

# Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Rotherham

*February 2003*

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# Contents

	Page
What is The Boundary Committee for England?	5
Summary	7
1. Introduction	13
2. Current electoral arrangements	15
3. Submissions received	19
4. Analysis and draft recommendations	21
5. What happens next?	33
Appendix	
A Draft recommendations for Rotherham: Detailed mapping	35
B Code of practice on written consultation	37



# What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England (BCFE) 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  
Ann M Kelly  
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

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



# Summary

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Rotherham on 8 May 2002.

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

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

- **in 13 of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the borough average and seven wards vary by more than 20% from the average;**
- **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 13 wards and by more than 20% in eight wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraph 58) are that:

- **Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council should have 63 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, instead of 22 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net decrease of one, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries.**

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

- **In only one of the proposed 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10% from the borough average**
- **By 2006, no wards are expected to vary by more than 10% from the borough average.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Aston-cum-Aughton, Bramley, Dalton, Maltby, Thrybergh, Thurcroft and Wickersley.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 11 February 2003. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission which will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 7 April 2003:

**Team Leader  
Rotherham Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large map reference</b>
1	Boston Castle	3	Part of Boston ward; part of Central ward; part of Park ward.	1 and 3
2	Dinnington	3	The parishes of Dinnington St John's, Firbeck, Gildingwells, Laughton-en-le-Morthen and Letwell; the proposed Thurcroft South parish ward of Thurcroft parish.	4, 5 and 7
3	Hellaby	3	The proposed Bramley South parish ward of Bramley parish; the proposed Maltby West parish ward of Maltby parish; the proposed Wickersley South parish ward of Wickersley parish.	4 and 5
4	Holderness	3	The proposed Aston-cum-Aughton East parish ward of Aston-cum-Aughton parish.	4 and 6
5	Hooper	3	The parishes of Brampton, Bierlow and Wentworth; part of Brampton, Melton and Wentworth ward.	1
6	Keppel	3	Part of Kimberworth ward; part of Thorpe Hesley ward; part of Greasbrough ward.	1 and 3
7	Lindrick	3	Unchanged (the parishes of North & South Anston and Woodsetts).	4, 5 and 7
8	Maltby	3	The parish of Hooton Levitt; the proposed Maltby East parish ward of Maltby parish.	4 and 5
9	Rawmarsh	3	Part of Central ward; part of Greasbrough ward; part of Rawmarsh East ward; part of Rawmarsh West ward.	1 and 2
10	Rother Vale	3	The parishes of Orgreave, Treeton and Ulley; the proposed Thurcroft North parish ward of Thurcroft parish; the proposed Aston-cum-Aughton West parish ward of Aston-cum-Aughton parish.	1, 2, 3 and 4
11	Rotherham East	3	Part of Herringthorpe ward; part of Park ward.	1, 2 and 3
12	Rotherham West	3	Part of Central ward; part of Kimberworth ward.	3 and 4
13	Silverwood	3	The parishes of Hooton Roberts and Ravenfield; the proposed Bramley North parish of Bramley parish; the proposed Dalton East parish ward of Dalton parish; the proposed Thrybergh North parish ward of Thrybergh parish; part of Herringthorpe ward; part of Rawmarsh East ward.	2 and 4
14	Sitwell	3	The parish of Whiston; part of Broom ward.	3, 4 and 6
15	Swinton	3	Part of Rawmarsh East ward; part of Swinton ward; part of Wath ward.	2
16	Valley	3	The proposed Dalton West parish ward of Dalton parish; the proposed Thrybergh South parish ward of Thrybergh parish; part of Boston ward; part of Broom ward; part of Herringthorpe ward; part of Park ward.	2, 3 and 4
17	Wales	3	Unchanged (the parishes of Harthill with Woodall, Thorpe Salvin, Todwick and Wales).	4, 5 and 6

18	Wath	3	Part of Brampton, Melton & Wentworth ward; part of Swinton ward; part of Wath ward.	1 and 2
19	Waverley	3	The parishes of Brinsworth and Catcliffe; part of Boston ward.	3
20	Wickersley	3	The proposed Bramley Central parish ward of Bramley parish; the proposed Dalton South parish ward of Dalton parish; the proposed Wickersley North parish ward of Wickersley parish.	4
21	Wingfield	3	Part of Greasbrough ward; part of Kimberworth ward; part of Thorpe Hesley ward.	1

*Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.*

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

Table 2: Draft recommendations for Rotherham

	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	Boston Castle	3	9,582	3,194	3%	9,446	3,149	1%
2	Dinnington	3	8,929	2,976	-4%	9,237	3,079	-1%
3	Hellaby	3	9,206	3,069	-1%	9,148	3,049	-2%
4	Holderness	3	9,513	3,171	3%	9,650	3,217	4%
5	Hooper	3	8,479	2,826	-9%	9,051	3,017	-3%
6	Keppel	3	9,487	3,162	2%	9,380	3,127	1%
7	Lindrick	3	9,224	3,075	-1%	9,011	3,004	-3%
8	Maltby	3	9,575	3,192	3%	9,518	3,173	2%
9	Rawmarsh	3	9,732	3,244	5%	9,513	3,171	2%
10	Rother Vale	3	8,256	2,752	-11%	9,522	3,174	2%
11	Rotherham East	3	9,679	3,226	4%	9,505	3,168	2%
12	Rotherham West	3	9,579	3,193	3%	9,356	3,119	0%
13	Silverwood	3	8,648	2,883	-7%	9,302	3,101	0%
14	Sitwell	3	9,693	3,231	4%	9,536	3,179	2%
15	Swinton	3	9,386	3,129	1%	9,247	3,082	-1%
16	Valley	3	9,341	3,114	1%	9,425	3,142	1%
17	Wales	3	8,454	2,818	-9%	8,426	2,809	-10%
18	Wath	3	9,466	3,155	2%	9,415	3,138	1%
19	Waverley	3	9,367	3,122	1%	9,222	3,074	-1%
20	Wickersley	3	9,572	3,191	3%	9,399	3,133	1%
21	Wingfield	3	9,694	3,231	4%	9,464	3,155	2%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>194,862</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>195,773</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,093</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,108</b>	<b>-</b>

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

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



# 1 Introduction

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

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Rotherham. Rotherham's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1978 (Report no. 306).

3 In carrying out these metropolitan reviews we must have 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.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Rotherham is being 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 to The Electoral Commission on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish and town councils in the borough.

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

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a 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 on the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution

of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

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

Table 3: Stages of the review

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

10 Stage One began on 8 May 2002, when we wrote to Rotherham Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified South Yorkshire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, National Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, Members of the European Parliament for the Yorkshire and the Humber Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 27 August 2002.

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

12 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 11 February 2003 and will end on 7 April 2003, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

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

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

14 The borough of Rotherham lies on the south - eastern edge of South Yorkshire. Comprising a mix of urban towns and rural villages, Rotherham has good road and rail links with the rest of South Yorkshire and the north. The electorate of the borough is 194,862 (December 2001). The Council presently has 66 members who are elected from 22 wards. All wards are three-member wards. The borough contains 29 parishes.

15 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,953 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,966 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 13 of the 22 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average, seven wards by more than 20% and four wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley ward, where the councillor represents 64% more electors than the borough average.

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

*Map 1: Existing wards in Rotherham*

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate 2001	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate 2006	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Anston & Woodsetts	3	9,224	3,081	4%	9,011	3,004	1%
2	Aston, Orgreave & Ulley	3	11,912	3,971	34%	12,523	4,174	41%
3	Boston	3	7,708	2,569	-13%	7,568	2,523	-15%
4	Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley	3	14,500	4,833	64%	14,537	4,846	63%
5	Brampton, Melton & Wentworth	3	7,354	2,451	-17%	7,875	2,625	-12%
6	Brinsworth, Catcliffe & Treeton	3	10,462	3,487	18%	10,602	3,534	19%
7	Broom	3	7,892	2,631	-11%	7,777	2,592	-13%
8	Central	3	5,890	1,963	-34%	5,814	1,938	-35%
9	Dalton, Hooton Roberts, & Thrybergh	3	10,253	3,418	16%	10,953	3,651	23%
10	Greasbrough	3	6,961	2,320	-21%	6,801	2,267	-24%
11	Herringthorpe	3	6,367	2,122	-28%	6,272	2,091	-30%
12	Kimberworth	3	8,506	2,835	-4%	8,339	2,780	-6%
13	Kiveton Park	3	8,454	2,818	-5%	8,426	2,809	-5%
14	Maltby	3	13,328	4,443	50%	13,195	4,398	48%
15	Park	3	7,010	2,337	-21%	6,848	2,283	-23%
16	Rawmarsh East	3	7,429	2,476	-16%	7,291	2,430	-18%
17	Rawmarsh West	3	8,201	2,734	-7%	8,097	2,699	-9%
18	St John's	3	9,034	3,011	2%	9,339	3,113	5%
19	Swinton	3	9,070	3,023	2%	8,891	2,964	0%
20	Thorpe Hesley	3	8,657	2,886	-2%	8,548	2,849	-4%

21	Thurcroft & Whiston	3	8,047	2,682	-9%	8,489	2,830	-5%
22	Wath	3	8,603	2,868	-3%	8,577	2,859	-4%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>194,862</b>	-	-	<b>195,773</b>	-	-
	<b>Averages</b>	-	-	<b>2,953</b>	-	-	<b>2,966</b>	-

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

*Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley ward were relatively under-represented by 64%, while electors in Central ward were relatively over-represented by 34%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

### 3 Submissions received

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

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

#### Rotherham Borough Council

19 The Borough Council proposed a council of 63 members, three fewer than at present, serving 21 wards, compared to the existing 22. The Council's proposals would provide good levels of electoral equality throughout the borough, with no wards having a variance over 10% by 2006. The Borough Council also suggested several ward name changes.

#### Parish and town councils

20 Representations were received from two parish councils. Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council objected to the proposed division of its parish between the proposed Holderness ward and Rothervale ward. It put forward an alternative division in the area. The parish council also suggested a proposal of 19 borough wards with average electors of 10,300. A representation was received from Thorpe Salvin Parish Council concerning parish boundaries, which we are unable to consider as part of this review.

#### Other representations

21 A representation was received from a local resident who suggested the creation of a new Whiston and South West Rotherham ward, so that Whiston would no longer have to share councillors with Thurcroft.



## 4 Analysis and draft recommendations

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

23 As described earlier, the prime aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Rotherham 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'.

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

25 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.

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

### Electorate forecasts

27 Since 1978 there has been a 10% increase in the electorate of Rotherham borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 1% from 194,862 to 195,773 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Rothervale ward, although a significant amount is also expected in Silverwood ward. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

28 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the Borough Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

### Council size

29 Rotherham Borough Council presently has 66 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 63 members, a reduction of three. It recognised that with the introduction of new political management arrangements, there was a need to review council size. This is to ensure

a council size that is most appropriate in terms of the roles and responsibilities of councillors and the internal management of the Council.

30 The Borough Council felt that it is important to consider how changes in council size will affect the broader representational roles of councillors and how councillors work within their respective areas. It is important that any changes to council size do not have an adverse effect on councillors' capacity to fulfil their representational role. This suggests then, that the council should be retained at a sufficient size to ensure that councillors can carry out their respective roles in relation to their executive or scrutiny function, whilst having the necessary time and capacity to engage fully in their broader representational roles within their local areas.

31 To provide appropriate flexibility for non - executive members to sit on one or two scrutiny panels and ensure that members have the capacity to fulfil their representational roles would suggest a council size of at least 60. It is the Borough Council's view that a council size of 63 will secure effective operation of functions as outlined in the Council's constitution, adopted in 2001. The decision by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to propose a council size of 63 was reached following careful consideration of different options for council size and further consideration of the implications of different council size in the rural and urban areas of the borough, in order to ensure that electors in the rural and urban areas of Rotherham have equal access to a councillor.

32 In outlining political management arrangements, the Council highlighted scrutiny panels, the performance and scrutiny overview committee and the executive and non - executive roles of councillors. The Council considered that in the light of the new political management arrangements and to ensure that members have the capacity to fulfil their representational roles it would need a council size of at least 60. Upon giving further consideration to the distribution of councillors in urban and rural areas it was concluded that the council would best function with 63 members.

33 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 63 members.

## Electoral arrangements

34 In view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we have based our recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than the current arrangements. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a) Brampton, Melton & Wentworth, Swinton and Wath wards;
- b) Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley, Dalton, Hooton Roberts & Thrybergh and Rawmarsh East wards;
- c) Anston & Woodsetts, Maltby and St John's wards;
- d) Aston, Orgreave & Ulley, Brinsworth, Catcliffe & Treeton and Kiveton Park wards;
- e) Boston, Broom, Herringthorpe, Park and Thurcroft & Whiston wards;
- f) Broom, Central, Dalton, Hooton Roberts & Thrybergh, Herringthorpe and Kimberworth wards;
- g) Greasborough, Rawmarsh West and Thorpe Hesley wards.

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

## Brampton, Melton & Wentworth, Swinton and Wath wards

35 These three wards cover the north of the borough. Brampton, Melton & Wentworth ward comprises the parishes of Brampton Bierlow and Wentworth and an unparished area. Wath and Swinton wards are unparished. Brampton, Melton & Wentworth, Swinton and Wath wards currently have 17% fewer, 2% more and 3% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (12% fewer, equal to and 4% fewer in 2006).

36 In this area, the Council proposed slightly revised warding arrangements based predominantly on the existing ward arrangements. The proposed Hooper ward would retain the existing Brampton, Melton & Wentworth ward boundary to its south. To the east, the proposed boundary would follow Brook Dike, Packman Road, along Wentworth Road and Harding Road then follow the pathway behind Clay Hill. Its proposed Wath ward would comprise the majority of the current Wath ward but include the area of the current Brampton, Melton & Wentworth ward to the east of Brooks Dike. Its boundary in the south with Swinton ward would follow Roman Ridge Dyke, a pathway behind Golden Smithies Lane and St Mary's Crescent, continuing south behind the houses on Church Road and along Park Road and Woodlands Crescent. Where Woodlands Crescent meets Rockingham Road, the boundary would continue southwards along the A663, Warren Vale. Swinton ward would retain the majority of the existing ward. However, its boundary with Wath ward would be amended as stated previously. In the east and south east, the proposed boundary would follow along the River Don, to the north of Hooton Road where would continue in a westerly direction to the north of Springfield Road. From here it would continue south along the railway line and then west to the corner of Sandalwood Rise, where the boundary would follow an easterly direction along Wentworth Road, before continuing south along the railway line to where it meets Colliers Brook, and would continue west along Colliers Brook before proceeding west along Wentworth Road towards Swinton Common. Under the Borough Council's scheme, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hooper, Swinton and Wath wards would have 9% fewer, 1% more and 2% more electors per councillor than the borough average initially (3% fewer, 1% fewer and 1% more by 2006).

37 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification. We consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities, with providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

## Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley, Dalton, Hooton Roberts & Thrybergh and Rawmarsh East wards

38 These three wards are located in the north east and east of the borough. Dalton, Hooton Roberts & Thrybergh ward comprises the parishes of Dalton, Hooton Roberts and Thrybergh. Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley ward comprises the parishes of Bramley, Ravenfield and Wickersley. Rawmarsh East ward is unparished. Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley, Dalton, Hooton Roberts & Thrybergh and Rawmarsh East wards currently have 64% more, 16% more and 16% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (63% more, 23% more and 18% fewer by 2006).

39 In this area the Council proposed a slightly revised warding pattern based mainly on the existing arrangements. The southern boundary of its proposed Silverwood ward would follow the railway line and continue west behind Wayford Avenue, along Lidget Lane, north along Moor Lane South and continue around the back of the houses along the Crescent East and the Crescent West, taking in the area comprising Belvedere Parade and Holyrood Rise. It would also include part of Dalston parish to the south of Holling's Lane. The boundary would then follow Vale Road, Poplar Avenue and south along Doncaster Road. Its western boundary would include the unparished areas of the current Herringthorpe and Rawmarsh East wards to the

east of Clay Pit Lane and St Nicholas Road and to the north of Kilnhurst Road. The proposed Wickersley ward would share its northern boundary with the proposed Silverwood ward and in the east of the ward would follow the M18 and continue west along the A631 Bawtry Road. The boundary to the west of the ward would continue behind the houses on Marcliff Crescent, continuing through Brecks plantation and following Hilltop Lane. The proposed Hellaby ward would comprise the area of the current Bramley, Ravenfield & Wickersley ward to the south of the A631 Bawtry Road and to the east of the M18. It would also comprise an area of Maltby parish. The boundary would follow Dale Hill Road, continuing south behind the houses on Trueman Green, Frobisher Grove and Columbus Way, until it meets Lilly Hall Road. From Lilly Hall Road the boundary would continue behind the school as far as Larch Plantation and continue towards Rotherham Road, behind the houses on Oak Road and Lilac Grove. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hellaby, Silverwood and Wickersley wards would be 1% fewer, 7% fewer and 3% more than the borough average respectively and 2% fewer, equal to and 1% more than the borough average by 2006.

40 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification as we consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities, while providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

### **Anston & Woodsetts, Maltby and St John's wards**

41 These three wards are located in the west and south - west of the borough. Maltby ward comprises the parish of Maltby, St John's ward comprises the parishes of Dinnington St John's, Firbeck, Gildingwells, Hooton Levitt, Laughton-en-le-Morthen and Laughton parish ward of Thurcroft parish. Anston & Woodsetts comprises the parishes of North & South Anston and Woodsetts. Anston & Woodsetts, Maltby and St John's wards currently have 4% more, 50% more and 2% more electors per councillor than the borough average (1% more, 48% more and 5% more in 2006).

42 The Council proposed revised warding arrangements in this area. It proposed that the parish of Hooton Levitt be combined with that part of the parish of Maltby not to be included within its proposed Hellaby ward. Neighbouring Dinnington ward would retain all of its boundaries, with a minor alteration in the south - west of the ward, where the boundary would follow Laughton Road, continue down the dismantled railway line, then head west along Laughton Common Road where it meets with the existing boundary. It proposed that Anston & Woodsetts ward be maintained upon its current boundaries but be renamed Lindrick ward. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Dinnington, Lindrick and Maltby wards would be 4% fewer, 1% fewer and 3% more than the borough average respectively and 1% fewer, 3% fewer and 2% more than the borough average by 2006.

43 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification as we consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities while providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

### **Aston, Orgreave & Ulley, Brinsworth, Catcliffe & Treeton and Kiveton Park wards**

44 These three wards are situated in the south and south - west of the borough. Kiveton Park ward comprises the parishes of Harthill with Woodhall, Thorpe Salvin, Todwick and Wales. Aston, Orgreave & Ulley ward comprises the parishes of Aston-cum-Aughton, Orgreave and Ulley and Brinsworth, Catcliffe & Treeton ward comprises the parishes of Brinsworth, Catcliffe and Treeton. Aston, Orgreave & Ulley, Brinsworth, Catcliffe & Treeton and Kiveton Park wards

currently have 34% more, 18% more and 5% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (41% more, 19% more and 5% fewer in 2006).

45 The Borough Council's proposed Wales ward would remain unchanged. Its proposed Holderness ward would comprise part of the parish of Aston-cum-Aughton. The boundary would follow Chesterfield Road until it meets the A618 Aughton Road, where it would continue behind the school and houses on Springwood Avenue and Coral Road and proceed along the footpath to Penny Hill Lane. The remainder of the parish would be combined with the parishes of Orgreave, Treeton and Ulley and part of Thurcroft to form the proposed Rother Vale ward works. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Holderness, Rother Vale and Wales wards would be 3% more, 11% fewer and 9% fewer than the borough average respectively and 4% more, 2% more and 10% fewer than the borough average by 2006.

46 In addition to the Borough Council's proposal, we also received a representation from Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council who objected to the proposed division of its parish between the proposed Holderness and Rother Vale ward which it argued would divide the Swallownest community. It proposed that the number of borough wards be reduced to 19 and that the whole of this community be included within one ward. Although we sympathise with these proposals, they would give an electoral variance of 12% under our proposed council size, whereas adopting the Borough Council's scheme allows for better electoral equality. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification. We consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities, with providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

## Boston, Broom, Park and Thurcroft & Whiston wards

47 These four wards are situated in the centre and east of the borough. Thurcroft & Whiston ward comprises the parish of Whiston and Thurcroft and Brampton parish wards of Thurcroft parish, while Boston, Broom and Park wards are all unparished. Boston, Broom, Park and Thurcroft & Whiston wards currently have 13% fewer, 11% fewer, 21% fewer and 9% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (15% fewer, 13% fewer, 23% fewer and 5% fewer in 2006).

48 In this area the Council proposed creating three new wards. Its proposed Waverley ward would comprise the parishes of Brinsworth and Catcliffe. The boundary in the north of Waverley ward would follow the footpath behind the golf course in the current Boston ward. The proposed Boston Castle ward would follow the Trans Pennine Trail footpath towards the football ground and continue along the A630 Centenary Way, in the north of the ward. The eastern boundary would follow the A633 on to St Ann's Lane, down Middle Lane and on to the A6021, proceeding along Broom Lane, continuing behind the houses in front of the Sheffield laboratories and continuing southwards along the A618 where it joins the existing boundary. The proposed Sitwell ward would share this boundary in the northern part of the ward and would include the parish of Whiston. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Boston Castle, Sitwell and Waverley wards would be 3% more, 4% more and 1% more than the borough average respectively and 1% more, 2% more and 1% fewer than the borough average by 2006.

49 In addition to the Borough Council's proposals, a further representation was received from a local resident who suggested the creation of a new Whiston and South West Rotherham ward, so that Whiston would no longer have to share councillors with Thurcroft. Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification. We consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

## Central, Herringthorpe and Kimberworth wards

50 These three wards are situated in the centre and east of the borough. Kimberworth, Central, Herringthorpe and Broom wards are all unparished. Central, Herringthorpe and Kimberworth wards currently have 34% fewer, 28% fewer and 4% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (35% fewer, 30% fewer and 6% fewer in 2006).

51 The Council proposed a revised warding arrangement in this area, with a pattern of three wards. The boundary of the proposed Rotherham West ward in the east of the ward would be shared with neighbouring Boston Castle ward and the northern boundary would proceed behind the back of the houses on Barber Balk Road, along Green Lane and down on to Winter Hill Lane. The boundary would continue behind the school, along Meadowhill Road, behind the houses on Churchfields, following on towards Kimberworth Park Road, where the boundary includes the area comprising Kiln Road and Ten Acre Road, before proceeding along the path that runs parallel with Bassingthorpe Lane. The proposed Rotherham East ward would retain its existing boundary to the north and share its western boundary with neighbouring Boston Castle ward, as described previously. The eastern ward boundary would follow the A6123 and continue behind the houses on Tennyson Road, behind the houses on Browning Road and along Middle Lane South. The proposed Valley ward would share this boundary to its west. To the north and east it would share a boundary with Silverwood ward, as described previously and to the south share a boundary with the Hellaby and Sitwell wards. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Rotherham East, Rotherham West and Valley wards would be 4% more, 3% more and 1% more than the borough average respectively and 2% more, equal to and 1% more than the borough average by 2006.

52 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals without modification as we consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities, while providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

## Greasbrough, Rawmarsh West and Thorpe Hesley wards

53 These three wards are situated in the centre and north - east of the borough. All three wards are unparished. Greasbrough, Rawmarsh West and Thorpe Hesley wards currently have 21% fewer, 7% fewer and 2% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (24% fewer, 9% fewer and 4% fewer in 2006).

54 The proposed Keppel ward would comprise the majority of the current Thorpe Hesley ward subject to a boundary amendment in the south - east of the ward, where the boundary would follow Winter Hill Lane and Meadowhall Road. Similarly, in the proposed Wingfield ward the boundaries would be subject to two modifications, with the rest of the ward boundaries remaining unaltered. The modifications relate to where the boundary is shared with Rotherham West ward and Keppel ward and include the existing western boundary of the Greasbrough ward and the area of Keppel ward mentioned above. The proposed Rawmarsh ward would retain its existing boundaries in the south and west. The modified boundary to the east is shared with Silverwood ward. The proposed boundary would follow the railway line and continue west behind Wayford Avenue, along Lidget Lane, north along Moor Lane South and around the back of the houses along the Crescent East and the Crescent West, taking in the area comprising Belvedere Parade and Holyrood Rise. The area in the north of Rawmarsh ward shares a boundary with Hooper ward which would follow the Packman Road, along the Wentworth Road and Harding Road then follow the pathway behind Clay Hill. The south - west tip of Rawmarsh ward shares a boundary with Wingfield ward, which follows Potter Hill and Carr Hill. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Keppel, Rawmarsh and Wingfield wards would be 2% more, 5% more and 4% more than the borough average respectively and 1% more, 2% more and 2% more than the borough average by 2006.

55 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One we propose adopting the Borough Council’s proposals without modification. We consider that the revised wards would balance the need to reflect local communities with providing improved levels of electoral equality and strong and easily identifiable boundaries. Our recommendations would therefore result in the same levels of electoral equality as under the Council’s proposals.

**Electoral cycle**

56 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all metropolitan boroughs have a system of elections by thirds.

**Conclusions**

57 Having considered all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 66 to a council of 63 members;
- there should be 21 wards;
- the boundaries of 20 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one ward, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries.

58 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations entirely on the Borough Council’s proposals.

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

*Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements*

	2001 Electorate		2006 Electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	66	63	66	63
Number of wards	22	21	22	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,953	3,093	2,966	3,108
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	13	1	13	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	7	0	8	0

60 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Rotherham Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 13 to one. By 2006 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

*Draft recommendation*

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

## Parish and town council electoral arrangements

61 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parishes of Aston-cum-Aughton, Bramley, Dalton, Maltby, Thrybergh, Thurcroft and Wickersley to reflect the proposed borough wards.

62 The parish of Aston-cum-Aughton is currently served by 15 parish councillors and is warded. Aston parish ward returns eight parish councillors and Swallownest parish ward returns seven parish councillors. At Stage One Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council suggested that the majority of the community of Swallownest remain in the same borough ward. However, its proposal was not compatible with the Council's scheme and, as a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Rother Vale and Holderness wards we cannot adopt the Parish Council's proposal. We are therefore proposing new parishing arrangements for the parish of Aston-cum-Aughton. Aston-cum-Aughton West parish ward, part of the proposed Rothervale ward, should be represented by three parish councillors. Aston-cum-Aughton East parish ward, part of the proposed Holderness ward, should be represented by 12 parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Aston-cum-Aughton West (returning three parish councillors) and Aston-cum-Aughton East (returning 12 parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

63 The parish of Bramley is currently served by 15 parish councillors and is not warded. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Silverwood, Wickersley and Hellaby wards at borough level, we propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Bramley. Bramley North parish ward, part of the proposed Silverwood ward, should be represented by two parish councillors. Bramley Central parish ward, part of the proposed Wickersley ward, should be represented by seven parish councillors, and Bramley South parish ward, part of the proposed Hellaby ward, should be represented by six parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Bramley Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Bramley North (returning two parish councillors) Bramley Central (returning seven parish councillors) and Bramley South (returning six parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

64 The parish of Dalton is currently served by 15 parish councillors and is not warded. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Silverwood, Wickersley and Valley wards at borough level, we consequently propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Dalton. Dalton East parish ward, part of the proposed Silverwood ward, should be represented by two parish councillors. Dalton South parish ward, part of the proposed Wickersley ward, should be represented by seven parish councillors and Dalton West parish ward, part of the proposed Valley ward, should be represented by seven parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Dalton Parish Council should comprise 16 parish councillors, one more than at present, representing three wards: Dalton East (returning two parish councillors) Dalton South (returning seven parish councillors) and Dalton West (returning seven parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

65 The parish of Maltby is currently served by 18 parish councillors and is warded. Maltby parish ward number one returns four parish councillors, Maltby parish ward number two returns four parish councillors, Maltby parish ward number three returns five parish councillors and Maltby parish ward number four returns five parish councillors. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Maltby and Hellaby wards at borough level, we propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Maltby. Maltby East parish ward, part of the proposed Maltby ward, should be represented by 13 parish councillors. Maltby West parish ward, part of the proposed Hellaby ward, should be represented by five parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Maltby Parish Council should comprise 18 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Maltby East (returning 13 parish councillors) and Maltby West (returning five parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

66 The parish of Thrybergh is currently served by 15 councillors and is not warded. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Silverwood and Valley wards at borough level, we propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Thrybergh. Thrybergh North parish ward, part of the proposed Silverwood ward, should be represented by eight parish councillors, and Thrybergh South parish ward, part of the proposed Valley ward, should be represented by seven parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Thrybergh Parish Council should comprise 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Thrybergh North (returning eight parish councillors) and Thrybergh South (returning seven parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

67 The parish of Thurcroft is currently served by 18 parish councillors and is warded. Brampton parish ward returns one parish councillor, Laughton Common parish ward returns three parish councillors and Thurcroft parish ward returns 14 parish councillors. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Rothervale and Dinnington wards at borough level, we propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Thurcroft. Thurcroft North parish ward, part of the proposed Rothervale ward, should be represented by 15 parish councillors. Thurcroft South parish ward, part of the proposed Dinnington ward, should be represented by three parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Thurcroft Parish Council should comprise 18 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Thurcroft North (returning 15 parish councillors) and Thurcroft South (returning three parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

68 The parish of Wickersley is currently served by 16 parish councillors and is warded. North parish ward returns six parish councillors, South parish ward returns six parish councillors and West parish ward returns four parish councillors. As a result of adopting the Borough Council's proposed Wickersley and Hellaby wards at borough level, we propose new parishing arrangements for the parish of Wickersley. Wickersley North parish ward, part of the proposed Wickersley ward, should be represented by eight parish councillors. Wickersley South parish ward, part of the proposed Hellaby ward, should be represented by eight parish councillors.

*Draft recommendation*

Wickersley Parish Council should comprise 16 parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Wickersley North (returning eight parish councillors) and Wickersley South (returning eight parish councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large maps.

*Map 2: Draft recommendations for Rotherham*



## 5 What happens next?

69 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Rotherham contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 7 April 2003. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

70 Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Team Leader  
Rotherham Review  
The Boundary Committee for England  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

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



# Appendix A

## Draft recommendations for Rotherham: **Detailed mapping**

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

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

The **large maps** illustrate the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Rotherham.

*Map A1: Draft recommendations for Rotherham: Key map*

# Appendix B

## Code of practice on written consultation

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

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

*Table B1: Boundary Committee for England's compliance with Code criteria*

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