485	-30
9	Conisbrough	3	10,393	3,464	0	11,206	3,735	5
10	Edlington & Warmsworth	3	8,962	2,987	-14	9,114	3,038	-15
11	Hatfield	3	11,579	3,860	12	11,797	3,932	10
12	Intake	3	7,827	2,609	-24	7,751	2,584	-27
13	Mexborough	3	10,926	3,642	5	11,296	3,765	6
14	Richmond	3	11,000	3,667	6	11,014	3,671	3
15	Rossington	3	10,059	3,353	-3	10,135	3,378	-5
16	South East	3	14,599	4,866	41	14,914	4,971	40
17	Southern Parks	3	11,952	3,984	15	12,083	4,028	13
18	Stainforth	3	12,217	4,072	18	12,484	4,161	17
19	Thorne	3	12,378	4,126	19	13,022	4,341	22
20	Town Field	3	7,631	2,544	-26	7,579	2,526	-29
21	Wheatley	3	8,164	2,721	-21	8,090	2,697	-24
	Totals	63	217,671	-	-	224,295	-	-
	Average	-	-	3,455	-	-	3,560	-

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Central ward were relatively over-represented by 28%, while electors in South East ward were relatively under-represented by 41%.

3 Draft recommendations

15 During Stage One, 19 representations were received, including borough-wide schemes from Doncaster Borough Council and The Community Group. We also received two partial schemes from an MP and a local resident, and representations from eight parish councils and one town council. A further seven representations were received from a local political party, residents associations, a community group and local residents. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Doncaster*.

16 Our draft recommendations were based on Doncaster Borough Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality. However, we departed from the Borough Council's proposals in three areas, between Hatfield and Thorne wards, in order to group similar communities in single wards. We proposed further amendments between Central and Town Moor wards and Wheatley and Town Moor wards in order to group similar communities in single wards, improve electoral equality or tie boundaries to better ground detail. We proposed that:

- Doncaster Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors, representing 21 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified, while one ward should retain its existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for the parishes of Adwick upon Dearne, Auckley, Brodsworth, Conisbrough Parks, Hatfield, Rossington and Thorne.

Draft recommendation

Doncaster Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors, serving 21 wards.

17 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 20 of the 21 wards varying by no more than 10% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 10% from the average in 2006.

4 Responses to consultation

18 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 91 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Doncaster Borough Council.

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

19 The Borough Council supported the draft recommendations but proposed one amendment between the Central and Town Moor Wards.

Liberal Democrat Group on Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

20 The Liberal Democrat Group on the Borough Council supported our proposals for Central, Town Moor and Wheatley wards.

Members of Parliament

21 Mr Jeff Ennis MP supported the proposal for 63 councillors representing 21 wards. He objected strongly to the proposals affecting the area covered by the existing Richmond Ward.

22 Mrs Caroline Flint MP put forward proposals for a revised Sprotbrough ward. She also proposed a number of amendments to Armthorpe, Bessacarr, Edlington & Warmsworth, Finningley and Thorne wards.

Parish and town councils

23 We received representations from five parish and town councils. Auckley Parish Council expressed support for the draft recommendations for the parish. The Parish Council of Norton objected to the proposed new Askern Spa ward name and suggested it be renamed Barnsdale Ward. Hatfield Town Council proposed amendments to its arrangements based on the draft recommendations. Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council objected to the draft recommendations and questioned whether the proposed development in the Bentley Rise area would take place given Government concerns about building on flood plains. Thorne - Moorends Town Council objected to the splitting of Thorne and Moorends wards and submitted a proposal which keeps these two areas together.

Councillors

24 Councillor Malcolm Jevons supported the proposals to include Adwick upon Dearne parish within the Mexborough ward. He also commented upon the location of the southern boundary. Councillor David Hughes opposed the transfer of the village of Highfields into the Bentley Central ward. He also proposed that Highfields village be restored into the Adwick ward.

Other representations

25 A further 67 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from local political groups, local organisations and residents.

26 The Conservative Association Hatfield Branch opposed the recommendations to split up Hatfield parish between Hatfield and Thorne wards. The Hatfield and Dunscroft Labour Party opposed the draft recommendation to use the M18 boundary for the new proposed Hatfield

ward. We received three further submissions from local residents objecting to the proposals to divide Hatfield parish.

27 Thorne South Tenants & Residents Association objected to the proposals to split Thorne from Moorends. Stainforth Community Partnership also objected to the proposals to transfer Moorends village into the proposed Stainforth ward and proposed an alternative. We received 32 submissions and a petition containing 160 signatures from local residents also objecting to the proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward and the proposed Thorne ward.

28 The Labour Party Don Valley Constituency expressed support for the proposals submitted by Caroline Flint MP. We received a further 37 proforma letters expressing support for Jeff Ennis MP's proposals for a new Richmond ward, broadly covering the area of our proposed Sprotsbrough ward.

29 Highfields Community Partnership objected to the proposals affecting the Highfields community and requested that the area be transferred to Adwick ward. This view was supported by Councillor Hughes. It was also supported by a petition of 514 signatures.

30 Councillor Jevons expressed support for the proposal to include Adwick upon Dearne parish within Mexborough ward. This view was also supported by Highwoods Community Base.

31 A local resident expressed support for 13 of the proposed wards, but objected to eight others. He also questioned whether the proposed development in the Bentley Rise area would take place given Government concerns about building on flood plains. We received a submission from a local resident who expressed support for the proposed Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall and Barnby Dun ward.

32 Town Field Branch Labour Party objected to the transfer of eight streets from the Belle Vue area to the proposed Central ward. This view was supported by a local resident. Another local resident supported the draft recommendations for the Belle Vue area.

33 One local resident supported the draft recommendations, in particular the proposed Edenthorpe, Barnby Dun and Kirk Sandall ward. Another objected to any changes to the existing electoral arrangements. We received two submissions supporting the Community Group's Stage One proposal for a 54-member council. However, it should be noted that the Community Group did not resubmit its Stage One proposal.

5 Analysis and final recommendations

34 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Doncaster is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended): the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

37 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 minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be considered and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

Electorate forecasts

38 Since 1975 there has been a 7% increase in the electorate of Doncaster borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 3% from 217,671 to 224,295 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects the growth to be spread throughout the borough. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, we stated in our draft recommendations report that we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

39 At Stage Three we received a submission from Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council questioning whether the proposed development in the Bentley Rise area would take place given Government concerns about building on flood plains. A local resident also questioned whether this planned development would take place.

40 We have sought clarification from the Doncaster Borough Council and based on the evidence they provided, we remain satisfied that the proposed development in Bentley Rise will be completed by 2006.

Council size

41 Doncaster Borough Council presently has 63 members. At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a council of 63 members which, it considered, provided for the correct allocation in the

borough and addressed the issues of representation between the urban and rural areas. The retention of a 63-member council was also proposed by Mr Jeff Ennis MP and a local resident, who both submitted partial borough-wide schemes based on this council size. The Community Group proposed a council size of 54, a reduction of nine. Another local resident queried whether, given the new system of internal political management, there was justification for Doncaster having 63 members.

42 Having considered all the evidence and argumentation received we proposed adopting a council size of 63, as at present. We noted the argumentation and justification put forward by the Community Group and acknowledged the fact that it considered the impact of a 54-member council on the council's functions in light of the implementation of the new system of internal management. However, we did not consider the Community Group's argumentation substantial enough to justify the implementation of a 54-member council size for Doncaster Borough in light of the recent changes to internal political management.

43 The Borough Council's Working Group considered that any reduction in the number of councillors would risk damaging the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's political structures. The Working Group also considered that any reduction would impact on councillors' ability to represent communities in Doncaster. The view towards the scrutiny function is that it is more likely to expand and to reduce the number and time available to councillors to carry out the overview and scrutiny function will weaken the essential balance and positive input to local governance.

44 The Council was of the view that the characteristics and needs of the borough of Doncaster, together with the development of a mayoral structure, means that a decrease in the number of councillors would bring less effective local governance. The Council did not consider that efficiency would be increased if the number of councillors rises and it is therefore of the view that 63 councillors representing 21 wards would best serve local governance in the borough.

45 We noted the consensus for a 63-member council and considered it to provide for the correct allocation between the urban and rural areas as this issue was addressed by the Borough Council in its submission. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a council size of 63 as proposed by the Borough Council, an MP and a local resident.

46 Following consideration of all the representations received at Stage One and having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 63 members.

47 During Stage Three we received two submissions expressing support for the Community Group's Stage One submission. The Community Group did not resubmit its proposals. Therefore, as stated above, we concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would be best met by a council of 63 members.

Electoral arrangements

48 Having agreed on a council size of 63 members, it was not possible to consider the Community Group's submission as it provided for a substantially different warding arrangement to that of the schemes based on a 63-member council. It was also not possible to recommend any of the Community Group's proposed wards as, based on a 63 member council, they would have resulted in poor electoral variances, although we did note the similarity between the Community Group scheme and the draft recommendations in the south and west of the borough. As the Borough Council's proposals and the schemes proposed by a local resident and an MP were based on a council size of 63 members, we looked closely at combining the schemes where we felt they best met the statutory criteria. We noted similarities between the schemes

based on a 63-member council in the west, south and southeast of the borough, in particular the Mexborough area.

49 After careful consideration of all the evidence received at Stage One, we considered that the Borough Council's proposals represented a better balance between the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One and were content to substantially endorse these proposals.

50 In the north of the borough the Borough Council identified the need to address the existing high electoral variance in Thorne ward. We considered the Borough Council's proposal to divide Thorne and Moorends, placing them in separate borough wards, to best address this issue as, although it separates the two communities, it avoids arbitrarily dividing the communities of Thorne or Moorends. We acknowledged that this arrangement, in the northeast of the borough, did not provide the most ideal of wards but considered it to best meet the statutory criteria in light of all proposals received and options investigated. These proposed wards in the northeastern area also facilitated a suitable arrangement in the north and east of the borough.

51 In the east of the borough we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals subject to one amendment between the proposed Hatfield and Thorne wards. The new boundary would follow the M18 motorway as we consider this to be a more identifiable boundary.

52 In the south of the borough we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals without amendment as we considered that they best satisfy the statutory criteria through respecting local communities and obtaining good levels of electoral equality. We acknowledged the fact that there was similarity between the Borough Council, MP and local resident's schemes in this area and that the wards and boundaries of the latter of the two schemes were similar to the Borough Council's.

53 In the west of the borough we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals without amendment. We considered all the proposals for this area in detail and concluded that the Borough Council's proposals best satisfied the statutory criteria as they grouped similar communities in single wards and utilised strong boundaries in the area. We considered that the two other schemes had merit, but found that they focused on the Bentley area, and produced a geographically unwieldy ward, Bentley North Road/Bentley Highfields, which did not facilitate effective and convenient local government. We noted Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council's alternative for this area but we did not consider that it facilitated a suitable warding arrangement in the surrounding area and we considered our proposed recommendations to group the Sprotbrough community in a single ward best met the statutory criteria. We also acknowledged the similarity between all schemes in the Mexborough area and considered the Borough Council's proposal to provide better community identity by grouping part of Adwick upon Dearne parish within the proposed Mexborough ward. The Borough Council's proposals also received local support and facilitated a suitable warding arrangement in the surrounding wards.

54 In the Doncaster urban area we proposed substantially adopting the Borough Council's proposals with two boundary amendments in order to group similar communities in single wards and to tie boundaries to better ground detail. The proposed amendments would be between the proposed Wheatley and Town Moor wards and the proposed Central and Town Moor wards.

55 We received a number of submissions during Stage One in relation to issues we are unable to deal with such as the amendment to external parish boundaries or the creation of single member wards.

56 At Stage Three, many of the submissions received reiterated comments made in Stage One submissions. We received a number of submissions expressing concern about our proposals for the western area, covering Sprotbrough, Mexborough and Great North Road wards. We noted the local objection to the draft recommendations, in particular the proposed Sprotbrough and

Great North Road wards. We noted the amendments proposed by Jeff Ennis MP and the local support they received. However, these proposals were identical to his Stage One submission and did not offer any additional evidence. As stated in the draft recommendations, we did not consider that his proposed Richmond ward reflected community identity. It also had a knock-on effect across the north of the borough. The same was broadly true for the proposals put forward by Caroline Flint MP. While there was some community identity argument, the knock-on effect of her proposed Sprotbrough ward was considerable. In both cases, we are not able to consider the area in isolation, but rather must consider the impact of the proposals across the district as a whole. Therefore we propose adopting our draft recommendations without modification for this area.

57 We also received a number of submissions expressing concern about our proposals for the north-east area, covering Stainforth & Moorends, Thorne and Hatfield wards. We note the objections to the proposals and consider that the arguments provided do have some merit. However, with regards to the separation of Moorends and Thorne villages, as stated in the draft recommendations, this has proved unavoidable and we have had no other proposals at this stage that sufficiently address the issues raised. Any such proposals would have a substantial knock-on effect and require the redrawing of wards in the eastern area of the borough and as already stated, we cannot consider any area in isolation. In addition, a number of these proposals led to a worsening of electoral equality. We have also examined the possibility of transferring some or all of Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward into Hatfield ward, rather than Thorne ward, but this significantly worsens electoral equality. In addition, if only transferring part of the ward, as suggested by Hatfield Town Council, it also isolates the remainder of the area from Thorne ward. We do however propose a minor boundary amendment to ensure that the Thorne/Hatfield ward boundary runs along the M18, rather than deviating as it does in our draft proposals.

58 We received both support and objection to the proposals to place the Belle Vue area in Central ward. As stated by one local resident, our proposals provide a strong identifiable boundary and in addition, any proposal to transfer this area into the proposed Town Moor ward significantly worsens electoral equality. However, we do propose a minor boundary amendment to run the boundary between Central and Bessacarr & Cantley wards along the Bawltrey Road.

59 We noted the proposed amendments to include Highfields in Adwick ward, however, upon closer investigation, it was discovered that such an amendment resulted in a poor electoral variance for Adwick ward and any attempt to address this high variance arbitrarily divided the Adwick community.

60 In the remainder of the borough we have noted the support from residents, local groups and the Borough Council for the remainder of the draft recommendations. Therefore we propose to endorse the draft recommendations for the remainder of the borough without amendment.

61 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we propose broadly confirming our draft recommendations as final subject to a few minor boundary amendments that do not affect any electors. It should be noted that, given the requirement to recommend three-member wards and given the geography of Doncaster, we have had some difficulties in producing a wholly satisfactory scheme. While we accept many of the concerns expressed to the Stage Three submissions, we have had to give consideration to the borough as a whole and concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would be best met by these proposals.

62 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- i) Askern, Hatfield, Stainforth and Thorne wards (pages 25 - 28);
- ii) Conisbrough, Mexborough and Richmond wards (pages 28 - 31);
- iii) Balby, Edlington & Warmsworth and Southern Parks wards (pages 31 - 32);
- iv) Armthorpe, Rossington and South East wards (pages 32 - 34);
- v) Adwick, Bentley Central and Bentley North Road wards (pages 34 - 35);
- vi) Bessacarr, Central, Intake, Town Field and Wheatley wards (pages 35 - 37).

63 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large maps.

Askern, Hatfield, Stainforth and Thorne wards

64 The existing wards of Askern, Hatfield, Stainforth and Thorne cover the north and north-eastern area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the four wards varies from the borough average by 19%, 12%, 18% and 19% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Askern, Hatfield and Stainforth wards while deteriorating slightly in Thorne ward to vary from the borough average by 13%, 10%, 17% and 22% respectively by 2006.

65 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by five wards, with the proposed Askern Spa, Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun, Hatfield, Stainforth & Moorends and Thorne wards being represented by three councillors each.

66 The Borough Council's proposed Askern Spa ward contained the parishes of Askern, Burghwallis, Norton and Owston. The proposed ward also included part of the existing Adwick ward west of Crossfield Lane and Ings Lane and north of the railway line. Its proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward contained the parishes of Fenwick, Fishlake, Kirk Bramwith, Moss, Stainforth and Thorpe in Balne. The proposed ward also included the entire settlement of Moorends from the existing Thorne ward. The proposed boundary follows Leonard's Drain, to the rear of properties south of Wilkinson Avenue, along Marshland Road and around the playing fields, finally running to the rear of properties west of Ferndale Drive and along Bloomhill Road and Pleasant Road until it reaches the M18 motorway.

67 The Borough Council's proposed Hatfield ward included part of the existing Hatfield ward to the west of the motorway, Rake Bridge Road and West Moor Lane. Its proposed Thorne ward included the Town parish ward of Thorne parish and that part of the existing Hatfield ward east of the motorway, Rake Bridge Road and West Moor Lane. This area also formed the proposed Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward. The Borough Council's proposed Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun ward included the parishes of Edenthorpe and Barnby Dun with Kirk Sandall.

68 At Stage One, Thorne-Moorends Town Council objected to the Borough Council's proposed division of Thorne and Moorends. Moorends North Tenants and Residents Association objected to the Borough Council's proposal to place Moorends in a ward with Stainforth and supported the suggestion that the canal should be used as a border and all properties south of the canal become part of Stainforth ward.

69 At Stage One, Moss and District Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposed Stainforth and Moorends ward and stated that it wished to remain in Askern ward but, if this was not possible, it suggested the new ward be named Stainforth, Moorends & Moss ward. Sykehouse Parish Council suggested that Stainforth ward be given a rural ward as there is a large rural area within its boundaries. Fishlake Parish Council objected to being included in the Borough Council's proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward and considered it more appropriate to be included in Thorne ward.

70 At Stage One, Doncaster North Conservative Association considered it sensible to unite Edenthorpe, Barnby Dun & Kirk Sandall in a single ward and suggested combining Thorne-Moorends with Stainforth town to form a ward. The Conservative Association also suggested that small villages should be grouped together so they could have a united voice. A local resident raised the issue of a parish boundary anomaly between Edenthorpe and Kirk Sandall parishes.

71 At Stage One, having considered all the representations we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area subject to one amendment. We proposed that the boundary between the proposed Thorne and Hatfield wards should follow the M18 motorway as we consider this to be a more solid boundary. We noted the difficulty that arises in the north-east of the borough with the existing Thorne ward. The existing Thorne ward, which currently contains the entire Thorne parish, by 2006 is expected to have an electoral variance of 22%. We endeavoured to retain Thorne parish in a single ward, but in order to address the high electoral variance in the north-east of the borough, found it necessary to divide the parish. We considered the Borough Council's proposals to best satisfy the statutory criteria as it did not further arbitrarily divide the natural communities of Thorne and Moorends and also facilitated a suitable warding arrangement in the surrounding area.

72 We noted the objections to the proposed Thorne and Stainforth & Moorends wards in the north-eastern area and we acknowledged that the proposed wards were not ideal. However, given the constraints of the borough boundary and the geographical location of Thorne and Moorends, we considered the proposed Thorne and Stainforth & Moorends wards to best satisfy the statutory criteria. We did not consider that a 22% variance could be justified if we had proposed retaining the existing Thorne ward. The proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward also grouped similar parishes in a single ward in the north of the borough and we also noted the endorsement for the Borough Council's proposals in this area from those who submitted partial schemes. We did however ask for locally generated proposals for this area at Stage Three.

73 We considered that the Borough Council's proposed Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun ward respected local communities and were content to endorse it as part of our draft recommendations. We also noted Doncaster North Conservative Association's support for this proposed ward. We also proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposed Askern Spa ward as we considered that it grouped similar communities, such as the northern parishes, in a single ward. We considered the proposed Hatfield ward to have good boundaries such as the M18 and noted that it retained the Hatfield area in a single ward.

74 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor would varied from the borough average in the proposed Askern Spa, Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun, Hatfield, Stainforth & Moorends and Thorne wards by 3%, 3%, 3%, 8% and equal to the average, respectively. This level of electoral equality was projected to improve in Askern Spa, Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun wards while deteriorating slightly in Hatfield, Stainforth & Moorends and Thorne wards to vary from the borough average by 2%, 2%, 4%, 10% and 3% by 2006.

75 At Stage Three, Thorne – Moorends Parish Council objected to the splitting of Thorne and Moorends Villages and submitted an alternative proposal. It stated that 'Moorends does not identify in any way with Stainforth; for example nobody goes there to shop or access services'. It also suggested that the change in boundaries could 'result in a loss of funding to the most deprived parts of the ward'. The parish council proposed transferring an area of the proposed Hatfield ward to the north of South Soak Drain and the railway line and to the east of the other railway line to a ward containing the Moorends area. Thorne South Tenants & Residents Association objected to the proposals to split Thorne from Moorends. The objection to the division of Thorne and Moorends was supported by 32 submissions and a petition containing 160 signatures.

76 Stainforth Community Partnership also objected to the proposals to transfer Moorends into the proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward. They suggested that the inclusion of Moorends ‘an even more deprived community, will drag Stainforth down the league table of wards identified through the Index of Multiple Deprivation [and that this is] not a good basis for inward investment’. They proposed the transfer of Duncroft and Dunville (currently in our proposed Hatfield ward) to a Stainforth ward.

77 The Conservative Association Hatfield Branch opposed the recommendations to split up Hatfield parish between Hatfield and Thorne wards. It stated that ‘Hatfield is over two miles away from Thorne’. It put forward a proposal to transfer part of Duncroft to the Stainforth & Moorends ward. The Hatfield and Duncroft Labour Party opposed the draft recommendation to use the M18 boundary for the new proposed Hatfield ward since this divides Hatfield Woodhouse from the remainder of Hatfield. We received a further three submissions from local residents opposing the draft recommendation for this area and requesting the inclusion of Hatfield Woodhouse within Hatfield ward.

78 At Stage Three, Hatfield Town Council proposed amendments to their parish wards objecting to the amendment of the boundary of Hatfield Parish ward to follow the M18 Motorway. In doing so, part of the cemetery in Cemetery road would be transferred to the Hatfield Woodhouse Parish Ward. The Town Council raised concerns that in any future reviews of parish and town council boundaries another council could gain responsibility for the cemetery.

79 In addition, at Stage Three the Parish Council of Norton objected to the proposed new Askern Spa ward name and suggested it be renamed Barnsdale Ward. It stated that ‘the new name for the ward “Askern Spa” is not inclusive, but exclusive as far as the smaller parishes are concerned’, adding ‘a more appropriate name for the ward would be “Barnsdale” reflecting the heritage of the area’. We also note a local resident’s support for the proposed Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall and Barnby Dun ward.

80 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received at Stage Three. We note the concerns put forward by Thorne – Moorends Parish Council and note its proposals to reunite the majority of Thorne with Moorends. However, while this does reunite most of Thorne with Moorends, we believe it arbitrarily divides the southern area of Thorne from the remaining area. The parish council did not provide any evidence for using this boundary. In addition, the transfer of Moorends to a new Thorne ward has the effect of leaving the proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward significantly over-represented. This could be addressed by adopting the proposals put forward by the Stainforth Community Partnership and the Conservative Association Hatfield Branch to transfer Duncroft and Dunville villages, or part of Duncroft, to a new Stainforth ward. However, removing these villages has the effect of leaving the proposed Hatfield ward significantly over-represented. In addition, this proposal did not provide any argument on the grounds of community identity for transferring this area. Therefore, we are not convinced that such a division of Hatfield would receive local support.

81 While we consider much of the argument put forward to have merit, this highlights the problem with considering any area in isolation, as this then has a knock-on effect across the remainder of the wards. Therefore, while the draft recommendations do not provide the ideal solution, given the requirement to propose three member wards, while achieving good levels of electoral equality and having regard for the statutory criteria, we consider that the draft recommendations provide the best balance.

82 We note the concerns of Hatfield Parish Council and of Hatfield & Duncroft Labour Party regarding the splitting of Hatfield Woodhouse from the remainder of Hatfield parish. We have examined the possibility of transferring Hatfield Woodhouse to the proposed Hatfield ward, but this significantly worsens the electoral equality in both Hatfield and Thorne wards. With regard to the use of the M18, we consider that contrary to the concerns of Hatfield Parish Council, this provides a strong geographical boundary. So much so, that we propose a minor amendment to

run the Hatfield/Thorne ward boundary along the length of the M18, instead of deviating at the southern end as it does under the draft recommendations.

83 We have also given consideration to the Parish Council of Norton's request to change the name of the proposed Askern Spa ward to Barnsdale Ward. However, while we acknowledge that the proposed name does not reflect all the parishes, Askern is the largest community by some way and forms the focus for this area. We are not convinced that the name Barnsdale reflects the area or would receive local support.

84 Given the support for the proposed Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun ward and the arguments outlined above, we remain satisfied that the draft recommendations provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We have therefore decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final, subject to the minor amendment to the boundary between Hatfield and Thorne wards. This does not affect any electors.

85 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in the proposed Askern Spa, Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun, Hatfield, Stainforth & Moorends and Thorne wards by 3%, 3%, 3%, 8% and equal to the average, respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Askern Spa, Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall & Barnby Dun wards while deteriorating slightly in Hatfield, Stainforth & Moorends and Thorne wards to vary from the borough average by 2%, 2%, 4%, 10% and 3% by 2006.

Conisbrough, Mexborough and Richmond wards

86 The existing wards of Conisbrough, Mexborough and Richmond cover the western area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by being equal to the borough average, 5% and 6% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Richmond ward while deteriorating in Conisbrough and Mexborough wards to vary from the borough average by 3%, 5% and 6% respectively by 2006.

87 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with the proposed Conisbrough & Denaby, Mexborough and Sprotbrough wards being represented by three councillors each.

88 The Borough Council's proposed Conisbrough & Denaby ward included the majority of the existing Conisbrough ward with the Corn Hill estate being transferred to the proposed Edlington & Warmsworth ward. Its northern boundary, shared with the proposed Mexborough ward, followed the railway line between Rowms Lane and Doncaster Road. The Borough Council proposed including the existing Mexborough ward with part of Adwick upon Dearne parish to accommodate urban overspill from Mexborough in Mexborough ward. Its proposed Sprotbrough ward included the parishes of Barnburgh, Cadeby, Clayton with Frickley, Hampole, Hickleton, High Melton, Hooton Pagnell and Marr. It also included part of Adwick upon Dearne, Brodsworth and Sprotbrough & Cusworth parishes and an unparished area of Doncaster.

89 A local resident proposed a new Richmond ward for this area which would include polling districts MF-MH from the existing Southern Parks ward, polling districts OM-OP from the existing Richmond ward and part of Brodsworth parish. Under the local resident's proposals for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in the proposed Richmond ward by 8%. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve to vary by 5% by 2006. He also proposed no change to the existing Mexborough ward but stated that, should the Commission consider it desirable, the parish of Adwick upon Dearne could be added to the proposed Mexborough ward. He also endorsed the Borough Council's proposed Conisbrough & Denaby ward. This area would also be partially covered by the local resident's proposed Askern Rural ward, as outlined earlier.

90 An MP proposed a new Richmond ward similar to that of the local resident, and also endorsed the Borough Council's Mexborough ward. His proposed Askern Rural ward would cover part of this area, as outlined earlier.

91 The Community Group proposed that this area be represented by three wards. Its proposed Richmond ward would include most of the existing Richmond ward and Scawthorpe/Scawsby and Bentley Rise from Bentley North Road ward. Its proposed Mexborough ward would include Adwick upon Dearne parish, formerly in Richmond ward while its proposed Conisbrough & Denaby ward would retain the existing ward along with an additional part of Conisbrough, formerly in Southern Parks ward.

92 Under the Community Group's proposals for a 54-member council, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in the proposed Richmond, Mexborough, Conisbrough & Denaby wards by 5%, 7% and 4% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Conisbrough & Denaby ward to vary from the borough average by 1% by 2006. The electoral variance for the proposed Mexborough and Richmond wards are expected to remain constant by 2006.

93 At Stage One, Highwoods Community Base suggested that everyone who lived in Mexborough town should vote in Mexborough ward. A local resident suggested that part of Adwick upon Dearne parish, within which he resides, be transferred to Mexborough ward. Brodsworth Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposals to divide the parish between two electoral wards and it also proposed parish boundary changes.

94 At Stage One, Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposals for its area and provided an alternative arrangement. This alternative arrangement included Sprotbrough & Cusworth parish and part of Brodsworth parish, as well as polling districts OC, OM and OP.

95 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One, we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals in this area without amendment. We considered that proposed Mexborough ward respected the entire Mexborough community as it included that part of Adwick upon Dearne parish that is urban overspill from Mexborough. We also noted the local support received for the proposed Mexborough ward. We noted the Borough Council's request to amend the southern boundary of the proposed Mexborough ward. However, we considered the river to be a strong boundary and proposed to retain it in this area. We considered that the Borough Council's proposed Conisbrough & Denaby ward respected communities in the area and utilised a strong boundary in the east of the proposed ward. The proposed ward also facilitated the inclusion of similar communities within the adjoining Edlington & Warmsworth ward and allowed the two parishes to be retained in a single ward. We noted the local support for the Borough Council's proposals in this area.

96 We considered that the Borough Council's proposed Sprotbrough ward best satisfied the statutory criteria in this area as it utilised strong boundaries and reflected local communities as it included the Sprotbrough community in a single ward, something which was applauded by the Parish Council. The proposed ward also facilitated a suitable warding arrangement in the surrounding area. We noted Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council's proposed alternative Sprotbrough ward but considered that it did not allow for a suitable warding arrangement in the surrounding area. Although we considered Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council's proposed alternative to have merit we could not consider this area in isolation and because of the knock-on effect to the surrounding area on adopting this proposal we considered the Borough Council's proposals to best satisfy the statutory criteria in light of all options received. We also noted the local resident's and MP's proposed Richmond ward but found that it resulted in an unwieldy Bentley North Road/Bentley Highfields ward which we did not consider satisfied the statutory criteria or promoted effective and convenient local government. We also considered that the proposed Askern Rural ward did not facilitate effective and convenient local government and its

implementation would have resulted in an unsuitable warding arrangement in the north-eastern area of the borough.

97 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor varied from the borough average in the proposed Conisbrough & Denaby, Mexborough and Sprotbrough wards by 4%, 6% and 10% respectively. This level of electoral equality was projected to improve in Conisbrough & Denaby and Sprotbrough wards while deteriorating in Mexborough ward to vary from the borough average by 1%, 9% and 7% by 2006.

98 At Stage Three, Jeff Ennis MP objected strongly to the proposals affecting the existing Richmond Ward. He urged us to reconsider his Stage One proposals and the creation of a new Richmond ward, stating that 'these proposals seem eminently more sensible than the Council's proposals to create in particular the new Great North Ward'. We also received 37 petition letters from local residents opposing the draft recommendations to create the Great North Road ward. They expressed support for Jeff Ennis MP's proposals to create a new Richmond ward.

99 Caroline Flint MP objected to the proposed shape of the Sprotbrough ward and the division of the Sprotbrough & Cusworth and Brodsworth Parishes by the Great North Road. She also objected to the addition of part of the urban Bentley area into the Sprotbrough ward. She put forward an alternative proposal for the Sprotbrough ward. This would comprise Adwick upon Dearne, Barnburgh, Cadley, High Melton and Sprotbrough & Cusworth parishes. She stated that 'the new Sprotbrough ward I support takes in all of the Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish, High Melton & Cadley parishes, which are directly linked to Sprotbrough and Barnburgh, the next closest parish. It is a coherent, compact ward of the correct size and reflecting real urban and semi-urban communities'. She added that 'It is beyond this submission to resolve the Bentley Central, Bentley North, Adwick and Askern wards'. However, she did suggest that 'the communities of Shelbrooke, Clayton and Brodsworth more easily sit within Askern or Adwick than within Sprotbrough'.

100 Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council objected to the proposals for Sprotbrough ward, stating that '[the proposed] ward boundary changes to the existing ward would split up geographically and socially currently linked communities, fundamentally disrupting the current sense of community identity, well founded socially and supported by the local service provision and amenities'. The parish council urged us to reconsider its Stage One submission. It also questioned whether the proposed development in the Bentley Rise area would take place given Government concerns about building on flood plains.

101 Councillor Jevons supported the proposal to include Adwick upon Dearne area within the Mexborough ward. He also commented on the location of the southern boundary. He suggested that the boundary, if not running along the railway line, should follow the course of the river so as to include Mexborough railway station and the Station house into the Mexborough ward. In addition, Highwoods Community Base supported the proposed draft recommendation for the inclusion of Adwick upon Dearne parish within the Mexborough ward.

102 A local resident opposed the move of the Adwick upon Dearne parish since it splits the parish, which is unwarded and only contains one polling district. He supported part of the proposals for Sprotbrough ward, but stated that 'the good work is undone [...] by placing the Cusworth [parish ward] into the proposed Great North Ward'. He also objected to the move of Bentley Rise into the Sprotbrough ward.

103 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received at Stage Three. We note the comments put forward by Jeff Ennis MP and the local support they received. We have also considered the comments put forward by Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council. However, these proposals are identical to their Stage One submission and did not offer any additional evidence. With regard to Jeff Ennis MP's proposals, as stated above, we consider that his

Richmond ward results in unwieldy Bentley Woodlands and Bentley Highfields wards which we did not consider satisfied the statutory criteria or promoted effective and convenient local government. We also considered that the proposed Askern Rural ward did not facilitate effective and convenient local government and its implementation would have resulted in an unsuitable warding arrangement in the north-east area of the borough.

104 The same is broadly true for the proposals put forward by Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council. As stated above, while we consider its proposals to have merit we could not consider this area in isolation and such was the knock on effect to the surrounding area on adopting this proposal that we considered the Borough Council's proposals to best satisfy the statutory criteria in light of all options received. We also note its comments regarding the proposed development in Bentley Rise, but we have sought clarification from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and are satisfied that the proposed development will take place.

105 We have also given consideration to the proposals put forward by Caroline Flint MP. While her proposal for a new Sprotbrough ward is supported by some sound community identity argument, we do not consider that we can adopt such a large amendment at this stage, particularly when it has a very considerable knock-on effect across the surrounding area. Although she did make some general comments about the surrounding area, she also stated that her proposal was not able to provide a solution for that area. Therefore, while we accept that there are some limitations within our draft recommendations, we still consider that they provide the best solution for the area as a whole.

106 We also note the support of Councillor Jevons and Highwoods Community Base for the inclusion of Adwick within Mexborough ward. We note his concerns regarding the southern boundary. However, the river Don forms the boundary for the Denaby parish and we are unable to amend parish boundaries as part of this review. In addition, we are unable to create a parish ward as the area would contain insufficient electors.

107 In light of the evidence received, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. These proposals would result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the draft recommendations and are illustrated and named on Map 2.

Balby, Edlington & Warmsworth and Southern Parks wards

108 The existing wards of Balby, Edlington & Warmsworth, and Southern Parks cover the south-western area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by being equal to the borough average, 14% and 15% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Southern Parks ward while deteriorating in Balby and Edlington & Warmsworth wards to vary from the borough average by 13%, 5% and 15% respectively by 2006.

109 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with the proposed Balby, Edlington & Warmsworth and Torne Valley wards being represented by three councillors each.

110 The Borough Council's proposed Torne Valley ward contained the parishes of Austerfield, Bawtry Braithwell, Loversall, Stainton, Tickhill and Wadworth. The proposed ward also comprised the proposed Conisbrough Parks South parish ward of Conisbrough Parks parish which contained that part of the parish south of Carr Lane. The proposed Edlington & Warmsworth ward contained the parishes of Edlington and Warmsworth and the Corn Hill estate from the existing Conisbrough ward, as previously mentioned. It also contained the proposed Conisbrough Parks North parish ward, the area north of Carr Lane, of Conisbrough Parks parish.

111 The Borough Council's proposed Balby ward contained the existing Balby ward apart from that part north of Church Lane, east of Oswin Avenue and north of High Road until it reaches Greenfield Lane, which it included in the proposed Central ward.

112 At Stage One, Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposals for its area and provided an alternative arrangement as outlined earlier.

113 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area without amendment as we considered them to group similar communities in single wards, such as the southern parishes in the proposed Torne Valley ward and the parishes of Edlington and Warmsworth in the proposed Edlington & Warmsworth ward. The proposed wards also achieved good levels of electoral equality. We also considered the Borough Council's proposals to utilise strong boundaries in this area. We noted the support for the Borough Council's proposed Balby ward and proposed to adopt this without amendment. We also noted the similarity between the schemes in this area but considered the Borough Council's to best meet the statutory criteria.

114 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor varied from the borough average in the proposed Balby, Edlington & Warmsworth and Torne Valley wards by 4%, 4% and 5% respectively. This level of electoral equality was projected to improve in all wards to vary from the borough average by 1%, 2% and 3% by 2006.

115 At Stage Three, Caroline Flint MP proposed transferring the electors in polling district MM, Clifton in the Conisbrough Parks Parish, from Torne Valley ward to Edlington & Warmsworth. She stated that 'in the interests of community coherence this would place the whole of this parish within the one ward'.

116 A local resident proposed transferring the whole of the Conisbrough Park parish to Edlington & Warmsworth ward. He stated that 'this would remove the unnecessary division of Conisbrough Park parish'. His proposals would also offer a marginal improvement to electoral equality in Thorne ward, while giving a marginal worsening of electoral equality in Edlington & Warmsworth ward.

117 We have given careful consideration to the proposals put forward by Caroline Flint MP and a local resident. We acknowledge that these proposals would reunite the whole of Conisbrough Parks parish in a single ward. We also acknowledge that Clifton village does have road links to Edlington and the east part of Conisbrough. However, we do not consider that this rural village would be better represented by transferring it from a largely rural ward with similar community identity, to one with a more urban character. In addition, we are not convinced that such a proposal would receive local support.

118 In light of the evidence received, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. These proposals would result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the draft recommendations and are illustrated and named on Map 2.

Armthorpe, Rossington and South East wards

119 The existing wards of Armthorpe, Rossington and South East cover the south-eastern area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 32%, 3% and 41% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in South East ward while deteriorating slightly in Rossington ward to vary from the borough average by 40% and 5% respectively by 2006. The electoral variance for Armthorpe ward is expected to remain constant by 2006.

120 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with the proposed Armthorpe, Finningley and Rossington wards being represented by three councillors each.

121 The Borough Council's proposed Finningley ward included the majority of the existing South East ward with the parishes of Austerfield and Bawtry, formerly in South East ward, being transferred into the proposed Torne Valley ward. Its proposed Armthorpe ward was coterminous with the parish boundary. The Borough Council also proposed retaining Rossington ward on its existing boundaries.

122 At Stage One, a local resident and MP endorsed the Borough Council's proposed Armthorpe, Finningley and Rossington wards in this area.

123 Armthorpe Parish Council proposed that the existing Armthorpe ward be dissolved and replaced by a new ward based solely on the parish of Armthorpe. One local resident proposed that the existing Rossington ward be divided into three separate wards, while Rossington Parish Council proposed new internal parishing arrangements. Auckley Parish Council enquired about a possible change to its internal parish warding arrangements.

124 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals in this area without amendment. We considered that the proposed Rossington and Armthorpe wards respected community identity by being coterminous with their respective parish boundaries and both wards also provided good levels of electoral equality. The proposed Armthorpe ward allowed for the inclusion of Edenthorpe in a ward with Barnby Dun and Kirk Sandall, an area we considered it to have more in common with than Armthorpe. We also noted the similarity between the Borough Council and Community Group's proposed Armthorpe wards and considered this to lend further support in adopting an Armthorpe ward coterminous with its parish boundaries.

125 We considered the Borough Council's proposed Finningley ward to group similar communities in a single ward and to utilise good boundaries in the unparished area of the ward. We noted the relatively high variance of 9% for this proposed ward but considered it justified in that it respected local communities and facilitated a suitable warding arrangement in the adjoining Armthorpe and Rossington areas.

126 We noted the local support and endorsement from a local resident, an MP and Armthorpe Parish Council for the Borough Council's proposals in this area.

127 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor varied from the borough average in the proposed Armthorpe, Finningley and Rossington wards by 4%, 12% and 3% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Armthorpe and Finningley wards while deteriorating slightly in Rossington ward to vary from the borough average by 3%, 9% and 5% by 2006.

128 At stage Three, Caroline Flint MP proposed transferring Cantley Village from Finningley ward into Armthorpe ward, stating that 'although part of Cantley parish, [it] is separated by a motorway not only from Branton Village, but also from the rest of Finningley ward'. She also proposed transferring an area of Finningley ward, around The Hollows and Checkstone Avenue, to Bessacarr ward to 'tidy the boundary'.

129 The Borough Council expressed support for the proposals for this area. The proposals were also supported by a local resident.

130 We have given careful consideration to the representations received at Stage Three. We note the proposals put forward by Caroline Flint MP regarding Cantley Village. However, while the village is indeed separated from Branton Village by the motorway, we note that there are

road links between the villages, across the motorway. In addition, Cantley Village has good road links to the south, to an area of Bessacarr in the proposed Finningley ward. With regard to the area around The Hollows and Checkstone Avenue, we consider the proposal to have merit, but have not been convinced by the level of argumentation.

131 In light of the evidence received, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. These proposals would result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the draft recommendations and are illustrated and named on Map 2.

Adwick, Bentley Central and Bentley North Road wards

132 The existing wards of Adwick, Bentley Central and Bentley North Road cover the urban north area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 15%, 18% and 16% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Bentley Central ward while deteriorating slightly in Adwick ward to vary from the borough average by 16% and 17% respectively by 2006. The electoral variance for Bentley North Road ward is expected to remain constant by 2006.

133 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by three wards, with the proposed Adwick, Bentley and Great North Road wards being represented by three councillors each.

134 The Borough Council's proposed Adwick ward included that part of Carcroft east of Crossfield Lane and Ings Lane, and also included the entire Adwick le Street and Woodlands East areas with the southern boundary following a dismantled railway, Great North Road and Langthwaite Lane. Its eastern boundary followed Doncaster Road, Bentley Moor Lane and a drain running south along Bentley Moor Wood until it reaches a dismantled railway.

135 The Borough Council's proposed Great North Road ward included the entire Cusworth, Scawsby and Highfield areas while its eastern boundary followed a dismantled railway. Its southern boundary followed Swaithe Dike, York Road, a track to the south side of Bridge Grove and Charnock Drive. The proposed boundary continued along this track and to the rear of properties on the north side of Valiant Gardens until it reached the parish boundary. The Borough Council's proposed Bentley Central ward included the area to the east of the proposed Great North Road ward eastern boundary and north of the River Don. Its northern boundary would be shared with Thorpe in Balne parish.

136 An MP proposed a new Richmond ward similar to that of the local resident, and also endorsed the Borough Council's Mexborough ward. Consequently, he proposed a new North Road/Bentley Highfields ward.

137 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area without amendment. We considered the Borough Council's scheme to utilise good boundaries, such as a dismantled railway, in the proposed Bentley ward, and group similar communities in a single ward such as the Adwick le Street area, in the proposed Adwick ward. The Borough Council's scheme also achieved good levels of electoral equality and facilitated a suitable warding arrangement for the remainder of the urban and rural western area and grouped the Sprotbrough area in a single ward.

138 We noted the local residents and MP's proposals for this area but did not consider these proposals to best satisfy the statutory criteria as they created a geographically unwieldy Bentley North Road/Bentley Highfields ward and did not facilitate a suitable warding arrangement for the remainder of the urban and western rural area. We also considered that their proposed North Road/Bentley Highfields wards did not provide for effective and convenient local government

due to its unwieldy shape and lack of internal links from the rural area to the urban area of the proposed ward.

139 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor varied from the borough average in the proposed Adwick, Bentley and Great North Road wards by 5%, 4% and 10% respectively. This level of electoral equality was projected to improve in Bentley and Great North Road wards while deteriorating in Adwick ward to vary from the borough average by 3%, 7% and 7% by 2006.

140 At Stage Three, Highfields Community Partnership objected to the proposals that it be transferred from Bentley Central ward to a Richmond ward or the proposed Great North ward. The Partnership's submission was supported by a petition of 514 signatures. The Partnership proposed remaining within the existing Bentley Central ward or transferring the area to the proposed Adwick ward. It stated that 'Highfields is a deprived village, struggling to regenerate its buildings, community and environment and is heavily dependent upon funding in order to achieve these aims. Changing the ward status of Highfields will affiliate the area with more affluent communities and remove us from our appropriately designated level within the government's indices of deprivation'.

141 Councillor Hughes also opposed the transfer of the village of Highfields to Great North ward. He submitted a broadly similar argument to the Highfields Community Partnership, adding that 'I believe it would have a detrimental effect on the people living there with regard all the hard work that Doncaster Council and outside bodies through community groups have put into the village. This commitment has turned Highfields from a run down estate a few years ago to a place where people now want to come to live and stay'. He proposed that Highfields village be transferred to Adwick ward alongside Woodlands East, its neighbouring village.

142 We have given careful consideration to the representations received at Stage Three. We note the proposals put forward by Highfields Community Partnership and Councillor Hughes. We have examined the possibility of transferring the Highfields area to Adwick ward and, while it improves electoral equality in Great North ward (1% under-represented by 2006), it significantly worsens it in Adwick ward (13% under-represented by 2006). We have considered the arguments supporting this proposal and, while they have some merit, issues of deprivation indices cannot be considered as part of this review. Given the significant worsening of electoral equality we do not propose adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

143 In light of the evidence received, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. These proposals would result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the draft recommendations and are illustrated and named on Map 2.

Bessacarr, Central, Intake, Town Field and Wheatley wards

144 The existing wards of Bessacarr, Central, Intake, Town Field and Wheatley cover the urban central area of the borough and each ward is represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the five wards varies from the borough average by 5%, 28%, 24%, 26% and 21% respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate in Central, Intake, Town Field and Wheatley wards to vary from the borough average by 30%, 27%, 29% and 24% respectively by 2006. The electoral variance for Bessacarr ward is expected to remain constant by 2006.

145 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by four wards, with the proposed Bessacarr & Cantley, Central, Town Moor and Wheatley wards being represented by three councillors each.

146 The Borough Council's proposed Bessacarr & Cantley ward was based on the existing Bessacarr ward apart from Sandall Beat Wood area, in the northeast of the existing ward, being

brought together in the proposed Town Moor ward. The proposed Central ward included the existing Central ward and also included the area west of Sandy Lane and south of High Street, Hall Gate, South Parade and Bennetthorpe, formerly in Town Field ward.

147 The Borough Council's proposed Town Moor ward included the existing Intake ward and the area east of Sandy Lane including the racecourse, and north of Bennetthorpe, the Town Field playing field and east of Thorne Road, formerly in Town Field ward, as well as the entire Sandall Beat Wood, as previously mentioned. The proposed Wheatley ward included the existing Wheatley ward and the area north of Hall Gate and South Parade, west of Town Field playing field and east of Thorne Road, formerly in Town Field ward.

148 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One, we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area subject to two amendments. We proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Town Moor and Wheatley wards so that it would follow Chestnut Road and to the rear of Wellcroft Close and Danesthorpe Close until it reached the existing boundary on Armthorpe Road. We considered this amendment to better reflect local communities by grouping Danesthorpe Close in the proposed Town Moor ward and also allowed for effective local government as this area has its access into the proposed Town Moor ward.

149 We also proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Central and Town Moor wards so that it would follow Bawtry Road continuously and include the Belle Vue area south of Bawtry Road and east of Sandy Lane in the proposed Central ward. We considered this amendment to utilise a stronger boundary in Bawtry Road and also grouped the Belle Vue area within a similar ward. We noted the support received for the Borough Council's proposals for this area and, subject to our two proposed amendments, considered its proposals to best meet the statutory criteria for this urban area as they achieved good levels of electoral equality and respected local communities. We noted the similarity between the Borough Council and Community Group's proposed Bessacarr & Cantley and Bessacarr wards and adopted the Community Group's boundaries where identical to that of the Borough Council.

150 Under our draft recommendations for a 63-member council, the number of electors per councillor varied from the borough average in the proposed Bessacarr & Cantley, Central, Town Moor and Wheatley wards by 5%, 7%, 1% and 3% respectively. This level of electoral equality was projected to improve in Central ward while deteriorating in Town Moor and Wheatley wards to vary from the borough average by 4%, 3% and 7% by 2006. The electoral variance for Bessacarr & Cantley ward is expected to remain constant by 2006.

151 At Stage Three, the Borough Council proposed one amendment between the Central and Town Moor wards. The amendment would transfer the Belle Vue Area south of Bawtry Road and East of Sandy Lane to Town Moor ward. The Borough Council stated that 'the proposed Central ward has brown field sites with development potential after December 2006, and the proposed Town Moor ward has virtually none. The likelihood is therefore that over time variation in electorate will improve'.

152 The Liberal Democrat Group on the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations for this area and not the Borough Council's proposed amendment.

153 We received a further two submissions regarding the Belle Vue area. One local resident objected to Belle Vue being included in the proposed Central ward and proposed that the Belle Vue area should be included in the proposed new Town Moor ward with the Welbeck Road and Alderson Drive areas. He stated that 'Belle Vue has very little in common with the rest of Central ward especially in regards to type and age of housing. He added that 'the inclusion of St Peter's School on Sandy Lane with Bessacarr ward [is an] anomaly'. Another local resident expressed support for the draft recommendations, stating that 'I am pleased to note that you are amending the boundary between the proposed Central and Town Moor wards so that it would follow

Bawtry Road continuously and include Belle Vue area south of Bawtry Road and East of Sandy Lane in the proposed Central ward'.

154 As stated earlier, Caroline Flint MP proposed transferring an area of Finningley ward, around The Hollows and Checkstone Avenue, to Bessacarr ward to 'tidy the boundary'.

155 We have given careful consideration to the representations received at Stage Three. We note the proposals put forward by the Borough Council, but as stated in our guidance, we can only base electoral arrangements on figures that fall within the five year forecasts, in this case, up to 2006. Therefore we are unable to adopt these proposals. We note that the Liberal Democrat Group on the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations. We also note the objection and support from local residents regarding our proposals for the Belle Vue area. While some of the community identity argument has merit, we consider that the draft recommendations provide the best balance between community identity and convenient and effective local government. We consider that the Bawtry Road provides an easily identifiable boundary.

156 However, we note the concerns of the local resident with regard to the area around St Peter's School on Sandy Lane and propose amending the boundary to run along Gliwice Way. This transfers the St Peter's School into Central ward, while providing a clearer boundary.

157 With regard to Caroline Flint MP's proposals for the area around The Hollows and Checkstone Avenue, we consider the proposal to have merit, but have not been convinced by the level of argumentation provided.

158 In light of the evidence received, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations as final. These proposals would result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the draft recommendations and are illustrated and named on Map 2.

Electoral cycle

159 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all Metropolitan borough have a system of elections by thirds.

Conclusions

160 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 a minor amendment to run the Hatfield/Thorne ward boundary along the length of the M18, instead of deviating at the southern end as it does under the draft recommendations;
- We propose transferring the area around St Peter's School from Bessacarr and Cantley ward to Central Ward.

161 We conclude that in Doncaster:

- there should be a council size of 63, as at present;
- there should be 21 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified.

162 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	63	63	63	63
Number of wards	21	21	21	21
Average number of electors per councillor	3,455	3,455	3,560	3,560
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	15	1	14	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	6	0	7	0

163 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 15 to one, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with no ward varying by more than 10% from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final recommendation

Doncaster Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors, serving 21 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

Parish and town council electoral arrangements

164 When reviewing parish electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. In our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for Adwick upon Dearne, Auckley, Brodsworth, Conisbrough Parks, Hatfield, Rossington and Thorne parishes to reflect the proposed borough wards.

165 The parish of Adwick upon Dearne is currently served by five councillors and is not warded. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Mexborough ward in this area we have had to create a parish ward in Adwick upon Dearne parish. We proposed that Adwick upon Dearne North parish ward should be represented by four parish councillors and Adwick upon Dearne South parish ward should be represented by one parish councillor.

166 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of the support for the proposed Mexborough ward, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Adwick upon Dearne parish as final.

Final recommendation

Adwick upon Dearne Parish Council should comprise five councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Adwick upon Dearne North (returning four councillors) and Adwick upon Dearne South (returning one councillor). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on large map 5.

167 The parish of Auckley is currently served by seven councillors and is not warded. At Stage One, Auckley Parish Council requested an increase in the number of councillors to nine and the creation of a parish ward for the former RAF Finningley Estate, to ensure that it is properly represented. We propose to increase the number of councillors to nine. However, we requested detailed mapping from the Parish Council to illustrate the proposed parish wards within its parish with a view to endorsing the proposed parish wards in the final recommendations.

168 At Stage Three, Auckley Parish Council supported the decision to increase its parish councillor allocation and upon further consideration decided against warding the parish.

169 Having considered the representations received and in light of the comments made by the Parish Council we propose to endorse the draft recommendations for Auckley parish as final.

Final recommendation

Auckley Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, two more than at present, representing the entire parish, as at present.

170 The parish of Brodsworth is currently served by nine councillors and is not warded. Having adopted the Borough Council's proposals in this area and in order to reflect our draft recommendations we proposed creating a parish ward in Brodsworth parish. We proposed that Brodsworth parish ward should be represented by two parish councillors and the proposed Scawsby parish ward should be represented by seven parish councillors.

171 At Stage Three we received no comments regarding Brodsworth Parish. Therefore, in light of this we are confirming the draft recommendation for warding Brodsworth parish as final.

Final recommendation

Brodsworth Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Brodsworth (returning two councillors) and Scawsby (returning seven councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundary, as illustrated and named on large maps 5 and 6.

172 The parish of Conisbrough Parks is currently served by five councillors and is not warded. Having adopted the Borough Council's proposals in this area and in order to reflect our draft recommendations, we proposed creating a parish ward in Conisbrough Parks parish. We proposed that Conisbrough Parks North parish ward should be represented by one parish councillor and Conisbrough Parks South parish ward should be represented by four parish councillors.

173 At Stage Three, Caroline Flint MP proposed transferring the electors in polling district MM, Clifton in the Conisbrough Parks Parish, from Torne Valley ward to Edlington & Warmsworth. She stated that 'in the interests of community coherence this would place the whole of this parish within the one ward'. We did not receive any comments from Conisbrough Parks Parish Council.

174 We acknowledge that this proposal would reunite the whole of Conisbrough Parks parish in a single ward. We also acknowledge that Clifton village does have road links to Edlington and

the east part of Conisbrough. However, we do not consider that this rural village would be better represented by transferring it from a largely rural ward with similar community identity, to one with a more urban character. In addition, we are not convinced that such a proposal would receive local support.

175 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of confirming the proposed wards in this area, we confirm the draft recommendation for warding Conisbrough Parks parish as final.

Final recommendation

Conisbrough Parks Parish Council should comprise five councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Conisbrough Parks North (returning one councillor) and Conisbrough Parks South (returning four councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on large maps 5, 6 and 9.

176 The parish of Hatfield is currently served by 14 councillors representing four wards with Dunscroft parish ward returning six councillors, Hatfield parish ward returning four councillors, Dunsville parish ward returning two councillors, and Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward returning two councillors. The Borough Council proposed a new warding arrangement for this area but proposed retaining the existing parish ward boundaries. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Hatfield and Thorne wards, with one amendment, the boundary between the proposed wards would now follow the M18 motorway. We proposed new Hatfield and Hatfield Woodhouse parish wards in order to reflect the proposals at Borough level.

177 We therefore proposed that Hatfield Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing four wards Dunscroft parish ward returning six councillors, Dunsville parish ward returning two councillors, Hatfield parish ward returning three councillors, and Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward returning three councillors.

178 At Stage Three, Hatfield Town Council proposed amendments to their parish wards. They also disagreed with the number of councillors representing each ward. It stated that 'The present arrangement is that Hatfield parish ward returns four councillors and Hatfield Woodhouse parish ward returns two councillors'. The Town Council also objected to changing the boundary of Hatfield Parish Ward to follow the M18 Motorway. In doing so, part of the cemetery in Cemetery Road would be transferred to the Hatfield Woodhouse Parish Ward. The Town council raised concerns in any future reviews of Parish and Town Council boundaries where another council could be responsible for the cemetery.

179 The Conservative Association Hatfield Branch also questioned the allocation of Councillors for Hatfield and Hatfield Woodhouse parish wards. It also opposed the recommendations to split up Hatfield parish between Hatfield and Thorne wards. It stated that 'Hatfield is over two miles away from Thorne'. It put forward a proposal to transfer part of Dunscroft to the Stainforth & Moorends ward. The Hatfield and Dunscroft Labour Party opposed the draft recommendation to use the M18 boundary for the new proposed Hatfield ward since this divides Hatfield Woodhouse from the remainder of Hatfield. We received a further three submissions from local residents opposing the draft recommendation for this area and requesting the inclusion of Hatfield Woodhouse within Hatfield ward.

180 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received at Stage Three. We note that our draft recommendations contained an error and Hatfield parish ward should return four councillors, while Hatfield Woodhouse parish should return two councillors. As stated above, we note the concerns of Hatfield Parish Council and of Hatfield & Dunscroft Labour Party regarding the splitting of Hatfield Woodhouse from the remainder of Hatfield parish. We have examined the possibility of transferring Hatfield Woodhouse to the proposed Hatfield ward, but this significantly worsens the electoral equality in both Hatfield and Thorne wards. With regard to the use of the M18, we consider that, contrary to the concerns of Hatfield Parish Council and Hatfield &

Dunscroft Labour Party, this provides a strong geographical boundary. So much so, that we propose a minor amendment to run the Hatfield/Thorne ward boundary along the length of the M18, instead of deviating at the southern end as it does under the draft recommendations.

Final recommendation

Hatfield Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Dunscroft (returning six councillors), Dunsville (returning two councillors), Hatfield (returning three councillors), and Hatfield Woodhouse (returning three councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundary, as illustrated and named on large maps 3, 4, 7 and 8.

181 The parish of Rossington is currently served by 15 councillors representing two wards. The parish is currently warded with Rossington East parish ward returning three parish councillors and Rossington West parish ward returning 12 parish councillors. At Stage One, the Parish Council proposed abolishing the existing parish wards and having the parish, as a whole, represented by 15 parish councillors.

182 We therefore proposed adopting the Parish Council's proposal to abolish the existing parish wards leaving Rossington parish unwarded and represented by 15 councillors, as at present.

183 Having considered all the evidence received, and in light of confirming the proposed wards in this area, we confirm the draft recommendation for Rossington Parish Council as final.

Final recommendation

Rossington Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing the parish as a whole.

184 The parish of Thorne is currently served by 15 councillors representing two wards. The parish is currently warded with Town parish ward returning nine parish councillors and Moorends parish ward returning six parish councillors. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposals in this area at borough level we proposed one minor boundary amendment to the boundary between the two existing parish wards. The parish ward boundaries would now follow the proposed borough ward boundaries between the proposed Stainforth & Moorends ward and Thorne ward.

185 At Stage Three we received a number of submissions objecting to the draft recommendations for this area. However, as stated above, we did not consider that we could adopt these proposals without having a considerable knock-on effect across the area. Therefore, having considered all the evidence received, and in light of confirming the proposed wards in this area, we confirm the draft recommendation for Thorne parish as final.

Draft recommendation

Thorne Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Town (returning nine councillors) and Moorends (returning six councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on large maps 3, 4 and 8.

Map 2: Final recommendations for Doncaster

6 What happens next?

186 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Doncaster and submitted our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

187 It is now up to The Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 8 October 2003, and The Electoral Commission will normally consider all written representations made to them by that date. They particularly welcome any comments on the first draft of the Order, which will implement the new arrangements.

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

**The Secretary
The Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Fax: 020 7271 0667

**Email: implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk
(This address should only be used for this purpose)**

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Doncaster: **Detailed mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Doncaster area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries for the Doncaster area.

The **large maps** illustrate the proposed warding arrangements for Doncaster.

Map A1: Final recommendations for Doncaster: Key map

Appendix B

Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral change Order

Preamble

This describes the process by which the Order will be made, and under which powers. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the Final recommendations.

Citation and commencement

This establishes the name of the Order and when it will come into force.

Interpretation

This defines terms that are used in the Order.

Wards of the borough of Doncaster

This abolishes the existing wards, and defines the names and areas of the new wards, in conjunction with the map and the schedule.

Elections of the council of the borough of Doncaster

This sets the date on which a whole council election will be held to implement the new wards, and the dates on which councillors will retire.

Wards of the parish of ...

This describes how parishes in Doncaster are being changed.

Maps

This requires Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council to make a print of the map available for public inspection.

Electoral registers

This requires the Council to adapt the electoral register to reflect the new wards.

Revocation

This revokes the Order that defines the existing wards, with the exception of the articles that established the system of election by thirds.

Explanatory Note

This explains the purpose of each article. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the Final recommendations.

Appendix C

First draft of electoral change Order for Doncaster

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2003 No.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENGLAND

The Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Changes) Order 2003

Made - - - - *2003*

Coming into force in accordance with article 1(2)

Whereas the Boundary Committee for England(**a**), acting pursuant to section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 1992(**b**), has submitted to the Electoral Commission(**c**) recommendations dated August 2003 on its review of the borough(**d**) of Doncaster:

And whereas the Electoral Commission have decided to give effect [with modifications] to those recommendations:

And whereas a period of not less than six weeks has expired since the receipt of those recommendations:

Now, therefore, the Electoral Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by sections 17(**e**) and 26(**f**) of the Local Government Act 1992, and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby make the following Order:

Citation and commencement

- 1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Changes) Order 2003.
- (2) This Order, with the exception of articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, shall come into force –
 - (a) for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to any election to be held on the ordinary day of elections in 2004, on the day after that on which it is made;

-
- (a) The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, established by the Electoral Commission in accordance with section 14 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (S.I. 2001/3962) transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Local Government Commission for England.
- (b) 1992 c.19. This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.
- (c) The Electoral Commission was established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The functions of the Secretary of State, under sections 13 to 15 and 17 of the Local Government Act 1992 (c.19), to the extent that they relate to electoral changes within the meaning of that Act, were transferred with modifications to the Electoral Commission on 1st April 2002 (S.I. 2001/3962).
- (d) The metropolitan district of Doncaster has the status of a borough.
- (e) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962 and also otherwise in ways not relevant to this Order.
- (f) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.

- (b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of elections in 2004.
- (3) Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 shall come into force –
 - (a) for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to the election of a parish councillor for the parishes of Adwick upon Dearne, Brodsworth, Conisbrough Parks, Hatfield, Rossington, Thorne and Auckley to be held on the ordinary day of elections in 2007, on 15th October 2006;
 - (b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of elections in 2007.

Interpretation

2. In this Order –

“borough” means the borough of Doncaster;

“existing”, in relation to a ward, means the ward as it exists on the date this Order is made;

any reference to the map is a reference to the map marked “Map referred to in the Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Changes) Order 2003”, of which prints are available for inspection at –

- (a) the principal office of the Electoral Commission; and
- (b) the offices of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council; and

any reference to a numbered sheet is a reference to the sheet of the map which bears that number.

Wards of the borough of Doncaster

3.—(1) The existing wards of the borough(a) shall be abolished.

- (2) The borough shall be divided into twenty-one wards which shall bear the names set out in Schedule 1.
- (3) Each ward shall comprise the area designated on the map by reference to the name of the ward and demarcated by red lines; and the number of councillors to be elected for each ward shall be three.
- (4) Where a boundary is shown on the map as running along a road, railway line, footway, watercourse or similar geographical feature, it shall be treated as running along the centre line of the feature.

Elections of the council of the borough of Doncaster

4.—(1) Elections of all councillors for all wards of the borough shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004(b)(c).

- (2) The councillors holding office for any ward of the borough immediately before the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004 shall retire on that date and the newly elected councillors for those wards shall come into office on that date.
- (3) Of the councillors elected in 2004 one shall retire in 2006, one in 2007 and one in 2008.
- (4) Of the councillors elected in 2004 –
 - (a) the first to retire shall, subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), be the councillor elected by the smallest number of votes; and
 - (b) the second to retire shall, subject to those paragraphs, be the councillor elected by the next smallest number of votes.

(a) See the Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1979 (S.I. 1979/1027).

(b) Article 4 provides for a single election of all the councillors and for reversion to the system of election by thirds, as established by section 7 of the Local Government Act 1972 (c.70).

(c) For the ordinary day of election of councillors of local government areas, see section 37 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2), amended by section 18(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c.50) and section 17 of, and paragraphs 1 and 5 of Schedule 3 to, the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (c.29).

- (5) In the case of an equality of votes between any persons elected which makes it uncertain which of them is to retire in any year, the person to retire in that year shall be determined by lot.
- (6) If an election of councillors for any ward is not contested, the person to retire in each year shall be determined by lot.
- (7) Where under this article any question is to be determined by lot, the lot shall be drawn at the next practicable meeting of the council after the question has arisen and the drawing shall be conducted under the direction of the person presiding at the meeting.

Wards of the parish of Adwick upon Dearne

5. The parish of Adwick upon Dearne shall be divided into two parish wards which shall bear the names set out in column (1) of Schedule 2; each parish ward shall comprise the area of the borough ward specified in respect of the parish ward in column (2) of that Schedule, and the number of councillors to be elected for each parish ward shall be the number specified in respect of the parish ward in column (3) of that Schedule.

Wards of the parish of Brodsworth

6. The parish of Brodsworth shall be divided into two parish wards which shall bear the names set out in column (1) of Schedule 3; each parish ward shall comprise the area of the borough ward specified in respect of the parish ward in column (2) of that Schedule, and the number of councillors to be elected for each parish ward shall be the number specified in respect of the parish ward in column (3) of that Schedule.

Wards of the parish of Conisbrough Parks

7. The parish of Conisbrough Parks shall be divided into two parish wards which shall bear the names set out in column (1) of Schedule 4; each parish ward shall comprise the area of the borough ward specified in respect of the parish ward in column (2) of that Schedule, and the number of councillors to be elected for each parish ward shall be the number specified in respect of the parish ward in column (3) of that Schedule.

Wards of the parish of Hatfield

- 8.—(1) The existing wards of the parish of Hatfield shall be abolished.
- (2) The parish shall be divided into four parish wards which shall bear the names Duncroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Hatfield Woodhouse; and the wards shall comprise the areas designated on sheets 3, 4, 7 and 8 by reference to the name of the ward and demarcated by orange lines.
 - (3) The number of councillors to be elected for the Duncroft parish ward shall be six, for each of the Hatfield and Hatfield Woodhouse parish wards shall be three, and for the Dunsville parish ward shall be two.

Wards of the parish of Rossington

9. The existing wards of the parish of Rossington shall be abolished.

Wards of the parish of Thorne

- 10.—(1) The existing wards of the parish of Thorne shall be abolished.
- (2) The parish shall be divided into two parish wards which shall bear the names set out in column (1) of Schedule 5; each parish ward shall comprise the area of the borough ward specified in respect of the parish ward in column (2) of that Schedule, and the number of councillors to be elected for each parish ward shall be the number specified in respect of the parish ward in column (3) of that Schedule.

Numbers of parish councillors for the parish of Auckley

11. The number of parish councillors to be elected for the parish of Auckley shall be nine.

Parish elections

12.—(1) Elections of all parish councillors for the parish[es] of *insert name[s]* shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in *insert year* and every fourth year after *insert same year*.

- (2) The term of office of all parish councillors elected in accordance with any of the paragraphs above shall be four years; and they shall retire on the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in the year of retirement and the newly elected councillors shall come into office on the day on which their predecessors retire.
- (3) The term of office of every parish councillor elected on the ordinary day of election of councillors in *insert year* for the parishes of *insert name(s)* shall be three years [*use this paragraph (3) and (4) below where you are cutting short the term of office of parish councillors where elections have been held*].
- (4) Elections of all parish councillors for the parishes of *insert names as above* shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in *establish new year that elections will be held* and every fourth year after *same year*.
- (5) The ordinary elections of parish councillors for the parishes of *insert names* in *enter year elections are due to take place* shall not take place; and any such parish councillor holding office immediately before *enter the usual retirement date* who would, but for this paragraph, have retired on that date shall, unless he resigns his office or it otherwise becomes vacant, continue to hold office until the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in *enter year*.
- (6) Elections of all parish councillors for the parish of *insert names* shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004, 2006 and every fourth year after 2006.
- (7) The term of office of every parish councillor elected on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004 for the parish of *insert names as above* shall be two years; and each such councillor shall, unless he resigns his office or it otherwise becomes vacant, continue to hold office until the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2006.
- (8) Where any provision of an Order made before the making of this Order requires an election of parish councillors for a parish mentioned in paragraphs *insert relevant paragraphs that establishes an election date for a parish(es)* to be held on a date other than that for which that paragraph provides, it shall cease to have effect to that extent.
- (9) Rule 8 of the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 1986(a) (filling of casual vacancies) shall have effect, in the case of a casual vacancy occurring before *insert date 4 days after election date* in the office of a parish councillor for the parishes of *insert names of parishes* as if the references in paragraphs (1) and (4) of that rule to the day on which that councillor would regularly have retired were a reference to *insert same date as above*.

Maps

13. Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council shall make a print of the map marked “Map referred to in the Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Changes) Order 2003” available for inspection at its offices by any member of the public at any reasonable time.

(a) S.I. 1986/2215, to which there are amendments not relevant to this Order.

Electoral registers

14. The Electoral Registration Officer(a) for the borough shall make such rearrangement of, or adaptation of, the register of local government electors as may be necessary for the purposes of, and in consequence of, this Order.

Revocation

15. The Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1979(b) is revoked, save for articles 8 and 9(8).

Sealed with the seal of the Electoral Commission on the day of 2003

Chairman of the Commission

Secretary to the Commission

SCHEDULE 1

article 3

NAMES OF WARDS

Adwick	Conisbrough and Denaby	Rossington
Armthorpe	Edenthorpe, Kirk Sandall and Barnby Dun	Sprotbrough
Askern Spa	Edlington and Warmsworth	Stainforth and Moorends
Balby	Finningley	Thorne
Bentley	Great North Road	Torne Valley
Bessacarr and Cantley	Hatfield	Town Moor
Central	Mexborough	Wheatley

(a) As to electoral registration officers and the register of local government electors, *see* sections 8 to 13 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2).

(b) S.I. 1979/1027.

SCHEDULE 2

article 5

WARDS OF THE PARISH OF ADWICK UPON DEARNE
 NAMES AND AREAS OF WARDS AND NUMBERS OF
 COUNCILLORS

<i>(1)</i> <i>Name of Ward</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Area of Ward</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Number of Councillors</i>
Adwick upon Dearne North	So much of the borough ward of Sprotbrough as comprises the parish of Adwick upon Dearne	4
Adwick upon Dearne South	So much of the borough ward of Mexborough as comprises the parish of Adwick upon Dearne	1

SCHEDULE 3

article 6

WARDS OF THE PARISH OF BRODSWORTH
 NAMES AND AREAS OF WARDS AND NUMBERS OF
 COUNCILLORS

<i>(1)</i> <i>Name of Ward</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Area of Ward</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Number of Councillors</i>
Brodsworth	So much of the borough ward of Sprotbrough as comprises the parish of Brodsworth	2
Scawsby	So much of the borough ward of Great North Road as comprises the parish of Brodsworth	7

SCHEDULE 4

article 7

WARDS OF THE PARISH OF CONISBROUGH PARKS
 NAMES AND AREAS OF WARDS AND NUMBERS OF
 COUNCILLORS

<i>(1)</i> <i>Name of Ward</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Area of Ward</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Number of Councillors</i>
Conisbrough Parks North	So much of the borough ward of Edlington and Warmsworth as comprises the parish of Conisbrough Parks	1
Conisbrough Parks South	So much of the borough	4

	ward of Torne Valley as comprises the parish of Conisbrough Parks	
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SCHEDULE 5

article 9

WARDS OF THE PARISH OF THORNE

NAMES AND AREAS OF WARDS AND NUMBERS OF COUNCILLORS

<i>(1)</i> <i>Name of Ward</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Area of Ward</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Number of Councillors</i>
Moorends	So much of the borough ward of Stainforth and Moorends as comprises the parish of Thorne	6
Town	So much of the borough ward of Thorne as comprises the parish of Thorne	9

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order gives effect, [with modifications], to recommendations by the Boundary Committee for England, a committee of the Electoral Commission, for electoral changes in the borough of Doncaster.

The modifications are *indicate the modifications*.

The changes have effect in relation to local government elections to be held on and after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.

Article 3 abolishes the existing wards of the borough and provides for the creation of 21 new wards. That article and Schedule 1 also make provision for the names and areas of, and numbers of councillors for, the new wards.

Article 4 makes provision for a whole council election in 2004 and for reversion to the established system of election by thirds in subsequent years.

Articles 5 to 11 make electoral changes in the parishes of Adwick upon Dearne, Brodsworth, Conisbrough Parks, Hatfield, Rossington, Thorne and Auckley.

[Article 12 provides for elections of [certain] parish councils in the borough.]

Article 14 obliges the Electoral Registration Officer to make any necessary amendments to the electoral register to reflect the new electoral arrangements.

Article 15 revokes the Borough of Doncaster (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1979, with the exception of articles 8 and 9(8).

The areas of the new borough and parish wards are demarcated on the map described in article 2. Prints of the map may be inspected at all reasonable times at the offices of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and at the principal office of the Electoral Commission at Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.