

# Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Newcastle upon Tyne

Report to The Electoral Commission

*October 2003*

© Crown Copyright 2003

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

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

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

This report is printed on recycled paper.

Report no. 358

# Contents

	Page
What is The Boundary Committee For England?	5
Summary	7
1 Introduction	11
2 Current electoral arrangements	13
3 Draft recommendations	17
4 Responses to consultation	19
5 Analysis and final recommendations	23
6 What happens next?	49
Appendices	
A Final recommendations for Newcastle upon Tyne: Detailed mapping	51
B Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral change Order	53
C First draft of the electoral change Order for Newcastle upon Tyne	55



## 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 councils.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the city of Newcastle upon Tyne.



# Summary

We began a review of Newcastle upon Tyne's electoral arrangements on 14 May 2002. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 25 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 Newcastle upon Tyne:

- **In 18 of the 26 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the city and 12 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 18 wards and by more than 20% in 13 wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 159-162) are that:

- **Newcastle upon Tyne City Council should have 78 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 26 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of each of the existing wards should be modified.**

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

- **In 22 of the proposed 26 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the city average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all but one ward expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the city in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements for the parish of North Gosforth;**
- **a reduction in the number of councillors serving Brunswick Parish Council;**
- **an increase in the number of councillors serving Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council;**
- **revised parish warding arrangements and revised names of parish wards in the parish of Woolsington.**

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 2 December 2003. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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

**Fax: 020 7271 0667  
Email: [implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk)  
(This address should only be used for this purpose.)**

Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large map reference
1	Benwell & Scotswood	3	Part of Benwell ward; part of Elswick ward; Scotswood ward; part of West City ward.	2
2	Blakelaw	3	The parish of Blakelaw & North Fenham; part of Fenham ward; part of Wingrove ward.	2
3	Byker	3	Part of Byker ward; part of Monkchester ward; part of Walkergate ward.	3
4	Castle	3	Part of Blakelaw ward; part of Castle ward; the parishes of Brunswick, Dinnington and Hazlerigg.	1 and 2
5	Dene	3	Part of Dene ward.	3
6	Denton	3	Part of Denton ward; part of Westerhope ward.	2
7	East Gosforth	3	Part of Grange ward; part of South Gosforth ward.	3
8	Elswick	3	Part of Benwell ward; part of Elswick ward; part of West City ward.	2 and 3
9	Fawdon	3	Part of Fawdon ward; part of Grange ward.	1 and 2
10	Fenham	3	Part of Fenham ward; part of Wingrove ward.	2
11	Kenton	3	Part of Blakelaw ward; part of Fawdon ward; part of Kenton ward.	2
12	Lemington	3	Part of Lemington ward; part of Newburn ward.	2
13	Newburn	3	Part of Denton ward; part of Lemington ward; part of Newburn ward; part of Westerhope ward.	2
14	North Heaton	3	Part of Dene ward; part of Heaton ward.	3
15	North Jesmond	3	Part of Jesmond ward.	3
16	Ouseburn	3	Part of Sandyford ward.	3
17	Parklands	3	Part of Grange ward; the parish of North Gosforth.	1, 2 and 3
18	South Heaton	3	Part of Byker ward; part of Heaton ward; part of Monkchester ward.	3
19	South Jesmond	3	Part of Jesmond ward; part of Moorside ward; part of Sandyford ward.	3
20	Walker	3	Part of Byker ward; part of Monkchester ward; Walker ward.	3
21	Walkergate	3	Part of Monkchester ward; part of Walkergate ward.	3
22	West Gosforth	3	Part of Grange ward; part of Kenton ward; part of South Gosforth ward.	2 and 3
23	Westerhope	3	Part of Westerhope ward.	2
24	Westgate	3	Part of Moorside ward; part of West City ward.	2 and 3
25	Wingrove	3	Part of Fenham ward; part of Moorside ward; part of Wingrove ward.	2 and 3
26	Woolsington	3	Part of Blakelaw ward; part of Westerhope ward; the parish of Woolsington.	1 and 2

Notes:

- 1) The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.
- 2) The wards in the above table and their constituent parts take account of amended parish boundaries which have been approved by the Secretary of State and set out in *The Newcastle upon Tyne (Parishes) Order 2002*.
- 3) We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.

Table 2: Final recommendations for Newcastle upon Tyne

	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	Benwell & Scotswood	3	9,783	3,261	27	7,747	2,582	2
2	Blakelaw	3	8,159	2,720	6	7,625	2,542	0
3	Byker	3	8,211	2,737	7	7,825	2,608	3
4	Castle	3	7,391	2,464	-4	7,899	2,633	4
5	Dene	3	7,623	2,541	-1	7,584	2,528	-1
6	Denton	3	8,305	2,768	8	7,770	2,590	2
7	East Gosforth	3	7,173	2,391	-7	7,482	2,494	-2
8	Elswick	3	8,097	2,699	5	7,893	2,631	4
9	Fawdon	3	7,635	2,545	-1	7,217	2,406	-5
10	Fenham	3	8,069	2,690	5	8,081	2,694	6
11	Kenton	3	7,634	2,545	-1	7,256	2,419	-5
12	Lemington	3	7,945	2,648	3	7,623	2,541	0
13	Newburn	3	7,138	2,379	-7	6,741	2,247	-12
14	North Heaton	3	7,660	2,553	0	7,400	2,467	-3
15	North Jesmond	3	7,400	2,467	-4	7,690	2,563	1
16	Ouseburn	3	6,627	2,209	-14	7,278	2,426	-5
17	Parklands	3	6,430	2,143	-16	7,759	2,586	2
18	South Heaton	3	7,250	2,417	-6	7,403	2,468	-3
19	South Jesmond	3	7,560	2,520	-2	7,825	2,608	3
20	Walker	3	8,448	2,816	10	7,830	2,610	3
21	Walkergate	3	7,520	2,507	-2	7,798	2,599	2
22	West Gosforth	3	7,678	2,559	0	7,582	2,527	-1
23	Westerhope	3	8,039	2,680	4	7,814	2,605	2
24	Westgate	3	6,424	2,141	-17	7,682	2,561	1
25	Wingrove	3	8,131	2,710	6	7,757	2,586	2
26	Woolsington	3	7,788	2,596	1	7,679	2,560	1
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>200,118</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>198,240</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,542</b>	<b>-</b>

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 city. 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 city of Newcastle upon Tyne. We are reviewing the five metropolitan boroughs in Tyne & Wear 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 Newcastle upon Tyne. Newcastle upon Tyne's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1979 (Report no. 357).

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 Newcastle upon Tyne 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 councils in the city.

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the district 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, or 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 city ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan city 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 14 May 2002, when we wrote to Newcastle City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Northumbria Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Northumberland Association of Local Councils, parish councils in the city, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the city, Members of the European Parliament for the North East Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Newcastle City Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 16 September 2002. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

10 Stage Three began on 25 February 2003 with the publication of the report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Newcastle upon Tyne*, and ended on 22 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 The city of Newcastle upon Tyne is bounded to the east by the boroughs of North and South Tyneside, to the south by the River Tyne and to the north and west by the borough of Castle Morpeth. The area of the city is split roughly into a relatively rural half in the west and north and an urban half in the south and east. Covering some 11,348 hectares, and with a population of some 279,500, Newcastle has a population density of almost 25 persons per hectare. The city contains six parishes, but the majority of the city is unparished. The unparished area comprises 92% of the city's total electorate.

12 The electorate of the city is 200,118 (December 2001). The Council presently has 78 members who are elected from 26 wards, three of which are relatively rural in the west and north of the city and the remainder of which are predominantly urban. All wards are three-member wards.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,566 electors, which the City Council forecasts will decrease to 2,542 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 18 of the 26 wards varies by more than 10% from the city average, 12 wards by more than 20% and seven wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in Dene ward, where each councillor represents 60% more electors than the city 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 city 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 Newcastle upon Tyne*

Table 3: Existing electoral arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Benwell	3	5,334	1,778	-31	4,603	1,534	-40
2	Blakelaw	3	8,637	2,879	12	8,048	2,683	6
3	Byker	3	6,199	2,066	-19	6,021	2,007	-21
4	Castle	3	8,981	2,994	17	10,542	3,514	38
5	Dene	3	12,304	4,101	60	12,187	4,062	60
6	Denton	3	7,597	2,532	-1	7,059	2,353	-7
7	Elswick	3	5,258	1,753	-32	4,684	1,561	-39
8	Fawdon	3	7,249	2,416	-6	6,895	2,298	-10
9	Fenham	3	8,449	2,816	10	8,493	2,831	11
10	Grange	3	9,405	3,135	22	9,486	3,162	24
11	Heaton	3	9,037	3,012	17	8,960	2,987	18
12	Jesmond	3	10,493	3,498	36	10,826	3,609	42
13	Kenton	3	7,463	2,488	-3	7,107	2,369	-7
14	Lemington	3	7,470	2,490	-3	7,054	2,351	-7
15	Monkchester	3	5,877	1,959	-24	5,705	1,902	-25
16	Moorside	3	8,892	2,964	16	8,937	2,979	17
17	Newburn	3	6,788	2,263	-12	6,522	2,174	-14
18	Sandyford	3	10,005	3,335	30	10,825	3,608	42
19	Scotswood	3	4,434	1,478	-42	3,126	1,042	-59
20	South Gosforth	3	8,176	2,725	6	8,610	2,870	13
21	Walker	3	5,493	1,831	-29	4,907	1,636	-36
22	Walkergate	3	7,802	2,601	1	8,060	2,687	6
23	West City	3	5,294	1,765	-31	6,893	2,298	-10
24	Westerhope	3	10,257	3,419	33	9,969	3,323	31
25	Wingrove	3	7,437	2,479	-3	6,976	2,325	-9
26	Woolsington	3	5,787	1,929	-25	5,745	1,915	-25
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>200,118</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>198,240</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,542</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Newcastle upon Tyne City 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 city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Scotswood ward were relatively over-represented by 42%, while electors in Dene ward were significantly under-represented by 60%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 Draft recommendations

15 During Stage One, 16 representations were received, including city-wide schemes from the City Council and Newcastle Liberal Democrats, and representations from the Newcastle Conservative Party, two parish councils, two community/residents' organisations, two city councillors, a school and a council-based community co-ordinator. Five submissions were received from 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 Newcastle upon Tyne*.

16 Our draft recommendations were based on the City Council's proposals, which achieved substantial improvement in electoral equality. However, we moved away from the City Council's scheme in a number of areas, affecting 15 wards. We proposed that:

- Newcastle City Council should be served by 78 councillors, representing 26 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified;
- there should be new warding arrangements for the parishes of North Gosforth and Woolsington and a reduction in the number of councillors serving Brunswick Parish Council.

*Draft recommendation*

Newcastle City Council should comprise 78 councillors, serving 26 wards.

17 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 22 of the 26 wards varying by no more than 10% from the city average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with only Newburn ward varying by more than 10% from the average in 2006.



## 4 Responses to consultation

18 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 95 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 Newcastle City Council.

### Newcastle City Council

19 The City Council, on the basis of public consultation, reiterated its Stage One proposal regarding the boundary between Westerhope and Woolsington wards being the Woolsington parish boundary, rather than Stamfordham Road. It moved away from its Stage One proposal for part of the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards to run along the backs of houses of Whinneyfield Road and instead proposed Scrogg Road, north of Welbeck Road. It proposed small amendments to its Stage One proposals for the boundaries between Byker and Walker wards and South Heaton and Walkergate wards. It forwarded a petition containing 224 signatures from local residents which proposed Scrogg Road as the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards. The City Council expressed support for Woolsington Parish Council's proposed renaming of the wards of its parish council, elaborated below. It notified us that, due to the residential development on a former Territorial Army Centre, involving 167 residents, the electorate forecasts relating to our proposed Parklands and West Gosforth wards require alteration.

### Newcastle Conservatives

20 The Newcastle Conservatives expressed opposition to our proposals to transfer areas of Westerhope ward in the vicinity of North Walbottle Wagonway to the adjacent wards of Denton and Newburn. One hundred and four petition slips regarding this issue were enclosed with the submission.

### Parish councils

21 We received two submissions from Woolsington Parish Council, which supported our draft recommendations regarding Woolsington ward and proposed alternative names for its parish wards. Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council supported our proposed Blakelaw, Fawdon and Kenton wards and requested an increase in parish council size from 10 to 12 members.

### Other representations

22 A further 90 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations, from local organisations, an MP, councillors and residents. Submissions received from Councillors Diane Packham, Nicholas Cott and John Shipley, Coxlodge Methodist Church, Coxlodge Tenants & Residents Association expressed opposition to our proposed boundary between Fawdon and West Gosforth wards, which includes an area of Coxlodge in Fawdon ward. Councillor Packham forwarded a petition containing 43 signatures opposing our proposed transfer of Coxlodge to Fawdon ward. We also received 15 submissions from local residents opposing this boundary. A resident supported our overall scheme for the city, especially with regard to our proposed West Gosforth ward. We received a submission from two residents who supported our draft recommendations for East Gosforth and West Gosforth wards. We received submissions from Westerhope Village Residents' Association, Westerhope Community Partnership, Westerhope Local History Society, Westerhope Excelsior Social Club & Institute and nine submissions from local residents expressing opposition to our proposed boundary between Westerhope and Woolsington wards. The Westerhope Village Residents' Association submitted a petition containing 1157 signatures opposing our proposed boundary between

Westerhope and Woosington wards. A local resident expressed opposition to our proposals to transfer areas in the existing Westerhope ward to Newburn and Denton wards.

23 Woosington Residents Association, submitting two representations, and a local resident proposed that Woosington village be contained in Castle ward. The Association submitted 50 petition slips in order to gather Woosington village residents' views on this proposal. A local resident supported a proposal for Woosington village to be placed in a ward with Newbiggin and Callerton. Councillor Anita Lower, member for Blakelaw ward, argued against our proposed boundary between Castle ward and Woosington ward and argued for the section of our proposed Castle ward south of the Metro line being included in Woosington ward. In a separate submission, she suggested renaming Blakelaw and Wingrove wards in light of the proposed boundary changes.

24 We received two submissions from Wingrove North Area Residents' Association which expressed opposition to our proposal to transfer part of the existing Wingrove ward to Blakelaw ward and enclosed a petition, containing the signatures of 61 local residents opposing our proposal to include part of Wingrove Road North in Blakelaw ward. Councillor Gerry Keating, member for Blakelaw, argued that a further section of the existing Wingrove ward, Moorside North and the eastern side of Wingrove Road North, should be part of Blakelaw ward. He also requested that we reconsider the boundaries of Castle, Westerhope and Woosington wards. The Newcastle Central Labour Party supported our proposed Kenton, Blakelaw and Wingrove wards in particular, as well as our draft recommendations in general. A submission from two local residents argued for a revised Blakelaw ward containing Moorside North and the eastern side of Wingrove Road North. They also argued for a reduction in the council size from 78 to 60 members. Professor Coombes, from the University of Newcastle, suggested alternatives to our Stage One recommendations for the boundaries between Kenton and Blakelaw, Blakelaw and Wingrove and Wingrove and Westgate wards, in order to facilitate the transfer of the Cowgate and Kenton Bar areas from Kenton ward to Blakelaw ward.

25 Walkergate Liberal Democrats and seventeen submissions from local residents echoed the City Council's proposal that the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards should be Scrogg Road, instead of the backs of houses on Whinneyfield Road. The Walkergate Liberal Democrats submitted a petition containing 170 signatures opposing our proposed Walkergate ward. Two submissions from local residents argued that the boundary between the two wards should be Scrogg Road and Sutton Street. Fourteen submissions were received from local residents opposed to our proposals to transfer a section of Walkergate ward into Byker ward. A local resident expressed opposition to our proposed South Heaton ward containing part of the existing Byker ward.

26 Walkergate Branch Ward Labour Party proposed that the seven houses next to the Welbeck Primary School be part of Byker ward instead of Walker ward. It proposed that the boundary between South Heaton and Byker wards follow the railway line so that both sides of Shields Road are contained in Byker ward, and that the Walkergate Metro station and the adjacent Lidl supermarket be included in Walkergate ward. Councillor Bob Renton, member for Dene ward, proposed altering the name of North Heaton ward to South Dene and, consequently, renaming South Heaton as Heaton. Councillor Doreen Huddart, member for Heaton ward, questioned the City Council's electorate figures in the Heaton area and stated she preferred Heaton ward to remain unchanged, but nevertheless submitted a proposal for South Heaton taking account of her estimates of the electorate. Councillor Huddart argued that it was preferable for the boundary between South Heaton and Walkergate wards to be along Benfield Road only and not behind the Walker Gate Hospital.

27 The Member of Parliament for Newcastle upon Tyne Central, Jim Cousins, supported our overall proposals including the North Jesmond, South Jesmond and Ouseburn Wards. He argued for an alternative boundary between Westgate and Wingrove wards, which would entail Moorside School, Frosterley Place, Thorpe Close and a block of sheltered accommodation (Iris

Steedman House) being placed in Wingrove ward. He additionally argued that Wingrove ward should be renamed Moorside ward.

28 A local resident argued that we should take into account the use of council services when making our decisions. We received two submissions from local residents arguing for a reduction in council size.



## 5 Analysis and final recommendations

29 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Newcastle upon Tyne 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'.

30 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.

31 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.

32 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.

33 The recommendations do not affect county, district or parish external boundaries, local taxes, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that these recommendations will have an adverse effect on house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

### Electorate forecasts

34 Since 1975 there has been a decrease of approximately 11% in the electorate of Newcastle upon Tyne, the majority of which has taken place during the last five years. The City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting a further decrease in the electorate of approximately 1% from 200,118 to 198,240 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects the most significant decline in the electorate to be in the existing Benwell, Blakelaw and Scotswood wards, although it forecasts that there will be some growth that will mostly be contained within the existing Castle and West City wards. A 20-year city-wide regeneration strategy, 'Going for Growth', will have significant effects on demolition and house-building in the city which will go beyond the time frame of this review. As such, the Council argued that 'this suggests that a further review will need to be undertaken in, say, 2010'. Under the current legislation, this option is available to the Committee if directed by The Electoral Commission, should a council request it.

35 In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to Unitary Development Plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the City Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

36 During Stage One, Councillor Young (Sandyford ward), in a submission to the Council, and Councillor Cookson, writing directly to the Committee, questioned the forecast electorate prepared by the City Council. Councillor Young considered that the forecast electorate figures for the City Council's proposed Sandyford ward were incorrect, 'due to failing to take into account the amount of planned and agreed building'. Councillor Cookson considered that 'proper account of the effects of the 'Going for Growth' strategy have not been included.' We sought clarification from the City Council on these issues, and we are content to accept the City Council's projected electorate figures. We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the City Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

37 During Stage Three, Councillor Doreen Huddart, member for Heaton ward, questioned the forecast electorate of the Heaton area. She considered that, due to the number of students settling in Heaton ward, and the consequent decline in voter registration, the City Council's electorate forecasts for the ward detailed in its Stage One submission were too high. The City Council responded to this claim and confirmed its forecasts as accurate and did not consider voter registration to be an issue. A resident in the existing Walker ward claimed that we did not take into account a substantial housing development in this area of the city when formulating our draft recommendations. The City Council responded to this claim and confirmed its forecasts as accurate.

## Council size

38 Newcastle City Council presently has 78 members. In the draft recommendations report we adopted the Council's proposal to retain a council of 78 members as we considered that it had given sufficient consideration to its internal and external operations, along with its members' representational roles and their roles in external organisations.

39 The Liberal Democrats proposed a reduction in council size from 78 to 60 councillors. They considered that the decline in electorate, along with a comparison with other 'core city' authorities, justified such a significant reduction. They also suggested that the Council had not 'adequately considered the effects of the Local Government Act's changes to political management structures'. This proposed council size was supported by the Conservatives and Councillor Cookson, while a local resident also supported a reduced council size, although he did not propose a specific number. A reduction to 60 councillors was supported by 17% of local respondents during the Council's consultation exercise.

40 We noted that a number of assertions were made by the Liberal Democrats, Conservatives and Councillor Cookson during Stage One, regarding reduced attendance at committee meetings. These assertions resulted in the suggestion that the Council could therefore run effectively with 18 fewer councillors. However, we were not persuaded by this argument and did not consider that this was sufficient justification for such a reduction. We did not consider that a reduction in council size (and consequently, committee size) would necessarily ensure full or adequate attendance at such meetings. Furthermore, the Liberal Democrats' argument that some committees are likely to expire over the next few years appeared to be based on assertion rather than fact. In addition, their argument that membership of Tyne & Wear Joint Authorities could be reduced if all the Tyne & Wear boroughs opt for a reduction in council size is dependent upon external considerations, which we could not consider.

41 The City Council provided detailed examples of backbench councillors being drawn into the work of the Executive, the overview and scrutiny membership, the area committees and advisory groups which have been established. Furthermore, we noted that retaining the existing council size was supported by 44% of local respondents. In view of these considerations, we were satisfied that there was sufficient justification to retain the existing council size. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a council size of 78.

42 During Stage Three, we received three submissions regarding council size from four residents, one of which proposed a reduction in the council size to 60 members on the basis of non-attendance of the public at council meetings. Another resident argued that the projected decline of the population in the Newcastle area meant that the City Council required fewer than 78 councillors. The latter respondent also suggested merging Gateshead and Newcastle into a single council and reducing the number of councillors per ward from three to one in order to increase voter participation at elections. Unfortunately, we are unable to consider a merging of two councils as part of this review. Two residents concluded that the council should be reduced to 60 members, stating that the city councillors' 'effectiveness can be queried'. Consequently, they argued a reduction in council size would release public funds for other activities as each councillor receives substantial allowances.

43 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three regarding council size, we consider that none of the submissions provided sufficient evidence for us to consider departing from our proposals for council size outlined in our draft recommendations. We are therefore content to confirm a council size of 78 as final.

## Electoral arrangements

44 In formulating our draft recommendations, we noted that the city contains a number of geographical features, in particular the A1 and the Tyne & Wear Metro light rail system. Although we did receive a scheme which utilises the A1 as a boundary for almost the entire length of the city, it was not possible to avoid breaching Metro lines in the city, due to the requirement that the number of councillors returned by metropolitan borough wards should be divisible by three. We tried to ensure that, where Metro lines breach proposed wards, there are sufficient crossing points to avoid division in the wards.

45 Having determined the council size on which to base our proposals, we proposed to broadly base our draft recommendations on the City Council's Stage One submission. We noted that it had utilised the A1 as a boundary that divides the city into two parts, and that it had correctly allocated sufficient councillors to the east and the west of the city.

46 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. After considering those representations, we are broadly confirming our draft recommendations for Newcastle City Council as final, subject to one boundary amendment, renaming four parish wards and increasing the number of members returned to a parish council. For city warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- i. Castle, Grange and Woosington wards (pages 25 to 28)
- ii. Denton, Lemington, Newburn and Westerhope wards (pages 29 & 30)
- iii. Blakelaw, Fawdon and Kenton wards (pages 30 to 33)
- iv. Fenham, Moorside and Wingrove wards (pages 33 to 36)
- v. Benwell, Elswick and Scotswood wards (page 36)
- vi. Dene, Jesmond and South Gosforth wards (pages 37 & 38)
- vii. Heaton, Sandyford and West City wards (pages 38 to 40)
- viii. Byker, Monkchester, Walker and Walkergate wards (pages 40 to 43)

47 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.

### **Castle, Grange and Woosington wards**

48 These three wards are situated in the north of the city. Castle ward is bounded by the boroughs of North Tyneside to the east and Castle Morpeth to the north and west. Woosington

ward is also bounded by Castle Morpeth to the west. Castle ward comprises the parishes of Brunswick, Dinnington, Hazlerigg and North Gosforth, along with an unparished area in the south of the ward. Woolsington ward comprises Woolsington parish. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 17% above the city average in Castle ward (38% above by 2006), 22% above in Grange ward (24% above by 2006) and 25% below in Woolsington ward, both in 2001 and by 2006.

49 At Stage One the City Council proposed that Woolsington parish be joined with part of the unparished area in the existing Blakelaw ward to form a revised Woolsington ward. It then proposed a modified Castle ward which would also gain part of the unparished area in the existing Blakelaw ward, although North Gosforth parish would be transferred to its proposed Parklands ward. Its proposed Parklands ward would also contain part of the existing Grange ward. The City Council stated that this ward 'contains the northern suburbs of the city that in themselves form a natural community'. The remainder of the existing Grange ward would be transferred to its proposed East Gosforth ward, while the majority of the remainder of the existing Grange ward to the west of the Great North Road would be transferred to its proposed West Gosforth ward, to be discussed later. A small part of the existing Grange ward would be transferred to the City Council's revised Fawdon ward, to be discussed later.

50 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 14% below the city average in Castle ward (6% below by 2006), 18% below in Parklands ward (2% below by 2006) and 2% above in Woolsington ward (1% above by 2006).

51 North Gosforth Parish Council proposed that its two parish wards be abolished, which will be discussed later. This proposal could be facilitated as part of the City Council's scheme. Woolsington Village Residents Association proposed that the parish ward of Woolsington parish which covers the Woolsington area be transferred to Castle ward as 'in the past Woolsington has been dominated by Newbiggin Hall'.

52 Two local residents jointly commented on the City Council's consultation scheme proposals for the existing Grange and South Gosforth wards, and proposed East and West Gosforth wards, both of which would include part of the existing Grange ward. This submission was also received by the City Council as part of its consultation exercise, and the Council amended its submission to broadly reflect this proposal. Another local resident, as part of his proposals for revised Denton and Westerhope wards (to be discussed later) proposed that those electors to the north of Stamfordham Road (currently in Westerhope ward) be transferred to a revised Woolsington ward.

53 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted the good levels of electoral equality which the City Council's proposed wards were forecast to achieve by 2006. We also noted that the proposals in this area respected parish boundaries and, broadly speaking, utilised identifiable boundaries. We therefore based our recommendations in this area on the City Council's proposals, with three amendments in order to better reflect community identity and to facilitate our proposals elsewhere in the city. We noted the request from Woolsington Village Residents Association that part of Woolsington parish be transferred to the proposed Castle ward. However, we noted that this request has come from only part of the parish, and does not appear to have support from elsewhere in the parish. Furthermore, we considered that the adoption of this proposal would have consequential effects on the proposals for the remainder of this area, which in turn would not facilitate a good scheme across the city as a whole.

54 Firstly, we proposed that Links Green and Links Green Walk should be transferred from the proposed East Gosforth ward to our proposed Parklands ward to ensure that these roads have good access to the remainder of their ward. We also proposed amending the proposed boundary between the revised Castle and Woolsington wards, in the unparished area, so that the A696 should form the new boundary instead of Ponteland Road. We considered that this is a

stronger boundary than that proposed by the City Council, and also ensures that those properties to the west of Ponteland Road are not isolated from the remainder of the ward. It also unites both residential areas around Tudor Way in the same ward.

55 We also proposed amending the boundary between the revised Woosington and Westerhope wards, so that Stamfordham Road would be the boundary instead of Woosington parish boundary, as proposed by a local resident. Having visited the area, officers from the Committee considered this to be a more identifiable boundary than the parish boundary. This amendment would facilitate our proposals for Westerhope ward in addition to providing for improved electoral equality in both of these wards.

56 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 4% below the city average in Castle ward (4% above by 2006), 16% below in Parklands ward (equal to the average by 2006) and 1% above in Woosington ward, both in 2001 and by 2006.

57 At Stage Three, we received 23 representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. The City Council notified us that, due to the residential development on a former Territorial Army Centre, involving 167 residents, the electorate forecasts relating to our proposed Parklands and West Gosforth wards require alteration. Consequently, the number of electors in our proposed Parklands and West Gosforth wards are forecast to vary from the city average by 2% and 1% respectively by 2006, compared to the estimated variance of equal to and 2% respectively, as set out in our draft recommendations. It argued, following a consultation exercise, in favour of its proposal for Westerhope ward, as outlined in its Stage One submission. It argued against our proposal to use Stamfordham Road as the boundary between Westerhope and Woosington wards. It argued that it would divide the village of Westerhope, which has a number of community associations and a strong community identity. It argued that the greater resultant electoral variance in Westerhope ward from transfer of the northern part of the village to Westerhope ward could be balanced with the transference of the area north of Walbottle Road, St John's estate, to Newburn ward. The City Council argued that such a transfer would reduce the electoral variance in Newburn ward also. The Newcastle Conservatives and a local resident opposed the transfer of areas in the existing Westerhope ward in the vicinity of North Walbottle Wagonway to the adjacent wards of Denton and Newburn. The Newcastle Conservatives collected a number of signatures on leaflets indicating substantial opposition to the transference of these parts of the existing Westerhope ward to neighbouring wards. The Westerhope Community Partnership also objected to our proposed boundary between Westerhope and Woosington and argued that transferring residential areas in the vicinity of North Walbottle Wagonway to adjacent wards would 'provide the fairest and most logical plan'. The Westerhope Village Residents' Association opposed the boundary between Westerhope and Woosington wards. It argued that, through its heritage, there has developed a strong community identity in Westerhope village, as evidenced by a number of village events. The Westerhope Village Residents' Association highlighted opposition within the local community to our proposed boundary by enclosing a petition containing 1157 signatures. Submissions received from Westerhope Local History Society, Westerhope Excelsior and 14 residents expressed opposition to our proposed boundary between Westerhope and Woosington wards. They stated the proposed boundary would divide Westerhope village, which has developed a strong community identity through its heritage.

58 Woosington Residents Association and two local residents argued that Woosington village, contained in Ward Three parish ward of Woosington parish, should be transferred into neighbouring Castle ward. The Woosington Residents Association argued that development in the vicinity of the village affects Woosington more than Newbiggin. It also argued that the housing characteristics of Newbiggin are different from that of Woosington village. It issued leaflets requesting Woosington village residents' views about whether they were in favour of being in Castle ward. The majority of the 50 slips forwarded to us indicated support for this proposal. A resident, sending this leaflet directly to us, requested Woosington village remain linked with Newbiggin and Callerton. Woosington Parish Council expressed support for our draft

recommendations, which proposed placing Ward Three parish ward, containing Woosington village, in Woosington ward. The City Council proposed the adoption of 'the new names for the Woosington Parish Council wards as proposed by the Parish Council as these more closely reflect community identity'.

59 Councillor Anita Lower argued that a section of the boundary between Castle and Woosington wards should be the Metro line rather than the A696. Councillor Lower stated that her proposal would unite communities in one ward that share common services and are well linked by a bus service. She argued that the Metro line represents a clear boundary and can be crossed at only one point. She stated that Castle ward consists of rural areas and small communities and, consequently, differs in characteristics from the largely urban area south of the Metro line. Additionally, she argued that such a transfer would redress the electoral imbalance caused by the removal of part of Westerhope village from Woosington ward, as proposed by the City Council.

60 Councillor Gerry Keating requested that the arrangements for Castle, Westerhope and Woosington wards be reconsidered in light of the expected rapid growth of the population in our proposed Castle ward.

61 Having carefully considered the representations received regarding these wards, we intend confirming our draft recommendations as final. Although we note the high level of community identity in the Westerhope village, having the boundary between Westerhope and Woosington wards run along the southern boundary of Woosington parish would result in the number of electors in the respective wards varying from the city average by an unacceptable margin. The estimated number of electors in Westerhope and Woosington wards respectively would vary from the city average by 11% and 8% by 2006. We note the proposals to transfer other parts of the existing Westerhope ward to either Newburn and/or Denton wards to improve electoral equality in Westerhope ward. However, we have received submissions from residents in the vicinity of North Walbottle Wagonway opposed to being transferred from Westerhope to an adjacent ward.

62 We noted the additional argument provided by Woosington Residents Association that part of Woosington parish be transferred to the proposed Castle ward. However, we do not consider this additional argumentation sufficient to justify adopting this proposal. We also note the Woosington Parish Council's support for our proposals regarding Woosington parish, as expressed in our draft recommendations. Furthermore, as in our draft recommendations, we consider that adopting this proposal would have consequential effects on the proposals for the remainder of this area, which in turn would not facilitate an appropriate scheme across the city as a whole.

63 We note Councillor Lower's argument for transferring the part of our proposed Castle ward south of the Metro line into Woosington ward. However, this suggestion is based on acceptance of the City Council's proposals for the boundary of Westerhope and Woosington wards, which we have not adopted. Consequently, the resultant electoral variance for both Castle and Woosington wards would be unreasonable at 17% and 21% respectively by 2006.

64 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 4% below the city average in Castle ward (4% above by 2006), 16% below in Parklands ward (2% above by 2006) and 1% above in Woosington ward, both in 2001 and by 2006. Castle ward contains the parishes of Brunswick, Dinnington and Hazlerigg. Parklands ward contains the parish of North Gosforth. Woosington ward contains the parish of Woosington. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

## **Denton, Lemington, Newburn and Westerhope wards**

65 These four wards are situated in the west of the city. Westerhope and Newburn wards are bounded by Castle Morpeth to the west, and Newburn and Lemington wards are bounded by the River Tyne to the south. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 1% below the city average in Denton ward (7% below by 2006), 3% below in Lemington ward (7% below by 2006), 12% below in Newburn ward (14% below by 2006) and 33% above in Westerhope ward (31% above by 2006).

66 At Stage One the City Council proposed revised Denton, Lemington, Newburn and Westerhope wards. Its modified Westerhope ward would lose an area from the existing Westerhope ward. Furthermore, the City Council proposed transferring properties to the north of North Walbottle Road and to the west of the North Walbottle Wagonway to its revised Newburn ward. Its revised Denton ward, other than reflecting the transfers from the existing Westerhope ward detailed previously, would broadly retain the remainder of its existing boundaries.

67 The City Council's Lemington ward would retain its existing northern, eastern and southern boundaries, while gaining an area from the existing Newburn ward. The City Council also proposed transferring the Allotment Gardens and Blucher Terrace to its revised Newburn ward from the existing Lemington ward. Its revised Newburn ward would reflect these transfers to and from the existing Lemington and Westerhope wards. It argued that 'being predominantly rural in character the impact of the A69 in this area as a divider is not strong. There is justification therefore in forming a rural ward to the west of Lemington, Denton and Westerhope.' It acknowledged the relatively small electorate in this ward, but added that 'further additions from the Westerhope area are difficult to make without prejudicing community structures.'

68 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 8% above the city average in Denton ward (2% above by 2006), 3% above in Lemington ward (equal to the average by 2006), equal to the average in Newburn ward (4% below by 2006) and 5% above in Westerhope ward (3% above by 2006).

69 A local resident proposed a revised Denton ward and a new Chapel ward to replace part of the existing Denton and Westerhope wards. He proposed that the properties in the existing Westerhope ward to the north of Stamfordham Road should be transferred to Woosington ward, as detailed earlier, and that those electors currently in Westerhope ward, west of North Walbottle Wagonway, should be transferred to Newburn ward. He argued that this proposal would reunite the Chapel House Estate in one ward.

70 We carefully considered the representations received. We noted that, in attempting to increase the electorate in the existing Newburn ward, which is forecast to be over-represented by 14% by 2006, the City Council proposed that two areas of the existing Westerhope ward should be transferred to its revised Newburn ward. However, having visited the area, officers from the Committee noted that one of these areas (those properties to the north of North Walbottle Road around Marquis Avenue) has very limited access to the remainder of the City Council's revised Newburn ward. Returning this area to the revised Westerhope ward results in the revised Newburn ward being over-represented by 12% by 2006. We therefore looked for viable alternatives to increase the electorate in the revised Newburn ward, but due to its position in the very south-west of the city, and the fact that it is separated in the south from the revised Lemington ward further east, we have been unable to identify any alternative proposals.

71 We therefore proposed amending the City Council's revised Newburn and Westerhope wards so that those properties to the north of North Walbottle Road are transferred back into Westerhope ward. We considered that the over-representation of the Newburn ward by 12% by 2006 was justified given the geographical position of the ward. Ideally, we would have proposed that the other area from the existing Westerhope ward (those properties to the west of North Walbottle Wagonway) should remain in the revised Westerhope ward as it is somewhat

separated from the remainder of the revised Newburn ward. However, this would have resulted in the revised Newburn ward being over-represented by approximately 22% by 2006 which, in our view, was unacceptable. Given the constraints of proposing three-member wards, we acknowledged that it had been necessary to recommend some wards which contain some disparate communities, although we have attempted to address this where possible.

72 Notwithstanding this amendment, we proposed adopting the remainder of the City Council's revised Newburn ward, other than a minor amendment in the south-east of the ward to tie the boundary to an identifiable ground feature, which would not affect any electors. As detailed earlier, we proposed utilising Stamfordham Road rather than Woolsington parish boundary as the boundary between the proposed Westerhope and Woolsington wards. This facilitated our proposals for Newburn and Westerhope wards as it balanced the electorate transferred from the City Council's revised Newburn ward. Finally, we proposed transferring properties in the southern part of Greenfield Avenue, and the surrounding properties on West Avenue, to the revised Westerhope ward from the City Council's revised Denton ward, to ensure that these properties have access to the remainder of the ward. Our proposed Denton ward would reflect this amendment but would have otherwise been based on the City Council's proposals. Our proposed Lemington ward was based on the City Council's proposals, other than the minor amendment with Newburn ward detailed above.

73 We were unable to adopt the proposals made by a local resident for a revised Denton ward and a new Chapel ward, as it would have resulted in at least one ward varying by more than 10% from the average by 2006. We did not consider that this would have been justifiable given the wards' location in a more condensed urban area, particularly when we had received a viable alternative for wards in this area.

74 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 8% above the city average in Denton ward (2% above by 2006), 3% above in Lemington ward (equal to the average by 2006), 7% below in Newburn ward (12% below by 2006) and 4% above in Westerhope ward (2% above by 2006).

75 At Stage Three, we received 17 representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. The City Council, Westerhope Community Partnership, Westerhope Excelsior, Westerhope Local History Society, Westerhope Village Residents' Association and local residents opposed our proposed boundary between Westerhope and Woolsington wards, as detailed in the previous section. The Newcastle Conservatives and a local resident opposed the transfer of areas in the existing Westerhope ward in the vicinity of North Walbottle Wagonway to the adjacent wards of Denton and Newburn, as detailed in the previous section.

76 Having carefully considered the representations received regarding these wards, we intend confirming our draft recommendations as final.

77 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Denton, Lemington, Newburn and Westerhope wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

### **Blakelaw, Fawdon and Kenton wards**

78 These three wards are situated in the centre of the city area to the north-west of the city centre. Blakelaw ward comprises the parish of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish, along with an unparished area in the north of the ward. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 12% above the city average in Blakelaw ward (6% above by 2006), 6% below in Fawdon ward (10% below by 2006) and 3% below in Kenton ward (7% below by 2006).

79 At Stage One the City Council proposed extending the existing Fawdon ward to gain an area from the existing Grange ward. It argued that 'the inclusion of the Coxlodge area currently in Grange [ward] provides a sensible addition to the ward and brings it within the range required.' It then proposed revising the existing Kenton ward to include two parts of the existing Blakelaw ward; the unparished area incorporating the properties off Hazeldene Avenue to the south of the A1; and part of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish. Its revised Kenton ward would be further modified by transferring an area into West Gosforth ward.

80 The City Council proposed that its revised Blakelaw ward should comprise the remainder of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish, along with polling district CBF from the existing Fenham ward and part of the existing Wingrove ward. It argued that these additions 'generally present...a strong inter-relationship'. That part of the existing Blakelaw ward to the west of the A1 would be transferred to the City Council's proposed Castle and Woolsington wards, as detailed earlier.

81 Under the City Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 4% above the city average in Blakelaw ward (2% above by 2006), 4% above in Fawdon ward (1% below by 2006) and 5% above in Kenton ward (equal to the average by 2006).

82 Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council stated that it 'would very strongly wish to remain all in a single city council ward'. Blakelaw Community Network proposed a modified Blakelaw ward to preserve 'the natural community boundaries that already exist' and to retain Blakelaw & North Fenham parish in one city ward. Its modified Blakelaw ward would comprise Blakelaw & North Fenham parish, part of the existing Blakelaw ward to the west of the A1 (the area to the south of Etal Lane, to the east of Marsden Lane and to the north of properties on the culs-de-sac off Garthfield Crescent) and part of the existing Kenton ward (the area broadly to the south of Kenton Lane, to the west of Moor Lane and Houghton Avenue and to the north of Eastern Way). Finally, it would also incorporate polling district CBF from the existing Fenham ward and part of the existing Wingrove ward (the area to the west of Two Ball Lonnen).

83 Finally, a local resident requested a review of Kenton ward's boundaries as she considered that recent local housing developments have 'increased the population ... to a degree which adversely affects representation on the city council'.

84 We carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. We noted that the City Council's proposals for these wards do not result in the retention of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish in a single city ward, which was proposed by the parish council and Blakelaw Community Network. We therefore looked for viable alternatives to ensure that the parish could remain in one city ward. As the parish is surrounded by an urban, residential area, it was possible to achieve alternative warding arrangements to facilitate Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council's proposal. We also considered that this proposal utilises more identifiable boundaries overall than those proposed by the City Council.

85 We therefore proposed amendments to the City Council's revised Blakelaw, Fawdon and Kenton wards. We proposed adopting the City Council's Fawdon ward, other than transferring the area to the south of Castle Close, Bellingham Court, Saxondale Road and Anfield Road to our proposed Kenton ward. We then proposed modifying the City Council's revised Kenton ward to reflect this gain from the revised Fawdon ward and to transfer that part of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish, which the City Council had proposed form part of Kenton ward, back to our proposed Blakelaw ward. To accommodate this transfer, we proposed transferring polling district CBF from the City Council's proposed Blakelaw ward back to our proposed Fenham ward (to be discussed later).

86 We were not persuaded to adopt Blakelaw Community Network's revised Blakelaw ward, as this proposed ward would breach the significant boundary of the A1. We noted that no other wards would breach this road as part of the City Council's scheme, other than its proposed Castle ward, which follows the boundary of North Gosforth parish in the very north of the city,

and we did not consider that breaching the A1 in this instance was justifiable in terms of securing an identifiable boundary.

87 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 2% above the city average in Blakelaw ward (3% below by 2006), 1% below in Fawdon ward (5% below by 2006) and 1% below in Kenton ward (5% below by 2006).

88 At Stage Three, we received 30 representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. Newcastle Central Labour Party expressed support for our Blakelaw, Kenton and Wingrove wards, and it stated that these more closely follow community boundaries and bring together areas of common housing type. Jim Cousins, the member of parliament for Newcastle upon Tyne Central, supported our Blakelaw and Kenton wards and stated that our proposals for these wards represented improvements on the City Council's Stage One proposals. Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council expressed support for our proposed Blakelaw, Fawdon and Kenton wards, as outlined in our draft recommendations.

89 Professor Mike Coombes from the University of Newcastle suggested that the areas of Cowgate and Kenton Bar, which are immediately to the east of Ponteland Road in our proposed Kenton ward, be transferred to Blakelaw ward. He stated that these areas have no connection with Kenton and are relatively more integrated with Blakelaw. To redress some of the consequential electoral imbalance from such a transfer, he suggested that some of the Nuns Moor area be transferred from Blakelaw to Wingrove, the boundary between Westgate and Wingrove be altered and the northern boundary of Kenton be realigned.

90 Councillor Nick Cott argued that Kenton Road should be the boundary between Fawdon and West Gosforth wards. He argued that this road is recognised by local residents to be the boundary of Coxlodge and Fawdon, as the former has traditionally been part of Gosforth ward. Additionally, he argued that our proposed boundary would cause social cohesion problems due to the combination of the relatively affluent area of West Gosforth with the relatively poor area of Fawdon. He stated that the management of issues relating to the St Nicholas Hospital site, located near our proposed boundary, 'are better addressed by being served by one administrative ward than by two'. To redress the consequential electoral imbalance from his proposal, Councillor Cott suggested transferring a section of our proposed Parklands ward, behind Red House Farm where housing development is due to take place, to Fawdon ward. He also suggested transferring sections of the Kenton Park area from our proposed West Gosforth ward to Kenton ward.

91 Councillor Dianne Packham also argued for all of the Coxlodge area, east of Kenton Road, to be contained in West Gosforth ward due to the high level of community identity in Coxlodge and its historic connections with Gosforth. She also stated that her proposal would assist community cohesion, due to the relatively similar housing type in Coxlodge and Gosforth, and enable the St Nicholas Hospital site to be managed under one ward committee. Councillor Packham enclosed a petition from local residents expressing opposition to our proposed boundary between Fawdon and West Gosforth wards, in relation to the Coxlodge area. Councillor John Shipley objected to the inclusion of the Coxlodge area in Fawdon ward, arguing that Coxlodge and Gosforth have historic links and that Coxlodge residents wish to be included in a Gosforth ward.

92 Coxlodge Tenants & Residents Association also opposed our proposed boundary between Fawdon and West Gosforth, arguing that the area of Coxlodge is a strong community and that it should be included in a Gosforth ward for historical and cultural reasons. Coxlodge Methodist Church objected to the church 'being taken out of the Gosforth Ward' and stated that 'Coxlodge is historically a village with strong community ties'. A local resident stated that Coxlodge was geographically part of Gosforth and that Kenton Road should be the boundary between Fawdon ward and the Coxlodge area. A local resident stated that the Coxlodge area has traditionally been linked with Gosforth in terms of local government. Two local residents argued against the

inclusion of the Coxlodge area in Fawdon ward on the basis of heritage and considered Kenton Road to be the appropriate boundary between West Gosforth and Fawdon wards. They stated that it would 'seem logical to extend Fawdon to some properties either on the Grange or the new developments currently being erected on the Parklands area'. Local residents stated that Coxlodge is a strong community. One argued that Coxlodge has strong historical links with Gosforth. A local resident stated that the Coxlodge area should be contained in our proposed West Gosforth ward as the area has 'always been part of the Gosforth district'. A local resident objected to our proposed transfer of the Coxlodge area, 'one of the oldest parts of Gosforth', to Fawdon ward whilst 'transferring a comparatively new part of Kenton, to the Gosforth West ward'. We received a further nine submissions from residents who objected to our proposed boundary between Fawdon and West Gosforth wards, in relation to the Coxlodge area.

93 A local resident supported our proposal for West Gosforth ward. Two local residents expressed support for our proposed East Gosforth and West Gosforth wards.

94 Having carefully considered the representations received regarding these wards, we intend confirming our draft recommendations as final. We cannot adopt Professor Coombes's suggestion to transfer the areas of Cowgate and Kenton Bar to Blakelaw ward, as he has not specified alternative boundaries in adjacent wards to address the resultant electoral imbalance. Additionally, we have received local support for our proposed boundaries of Blakelaw and Kenton wards.

95 We note the arguments against our proposed Fawdon and West Gosforth wards. We have not been persuaded to transfer the area of our proposed Fawdon ward bounded by Kenton Road, John Street, Coxlodge Road and Leagreen Court (the part of the Coxlodge area contained in our existing Gosforth ward) to West Gosforth ward due to the adverse impact on electoral equality in both Fawdon and West Gosforth wards. The resultant electoral variances would be 11% and 10% from the city average, respectively (15% and 10% respectively by 2006), which we consider unjustifiable given the evidence received. To transfer the part of our proposed Fawdon ward east of Kenton Road to West Gosforth ward would result in worse electoral equality. The suggestions to transfer part of the Kenton Park estate, which we proposed to be included in West Gosforth ward, to the adjacent Kenton ward in order to balance the number of electors between wards, would result in this estate being split between two wards. We did not receive any additional evidence of local support for such a proposal, although support has been expressed for our proposed Kenton ward. Similarly, a suggestion to transfer part of Parklands ward to Fawdon ward to make up for the loss of Coxlodge would entail the creation of a parish ward in North Gosforth parish, which would contain no electors initially. This would necessitate the establishment of at least one parish councillor who would initially represent no electors. Support has also been expressed for our proposed Fawdon ward.

96 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 6% above the city average in Blakelaw ward (equal to by 2006), 1% below in Fawdon ward (5% below by 2006) and 1% below in Kenton ward (5% below by 2006). Blakelaw ward contains the parish of Blakelaw & North Fenham. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

### **Fenham, Moorside and Wingrove wards**

97 These three wards are situated in the centre of the city, broadly to the north of the A186. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 10% above the city average in Fenham ward (11% above by 2006), 16% above in Moorside ward (17% above by 2006) and 3% below in Wingrove ward (9% below by 2006).

98 At Stage One the City Council proposed a modified Fenham ward. It proposed transferring polling district CBF to its proposed Blakelaw ward, as detailed earlier. It also proposed that Fenham ward would gain the majority of properties on the eastern side of Bolbec Road. The

existing Wingrove ward would be modified by transferring the north-western part of the ward to the City Council's proposed Blakelaw ward, as detailed earlier. It would be further modified to gain part of the existing Moorside ward. It would also gain the area further north from the existing Moorside ward comprising the largely uninhabited area including Exhibition Park and Town Moor. The remainder of the existing Moorside ward would form part of the City Council's proposed Westgate ward, to be discussed later, other than the area to the east of the Great North Road, Barras Bridge, to the north of St Mary's Place, to the east of John Dobson Street and to the north of Durant Road. This area would be transferred to its proposed South Jesmond ward, also to be discussed later.

99 Under the City Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the city average in Fenham ward both in 2001 and by 2006) and 3% above in Wingrove ward (2% below by 2006).

100 A local resident proposed that her road, Denhill Park, be transferred from Elswick ward to Fenham ward, to return it to the situation before the last local government review, as she considered that the current situation adversely affected property prices.

101 We carefully considered the representations received. We noted the proposal made by a local resident regarding Fenham ward, and also noted that under the City Council's proposals Denhill Park remains in Elswick ward. However, the purpose of this review is to ensure that the number of electors per councillor is as nearly as possible the same. We therefore cannot take into account any effects our proposals may or may not have on property prices. Furthermore, her proposal would involve breaching the A186 which we believe to be a strong, identifiable boundary in this urban area. In the light of this, we carefully examined the City Council's proposals. As detailed earlier, our proposals to facilitate the whole of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish in one city ward resulted in consequential changes being made to surrounding wards. In the light of this, we made amendments to the City Council's proposed Fenham and Wingrove wards. We considered that our proposals utilised more identifiable boundaries and would facilitate our proposals in Blakelaw & North Fenham.

102 We therefore amended the City Council's proposed Fenham ward to gain part of its proposed Blakelaw ward, as detailed earlier. As a consequence we also amended the proposed boundary between the revised Fenham and Wingrove wards. We proposed that the area to the east of Hoyle Avenue and to the south of Hadrian Road should be transferred from the revised Fenham ward to our proposed Wingrove ward. Notwithstanding these modifications in order to facilitate our proposals for Blakelaw & North Fenham parish, we considered that the City Council's proposals for Fenham and Wingrove wards generally utilised strong boundaries, achieved good levels of electoral equality, and allowed the city centre to be contained within one ward.

103 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5% above the city average in Fenham ward (6% above by 2006) and 10% above in Wingrove ward (4% above by 2006).

104 At Stage Three, we received seven representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. Councillor Gerry Keating proposed that the whole of Wingrove Road North and Moorside North be placed in Blakelaw ward. He stated that these properties were 'logically' part of Blakelaw, given our proposals for Blakelaw and Wingrove wards outlined in our draft recommendations, and that such a transfer would improve electoral equality. The Wingrove North Area Residents' Association opposed our proposals for Blakelaw and Wingrove wards and enclosed a petition signed by 61 residents opposing the proposal for part of Wingrove Road North to be contained in Blakelaw ward. It stated that our proposed boundary would split 'a coherent community', which the association represents, and residents living on either side of Wingrove Road North would be represented by different sets of councillors, thereby decreasing the Association's effectiveness. It also argued that 'the

community of the present Wingrove Ward has more in common with the residents of the adjacent Moorside Ward, than those in the current Blakelaw Ward, which is situated 2 miles away'. Two residents argued that Wingrove Road North and Moorside North ought to be part of Blakelaw ward as these roads are isolated from the remainder of our proposed Wingrove ward by moorland. Additionally, they stated that Wingrove Road North and Moorside North are contained in the area represented by the Wingrove Road Tenants Association, which represents residents in the area bounded by Fenham Hall Drive, Kingsway and Moorside North. Councillor Anita Lower suggested the renaming of Blakelaw ward as Blakelaw & North Wingrove ward. She argued that, as our proposed Blakelaw ward contains 'different communities' with few links or common facilities, the supposed division between the communities could be reflected in her suggested name. As a consequence of this proposal, she further suggested that our proposed Wingrove ward possibly be renamed South Wingrove.

105 Jim Cousins, member of parliament for Newcastle upon Tyne Central, argued for the renaming of Wingrove ward as Moorside ward 'in order to reflect the significance of Newcastle Town Moor in the political life of the City' and stated 'that the bulk of the communities in Wingrove Ward, such as Spital Tongues, Arthur's Hill and Nuns Moor would naturally respect the name of the existing Moorside Ward than that of the existing Wingrove Ward'. Additionally, he stated that 'there is no neighbourhood that people refer to as Wingrove'. He proposed the alteration of our proposed boundary between Westgate and Wingrove wards to include Moorside School and the shopping area at the intersection of Stanhope Street and Beaconsfield Street in Wingrove ward to make the boundary between Westgate and Wingrove wards broadly coterminous with that of administrative areas for the New Deal for Communities. He stated that the broadly concurrent boundaries would serve to improve the program's accountability and assist in regeneration plans for the area. Additionally, he argued that the entire North British Housing Association housing stock north of Westgate Road ought to be placed in Wingrove ward, as this housing is covered by an active tenants' group. Consequently, he requested the transfer of Frosterley Place from our proposed Westgate ward to our proposed Wingrove ward. He also requested the transfer of Iris Steedman House, a block of sheltered accommodation, and Thorpe Close, a group of special-purpose houses from our proposed Westgate ward to our proposed Wingrove ward. He stated that his proposed alterations to the boundary between Westgate and Wingrove wards would result in only a minor change in the respective number of electors in both wards relative to our draft proposals for both wards.

106 Having carefully considered the representations received regarding these wards, we intend to broadly confirm our draft recommendations as final. We have not been persuaded by the argument put forward by the Wingrove North Area Residents' Association against our proposal to transfer a section of the existing Wingrove ward into Blakelaw ward due to the adverse impact on electoral equality. We also note the support expressed by Newcastle upon Tyne Central Labour Party for both of these wards and we note the support from Jim Cousins MP and the Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council for our proposed Blakelaw ward, detailed previously. However, we have been persuaded by the arguments that the whole of Wingrove Road North and Moorside North should be included in our proposed Blakelaw ward, as electoral equality in both Wingrove and Blakelaw wards would be improved and these roads are well linked to the area immediately to their west. We have not been persuaded by Councillor Lower's argument to alter the name of our proposed Blakelaw ward to Blakelaw & North Wingrove ward. We consider such a name change is unlikely to have further community support and the renaming will highlight the split in the existing Wingrove ward between our proposed Blakelaw and Wingrove wards.

107 We have not been convinced by the arguments put forward by Jim Cousins MP to transfer Moorside School, the Stanhope Street shopping area, Frosterley Place, Thorpe Close and a block of sheltered accommodation from our proposed Westgate ward to Wingrove ward as we consider our proposed boundary between the two wards to be more identifiable. Also, we cannot base our decisions on ward boundaries with regards to the administrative boundaries of programs such as New Deal for Communities.

108 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5% above the city average in Fenham ward (6% above by 2006) and 6% above in Wingrove ward (2% above by 2006). Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

### **Benwell, Elswick and Scotswood wards**

109 These three wards are situated in the south of the city area, towards the west of the city centre. Benwell and Scotswood wards are bounded to the south by the River Tyne. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 31% below the city average in Benwell ward (40% below by 2006), 32% below in Elswick ward (39% below by 2006) and 42% below in Scotswood ward (59% below by 2006).

110 At Stage One the City Council proposed adding most of the existing Benwell ward and a small part of the existing Elswick ward to the existing Scotswood ward to create a new Benwell & Scotswood ward. It proposed that Lismore Place should be transferred from the existing Elswick ward to its proposed Benwell & Scotswood ward, along with all of the existing Benwell ward, other than St John's Cemetery, which would be transferred to its revised Elswick ward. This revised ward would also comprise the whole of the existing Elswick ward, other than Lismore Place, as detailed above, and would also contain part of the existing West City ward.

111 Under the City Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 27% above the city average in Benwell & Scotswood ward (2% above by 2006) and 5% above in Elswick ward (3% above by 2006).

112 As detailed earlier, a local resident proposed that Denhill Park be transferred from the existing Elswick ward to Fenham ward, for reasons which we do not take account of in formulating our recommendations, which would also involve the ward breaching the A186, which we do not believe would provide a stronger boundary.

113 We carefully considered the representations received. We noted that the City Council's scheme addressed the significant over-representation in this area of the city by combining large parts of existing wards together. We also noted that the City Council has predominantly utilised strong boundaries. We therefore based our draft recommendations in this area on the City Council's proposals. However, in one area we noted that, in retaining the existing boundary between the proposed Benwell & Scotswood and revised Elswick wards in the south around Amelia Close, the City Council's scheme isolated the residents of this road from the remainder of Benwell & Scotswood ward. We therefore transferred Amelia Close to our proposed Elswick ward to ensure that residents have good access to the remainder of the ward.

114 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 27% above the city average in Benwell & Scotswood ward (2% above by 2006) and 5% above in Elswick ward (4% above by 2006).

115 At Stage Three, we received no representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. We therefore intend to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

116 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Benwell & Scotswood and Elswick wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

## **Dene, Jesmond and South Gosforth wards**

117 These three wards are situated in the east of the city area, to the north-east of the city centre. Dene ward is bounded by North Tyneside to the north and east. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 60% above the city average in Dene ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 36% above in Jesmond ward (42% above by 2006) and 6% above in South Gosforth ward (13% above by 2006).

118 At Stage One the City Council proposed that approximately half of the existing South Gosforth ward form part of its proposed West Gosforth ward, along with part of the existing Grange and Kenton wards, as detailed earlier. It then proposed that the remainder of the existing South Gosforth ward form part of its proposed East Gosforth ward, along with part of the existing Grange ward, also as detailed earlier. It then proposed a revised Dene ward, which would lose an area to the City Council's proposed North Heaton ward, to be discussed later.

119 The City Council also proposed that the existing Jesmond ward be modified to form a new North Jesmond ward and part of a new South Jesmond ward. The area to the north would form the City Council's proposed North Jesmond ward, while the area to the south from the existing Jesmond ward would form part of the City Council's proposed South Jesmond ward, along with part of the existing Moorside ward, as detailed earlier. The City Council also proposed that part of the existing Sandyford ward would also form part of its proposed South Jesmond ward.

120 Under the City Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the city average in Dene ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 5% below in East Gosforth ward (equal to the average by 2006), 4% below in North Jesmond ward (1% above by 2006), 2% below in South Jesmond ward (3% above by 2006) and equal to the average in West Gosforth ward (2% above by 2006).

121 As detailed earlier, two local residents commented on the City Council's consultation scheme proposals regarding the existing South Gosforth ward, which was subsequently amended to broadly reflect their proposal.

122 We carefully considered the representations received. We noted that, following locally derived comments received during its own consultation stage, the City Council amended its proposals for the Gosforth area to propose East and West Gosforth wards, dividing the area east-westwards rather than north-southwards. We also considered that the City Council's proposals in this area utilised identifiable boundaries, such as the Great North Road and the River Ouseburn, and that they achieved good levels of electoral equality. We therefore adopted the City Council's proposals for this area in full, other than the minor amendment with Parklands ward, as detailed earlier, and a minor amendment to the boundary between North and South Jesmond wards which did not affect any electors.

123 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the city average in Dene ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 7% below in East Gosforth ward (2% below by 2006), 4% below in North Jesmond ward (1% above by 2006), 2% below in South Jesmond ward (3% above by 2006) and equal to the average in West Gosforth ward (2% above by 2006).

124 At Stage Three, we received 23 representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. The City Council notified us of an updated forecast of the number of the electors in our proposed West Gosforth ward, as detailed previously. We received a number of submissions regarding our proposed Fawdon and West Gosforth wards, as detailed in a previous section. Jim Cousins, member of parliament for Newcastle upon Tyne Central supported our changes to the City Council's proposals for Ouseburn and South Jesmond wards and he thought 'the division of the City Centre at Durant Road between Ouseburn, Westgate and

South Jesmond Ward is a very sensible change'. Councillor Bob Renton proposed renaming our proposed North Heaton ward as South Dene ward and, consequently, renaming our proposed South Heaton ward as Heaton ward and our proposed Dene ward as North Dean ward. He argued that the name 'Dene' brings together all the different locations of the ward under a 'neutral' name.

125 Having considered the representations received, we intend to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. We have not been persuaded by Councillor Renton's arguments to change the name of North Heaton ward to South Dene ward and, consequently Dene ward to North Dene ward and South Heaton ward to Heaton ward. The proposal for the name change was based on the argument that 'North Dene' is a 'neutral name', as this proposed ward comprises part of the existing Dene ward. However, our proposed North Heaton ward covers the area of High Heaton and contains Heaton Manor School. We therefore do not propose renaming these wards.

126 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the city average in Dene ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 7% below in East Gosforth ward (2% below by 2006), 4% below in North Jesmond ward (1% above by 2006), 2% below in South Jesmond ward (3% above by 2006) and equal to the average in West Gosforth ward (1% below by 2006).

127 Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

### **Heaton, Sandyford and West City wards**

128 These three wards are situated in the south of the city area, around the centre. Sandyford and West City wards are bounded to the south by the River Tyne, while Heaton ward is bounded to the east by North Tyneside. Under the existing arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 17% above the city average in Heaton ward (18% above by 2006), 30% above in Sandyford ward (42% above by 2006) and 31% below in West City ward (10% below by 2006).

129 At Stage One the City Council proposed that two parts of the existing West City ward should be transferred to its revised Elswick ward, as detailed earlier. It then proposed that the remainder of this existing ward should form its proposed Westgate ward, along with part of the existing Moorside ward, as detailed earlier. Also as detailed earlier, it proposed that the southern part of the existing Dene ward should form part of its proposed North Heaton ward, along with part of the existing Heaton ward. The City Council stated that 'its size is below average to avoid cutting into the communities of South Heaton.'

130 The remainder of the existing Heaton ward would form part of the City Council's proposed South Heaton ward, along with part of the existing Monkchester ward and part of the existing Byker ward. In acknowledging that its proposal crosses the main east coast railway, the City Council argued that 'there are good links between these areas despite the presence of the railway and the southern area is in itself fairly isolated from the rest of Byker of which it currently forms a part.' The remainder of the existing Sandyford ward not transferred to the City Council's proposed South Jesmond ward would form its proposed Ouseburn ward.

131 Under the City Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in North Heaton ward (3% below by 2006), 14% below in Ouseburn ward (5% below by 2006), 6% below in South Heaton ward (3% below by 2006) and 17% below in Westgate ward (1% above by 2006).

132 We carefully considered the representations received during Stage One. We noted that the topographical features in this area, namely the Metro line Maintenance Depot and Heaton

Carriage Sidings, the River Ouseburn and the city centre itself, made the formulation of wards which are not breached by these features a difficult task. Officers from the Committee, having visited the area, considered that the City Council's proposed Westgate ward, while being an unusual shape, incorporates the city centre and the buildings which form the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and takes in residential areas where it is necessary to increase the electorate in the area for electoral equality purposes under a uniform pattern of three-member wards. We also considered that the eastern part of the City Council's proposed Ouseburn ward has sufficient links to the remainder of the ward and broadly reflects the current arrangements for the area.

133 We did have some concerns regarding the composition of the City Council's proposed South Heaton ward, as it is breached by the Metro line Maintenance Depot and Heaton Carriage Sidings. However, we were unable to identify viable alternative arrangements for this area, given the proposals for the surrounding wards and the need to achieve good levels of electoral equality. Given that the area to the south of the Metro line Maintenance Depot and Heaton Carriage Sidings comprises a mainly industrial area, we were satisfied that few, if any, electors would be isolated from the remainder of the ward by this geographical barrier. Therefore, we adopted the City Council's proposals for this area in full.

134 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in North Heaton, Ouseburn, South Heaton and Westgate wards would be the same as under the City Council's proposals.

135 At Stage Three, we received six representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. The City Council and the Walkergate Branch Ward Labour Party proposed that the Walkergate Metro station and the adjacent Lidl supermarket be transferred from our proposed South Heaton ward to Walkergate ward, with the City Council arguing that such a proposal would have little impact on electoral equality. The Walkergate Branch Ward Labour Party proposed that the boundary of South Heaton and Byker wards follow the railway line so that both sides of Shields Road are contained in Byker ward. Councillor Bob Renton proposed renaming our proposed North Heaton ward as South Dene and, consequently, renaming our proposed Dene ward as North Dene, as detailed in the previous section. Jim Cousins MP proposed changes to our proposed boundary between Westgate and Wingrove wards, as detailed in a previous section.

136 Councillor Doreen Huddart, member for Heaton ward, questioned the City Council's electorate figures in the Heaton area. She stated that she preferred Heaton ward to remain unchanged, but nevertheless submitted a proposal for South Heaton taking into account her estimates of the electorate. She argued that it was preferable for the boundary between South Heaton and Walkergate wards to run along Benfield Road and not behind the Walker Gate Hospital, as Benfield Road provides a very identifiable boundary and the hospital site does not contain any residents. Councillor Huddart also argued that the Shields Road and Fossway industrial area, south of the railway line, should be placed in Byker ward and that placing this area in a new South Heaton ward would divide communities.

137 A local resident objected to our proposal to include part of the existing Byker ward in our proposed South Heaton ward.

138 Having considered the representations received, we intend to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. We have not been persuaded by Councillor Huddart's argument to transfer the industrial area south of the Metro line and east of Millers Road to Byker ward, as this area is already linked to a residential area in our proposed South Heaton ward that also lies south of the Metro line. We have not been persuaded by Councillor Huddart's argument that Benfield Road alone provides a substantially better boundary between South Heaton and Walkergate wards than our proposal. Under Councillor Huddart's proposal, the Walker Gate Hospital would be separated from the remainder of South Heaton ward by the

railway line and we remain convinced that the boundary of the hospital is sufficiently identifiable. We do not accept that the Walkergate Metro station and the surrounding supermarket should be part of Walkergate ward as proposed by the Walkergate Branch Ward Labour Party and the City Council. We consider this section of Benfield Road, which the station lies to the west of, provides a more identifiable boundary than could be established if the Metro station were to be included in Walkergate ward. We cannot accept Councillor Huddart's suggested boundary for South Heaton ward as it is based on her electorate figures, which have not been accepted by the City Council, as detailed previously.

139 Having carefully considered the representations received, we intend to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in North Heaton, Ouseburn, South Heaton and Westgate wards would be the same as under our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

### **Byker, Monkchester, Walker and Walkergate wards**

140 These four wards are situated in the south-east of the city. Byker, Monkchester and Walker wards are bounded to the south by the River Tyne. Walker and Walkergate wards are bounded to the east by South Tyneside. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 19% below the city average in Byker ward (21% below by 2006), 24% below in Monkchester ward (25% below by 2006), 29% below in Walker ward (36% below by 2006) and 1% above in Walkergate ward (6% above by 2006).

141 At Stage One the City Council proposed that most of the remainder of the existing Byker ward not being transferred to its proposed South Heaton ward, as detailed earlier, would form a revised Byker ward, which would also incorporate part of the existing Monkchester ward and part of the existing Walkergate ward. The area to the west of Flodden Street would be transferred from the existing Byker ward to the City Council's revised Walker ward. This area would be joined with part of the existing Monkchester ward and all of the existing Walker ward to form a revised Walker ward. Finally in this area, the existing Walkergate ward would be modified to lose its south-eastern part to the City Council's revised Byker ward, as detailed earlier, and to gain part of the existing Monkchester ward.

142 Under the City Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 7% above the city average in Byker ward (3% above by 2006), 10% above in Walker ward (3% above by 2006) and 2% below in Walkergate ward (2% above by 2006).

143 The City Council also forwarded pro-forma letters containing 31 signatures from local residents proposing a revised Monkchester ward. Councillor Brown, the secretary of the local Labour Party branch, and the Monkchester Community Co-ordinator based at the City Council, all raised concerns about the future of Monkchester ward. The headmaster of Welbeck Primary School proposed that the school be transferred from Byker ward to Monkchester ward as it mainly serves the Monkchester community.

144 We carefully considered the representations received. We noted that there had been some local concern about the future of Monkchester ward, with an alternative ward being proposed by a number of residents. However, we also noted that an amended Monkchester ward had been proposed to the City Council during its consultation stage, but this had not been adopted as 'whilst it would be possible to centre a ward around Monkchester it would require elements of [the] existing Walker and Byker [wards] to form a viable size ... this option would require significantly more change over existing boundaries and affect more communities than the option put forward for consultation.' It was not possible to look at areas in isolation, and we considered that adopting this revised Monkchester ward would have a significant effect on surrounding communities, given that at present the ward is significantly over-represented and would therefore require a large transfer of electors.

145 In the light of this, we adopted the City Council's proposals for this area in full. We considered that the scheme utilised strong boundaries and addressed the significant over-representation in the south-eastern part of the city. Furthermore, we noted that the City Council, which received a copy of the submission from the headmaster of Welbeck Primary School during its consultation exercise, amended its proposed boundary between its revised Byker and Walker wards to facilitate the inclusion of the school within the community which it serves in the former Monkchester ward.

146 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor for Byker, Walker and Walkergate wards would be the same as under the City Council's proposals.

147 At Stage Three, we received 34 representations in response to our draft recommendations for these wards. The City Council, following a public consultation, moved away from its Stage One proposals for the boundaries between Byker and Walkergate wards and between Byker and Walker wards, which we adopted as part of our draft recommendations. It proposed the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards run along the section of Scrogg Road north of Welbeck Road. It stated that the residents to the east of Scrogg Road which the council proposed to be included in Byker ward in its Stage One submission, 'have no natural affinity with the Byker redevelopment and have much closer links with the residential area to the west and south of St. Mary's RC Schools'. It stated, that for electors residing in the area of the existing Walkergate ward bounded by Finsbury Avenue, Scrogg Road and Welbeck Road, 'the links [with the remainder of Walkergate] are less strong and it has been suggested that Scrogg Road represents the natural boundary' between Walkergate and Byker wards. It argued for the area of our proposed Walkergate ward to the west of Scrogg Road and north of Fossway to be included in Walkergate ward as the residents in this area have 'more in common with the residential area clustered around Walkergate School, whilst the Fossway would represent a significant barrier between this area and the remainder of Byker. It would also widen ... the electoral imbalance between the two wards'. The number of electors in the City Council's Byker and Walkergate wards, as proposed at Stage Three, would vary from the city average by 4% and 8% respectively by 2006, compared to 3% and 2% respectively by 2006 under our proposals. The City Council proposed transferring the seven houses adjacent to Welbeck Primary School from our proposed Walker ward to Byker, due to 'the properties representing a natural part of the Byker community' and the transfer 'would have negligible electoral implications'.

148 Walkergate Liberal Democrats opposed our proposals for Byker and Walkergate wards and proposed that Scrogg Road, north of Welbeck Road, comprise part of the boundary between the wards. They stated that Walkergate has a strong community identity and that the contrasting housing styles on either side of Scrogg Road mean that Scrogg Road is recognised as a clear boundary between the Byker and Walkergate communities. They claimed the section of our proposed boundary between these wards along the backs of houses on Whinneyfield Road is 'less visible [than Scrogg Road] and would only be accessible by crossing from the footpath that runs between the back of the houses on Whinneyfield Road and Kentmere Avenue'. They supported the City Council's Stage Three proposal to place the electors residing in the area in the existing Walkergate ward bounded by Finsbury Avenue, Scrogg Road and Welbeck Road in Byker ward. They stated that 'many residents on the "Walkergate side" of Finsbury Avenue already believe themselves to be in Monkchester'. They stated that the electoral variance of their proposed Walkergate ward is 'less than 8% of the average for the City ... [which] remains within the parameters (+/- 10%) set within ... [our] Draft Recommendations'.

149 Walkergate Branch Ward Labour Party broadly supported minor revisions to our proposed boundary between Byker and Walker wards by proposing the transfer of seven houses adjacent to Welbeck Primary School from our proposed Walker ward to Byker ward. It also supported amendments to our proposed boundaries between Byker and South Heaton wards

and between our proposed South Heaton and Walkergate wards, as detailed in the previous section.

150 Five local residents of Whinneyfield Road expressed opposition to being placed in Byker ward, as proposed in our draft recommendations. They stated that the section of the existing Byker ward in the vicinity of Trojan Avenue, which we propose to transfer into the Walkergate ward, 'is almost equal in size to the portion of [the] existing Walkergate ward around Whinneyfield road proposed to join Byker ward'. They also stated that Scrogg Road and Welbeck Road is the 'natural barrier between the communities' of Byker and Walkergate and that such a boundary would result in acceptable levels of electoral equality.

151 Two local residents opposed our proposed boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards and proposed that part of the boundary runs along Scrogg Road from Fossway to Welbeck Road, which 'would unite all of Walkergate' with the resultant number of electors in Walkergate ward 'still within the +/-10% limit set by the Boundary Committee' by 2006. A local resident objected to our proposed boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards and stated that, 'if Scrogg Road was used as the Boundary this would re-unite all of the Walkergate ward'. A local resident stated that the areas of the existing Walkergate ward which we proposed to transfer to Byker have 'traditionally been an integral part of Walkergate and [have] no historical or neighbourhood links with Byker'. He argued that the 'reasonable' boundary would be along Scrogg Road and Sutton Street and he stated that this would result in very similar levels of electoral equality to our proposals outlined in the draft recommendations.

152 Two residents proposed transferring Baret Road, West Farm Road and Whinneyfield Road into Walkergate ward. They proposed we should 'transfer the residents from the Monkchester ward' into Byker ward as these residents 'actually live closer to Byker' than the residents of Baret Road, West Farm Road and Whinneyfield Road. Two residents opposed 'the proposals contained in the draft recommendations [that] would move the current boundary of Walkergate Ward eastwards from Scrogg Road to the back of houses on Whinneyfield Road'. They stated that the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards is clearly defined by Scrogg Road, which separated the differing housing styles contained in Walkergate relative to the adjacent ward. They stated that our proposal to run part of the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards along the back of houses on the eastern side of Whinneyfield Road would be less visible.

153 Eight residents stated that the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards is clearly defined by Scrogg Road, which separated the differing housing styles contained in Walkergate ward relative to the existing Monkchester ward. They stated that our proposal to run part of the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards along the backs of houses on the eastern side of Whinneyfield Road would be 'much less visible and would only be accessible by crossing from the footpath that runs between the back of the houses on Whinneyfield Road and Kentmere Avenue'.

154 A further 14 submissions were received from local residents objecting to our proposals to transfer of a section of the existing Walkergate ward to Byker ward.

155 Having carefully considered the representations received, we intend to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. We note the arguments based on community identity, clarity and accessibility of the boundary and acceptable electoral equality for the use of Scrogg Road, north of Welbeck Road, as opposed to our proposal to use the backs of houses along Whinneyfield Road, as the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards. We have not been convinced by the arguments that this section of our proposed boundary between these wards, as outlined in our draft recommendations, is considerably less identifiable than the existing boundary which runs along Scrogg Road. We acknowledge the argument that there is a high level of community identity in the existing Walkergate ward. However, we consider the worse

levels of electoral equality resulting from a proposed Walkergate ward having Scrogg Road as a boundary, to be unjustifiable given the evidence received.

156 We note the argument that the number of electors in this proposal for Walkergate ward varies from the city average by an acceptable margin (8% above the city average by 2006). However, the ward with the highest variance in our proposals, with the exception of our proposed Newburn ward, is Fenham ward, only 6% above the city average by 2006. The proposal for the boundary between Byker and Walkergate to run along Scrogg Road between Fossway and Welbeck Road would result in the number of electors in Walkergate ward varying from the city average by 8% by 2006, higher than the corresponding variance in our proposed Fenham ward. We note the proposal to run the boundary between Byker and Walkergate wards along Sutton Street and Scrogg Road, north of Welbeck Road, based on the arguments that the area between Valentia Avenue and Sutton Street is currently contained in Monkchester ward, that this area is close to Byker and that such a proposal would yield negligible difference in the electoral variance for both Byker and Walkergate wards compared to our proposals. This proposal would entail the transfer of the area between Valentia Avenue and Sutton Street from our proposed Walkergate ward to Byker ward. Although we accept that this proposal would result in electorate numbers for both wards being very similar to those under our proposals, we have not received any support from residents in the area west of Sutton Street for such a proposal.

157 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Byker, Walker and Walkergate wards would be the same as under our final recommendations. Our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A.

## Electoral cycle

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

## Conclusions

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

- we propose amending the boundary between Blakelaw and Wingrove wards to transfer Moorside North and the houses on the eastern side of Wingrove Road North from Wingrove ward to Blakelaw ward.

160 We conclude that, in Newcastle upon Tyne:

- there should be no change in the council size of 78, as at present;
- there should be 26 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

161 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	78	78	78	78
Number of wards	26	26	26	26
Average number of electors per councillor	2,566	2,566	2,542	2,542
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	18	4	18	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	12	1	13	0

162 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 18 to four, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the city average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with only one ward, Newburn, varying by more than 10% from the average, at 12%. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

*Final recommendation*

Newcastle upon Tyne City Council should comprise 78 councillors serving 26 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

## Parish council electoral arrangements

163 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 city 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 Brunswick, North Gosforth and Woolsington parishes to reflect the proposed city wards.

164 The parish of Brunswick is currently served by eight councillors and is unwarded. At Stage One, the City Council, following a request from the parish council, proposed a reduction in the number of parish councillors to six. Our city warding arrangements would be unaffected by this proposal and we were content to put this proposal forward as part of our draft recommendations.

165 We received no representations regarding the parishing arrangements of Brunswick parish during Stage Three. Consequently, we are content to confirm the arrangements proposed in our draft recommendations as final.

*Final recommendation*

Brunswick Parish Council should comprise six councillors, two fewer than at present, and should remain unwarded.

166 The parish of North Gosforth is currently served by 10 councillors representing two wards: East, which is represented by four councillors, and West, which is represented by six councillors.

167 At Stage One the City Council, following a request from the parish council, proposed that the two parish wards be abolished and that the parish should be unwarded. This was also requested directly to us by North Gosforth Parish Council. Our city warding arrangements would be unaffected by this proposal and we were content to put forward this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

168 We received no representations regarding the parishing arrangements of North Gosforth parish during Stage Three. Consequently, we are content to confirm the arrangements proposed in our draft recommendations as final.

*Final recommendation*

North Gosforth Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, as at present, and should be unwarded.

169 The parish of Woolsington is currently served by 12 councillors representing four wards: Wards 1, 2 and 3 are represented by two parish councillors each, and Ward 4 is represented by six parish councillors.

170 At Stage One the City Council, following a request from the parish council, proposed that polling district NHB, which is currently part of Ward 2, should be transferred to Ward 1. This would result in Ward 2 consisting wholly of polling district NHC, the urban area to the west of Newbiggin Lane and to the south of the lane which runs to the north of properties on Harydene and Lowbiggin. Each of these parish wards would continue to be represented by two parish councillors. Our city warding arrangements would be unaffected by this proposal and we were content to put this forward as part of our draft recommendations.

171 We received three representations regarding the internal electoral arrangements of Woolsington parish during Stage Three. Woolsington Parish Council, supported by the City Council, proposed renaming the wards of its parish, Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 3 and Ward 4 as Callerton, Bedeburn, Woolsington & Bank Foot and Newbiggin Hall respectively in order to reflect the respective names of the communities they each contain. Woolsington Residents Association proposed that Woolsington village, contained in Ward 3 of Woolsington parish, be transferred to Castle ward.

172 Having considered the representations received regarding Woolsington parish during Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. In light of the submission from Woolsington Parish Council, we intend to adopt the names of the parish wards of Woolsington parish, as proposed by the Parish Council.

*Final recommendation*

Woolsington Parish Council should comprise 12 parish councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Callerton (returning two councillors), Bedeburn (two), Newbiggin Hall (six) and Woolsington & Bank Foot (two). The revised boundary between Callerton and Bedeburn is illustrated and named on the large maps.

173 The parish of Blakelaw & North Fenham is currently served by 10 councillors representing three wards: Blakelaw, Cragston and North Fenham, returning five, three and two

councillors. During Stage Three we received one submission regarding the parishing arrangements of Blakelaw & North Fenham parish. The Parish Council proposed increasing the number of parish councillors returned to each of the parish wards of Blakelaw and North Fenham by one, thereby increasing the total number of parish councillors from 10 to 12. It proposed that the number of councillors returned from North Fenham parish ward be increased from two to three and the number of councillors returned from Blakelaw ward be increased from five to six. It argued for the increase on the basis of high demand for councillor positions and high workload for present councillors.

174 Having considered the representation received, we accept the Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council's arguments regarding the size of the parish council and we propose increasing the number of parish councillors of Blakelaw & North Fenham from 10 to 12.

*Final recommendation*

Blakelaw & North Fenham Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, two more than at present, representing three wards: Blakelaw (returning six councillors, one more than at present), Cragston (three councillors, as at present) and North Fenham (returning three councillors, one more than at present).

*Map 2: Final recommendations for Newcastle upon Tyne*



## 6 What happens next?

175 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Newcastle upon Tyne 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).

176 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 2 December 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.

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



# Appendix A

## Final recommendations for Newcastle upon Tyne: Detailed mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Newcastle upon Tyne area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the ward boundaries within the city and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on the large maps.

The **large maps** illustrate the proposed warding arrangements for Newcastle upon Tyne.

*Map A1: Final recommendations for Newcastle upon Tyne: 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 city of Newcastle upon Tyne**

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 city of Newcastle upon Tyne**

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 / Numbers of parish councillors for the parish of ...**

This describes how electoral arrangements in four parishes in Newcastle upon Tyne are being changed.

### **Maps**

This requires Newcastle upon Tyne City 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 Newcastle upon Tyne

---

### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

---

**2003 No.**

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENGLAND**

### **The City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Changes) Order 2003**

*Made* - - - - - *2003*

*Coming into force in accordance with article 1(2)[ and insert  
other sub-paragraphs of commencement article]*

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 October 2003 on its review of the city(d) of Newcastle upon Tyne:

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 City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Changes) Order 2003.

(2) This Order[, with the exception of articles *insert numbers*,] shall come into force –

- 
- (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 Newcastle upon Tyne has the status of a city.
- (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.

- (a) [for the purposes of article[s and] *insert relevant number or numbers*] and for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to any election to be held on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004, on the day after that on which it is made;
  - (b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.
- (3) Articles *insert numbers* shall come into force –
- (a) for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to the election of a parish councillor for the parishes of *insert names* to be held on the ordinary day of elections in *insert year*, on 15th October *insert preceding year*;
  - (b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of elections in *insert year*.

## Interpretation

### 2. In this Order –

“city” means the city of Newcastle upon Tyne;

“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 City of Newcastle upon Tyne (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 Newcastle upon Tyne City Council; and

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

## Wards of the city of Newcastle upon Tyne

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

(2) The city shall be divided into twenty-six wards which shall bear the names set out in the Schedule.

(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 city of Newcastle upon Tyne

4.—(1) Elections of all councillors for all wards of the city 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 city 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) See the City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980 (S.I. 1980/1054).  
 (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).

- (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.

(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 North Gosforth(a)**

5. The existing wards of the parish of North Gosforth shall be abolished.

#### **Wards of the parish of Woolsington**

6.—(1) The existing wards of the parish of Woolsington shall be abolished.

(2) The parish shall be divided into four parish wards which shall bear the names Bedeburn, Callerton, Newbiggin Hill, and Woolsington and Bank Foot; and the wards shall comprise the areas designated on sheets 1 and 2 by reference to the name of the ward and demarcated by orange lines.

(3) The number of councillors to be elected for the Newbiggin Hill parish ward shall be six and for each of the Bedeburn, Callerton, and Woolsington and Bank Foot parish wards shall be two.

#### **Numbers of parish councillors for the parish of Blakelaw and North Fenham(b)**

7.—(1) The number of parish councillors to be elected for the parish of Blakelaw and North Fenham shall be twelve.

(2) The number of councillors to be elected for the Blakelaw parish ward shall be six and for each of the Cragston and North Fenham parish wards shall be three.

#### **Numbers of parish councillors for the parish of Brunswick**

8. The number of parish councillors to be elected for the parish of Brunswick shall be six.

#### **Parish elections**

9.—(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*

---

(a) The area of the parish of North Gosforth was altered by the Newcastle upon Tyne (Parishes) Order 2002 (S.I. 2002/2516) and the Newcastle upon Tyne (Parishes) Order 1998 (S.I. 1998/3242).

(b) The parish of Blakelaw and North Fenham was created by the Newcastle upon Tyne (Parish) Order 2001 (S.I. 2001/95) and divided into three parish wards by the City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Blakelaw and North Fenham Parish Council) (Establishment, Electoral Arrangements, etc.) Parish Order 2001.

(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

10. Newcastle upon Tyne City Council shall make a print of the map marked “Map referred to in the City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Changes) Order 2003” available for inspection at its offices by any member of the public at any reasonable time.

## Electoral registers

11. The Electoral Registration Officer(b) for the city 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

12. The City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980(c) is revoked, save for article 8.

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

---

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

(b) 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).

(c) S.I.1980/1054.

Chairman of the Commission

Secretary to the Commission

## SCHEDULE

article 3

### NAMES OF WARDS

Benwell and Scotswood	Fenham	South Jesmond
Blakelaw	Kenton	Walker
Byker	Lemington	Walkergate
Castle	Newburn	Westerhope
Dene	North Heaton	Westgate
Denton	North Jesmond	West Gosforth
East Gosforth	Ouseburn	Wingrove
Elswick	Parklands	Woolsington
Fawdon	South Heaton	

#### 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 city of Newcastle upon Tyne.

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 city and provides for the creation of 26 new wards. That article and the Schedule 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 8 make electoral changes in the parishes of North Gosforth, Woolsington, Bakelaw and North Fenham, and Brunswick.

[Article 9 provides for elections of [certain] parish councils in the city.]

Article 11 obliges the Electoral Registration Officer to make any necessary amendments to the electoral register to reflect the new electoral arrangements.

Article 12 revokes the City of Newcastle upon Tyne (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980, with the exception of article 8.

The areas of the new city 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 Newcastle upon Tyne City Council and at the principal office of the Electoral Commission at Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.