

Final recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Blackburn with Darwen

Report to the Electoral Commission

June 2002

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Blackburn with Darwen is inserted inside the back cover of this report.

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
Kru Desai
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.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Blackburn with Darwen.

SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Blackburn with Darwen electoral arrangements on 12 June 2001. It published its draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 15 January 2002, after which it undertook an eight-week period of consultation. As a consequence of the transfer of functions referred to earlier, it falls to us, the Boundary Committee for England, to complete the work of the LGCE and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations received by the LGCE during consultation on its draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Blackburn with Darwen:

- **in four of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in five wards and by more than 20 per cent in one ward.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 79–80) are that:

- **Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council should have 64 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 23 wards, instead of 22 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one, and seven 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 18 of the proposed 23 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in only two wards, Livesey with Pleasington and Fernhurst wards, expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough by 2006.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Electoral Commission, to arrive no later than 18 July 2002:

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

Table 1: Final Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Audley (Blackburn)	3	Audley ward; part of Bastwell ward	Map 2 and the large map
2	Bastwell (Blackburn)	3	part of Bastwell ward	Map 2 and the large map
3	Beardwood with Lammack (Blackburn)	3	part of Beardwood with Lammack ward	Map 2 and the large map
4	Corporation Park (Blackburn)	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Corporation Park	Map 2 and the large map
5	Earcroft (Darwen)	2	part of Earcroft ward	Map 2 and the large map
6	East Rural	1	<i>unchanged</i> ; parishes of Eccleshill and Yate & Pickup Bank	Map 2 and the large map
7	Ewood (Blackburn)	3	part of Ewood ward	Map 2 and the large map
8	Fernhurst (Blackburn)	3	part of Earcroft ward; part of Ewood ward	Map 2 and the large map
9	Higher Croft (Blackburn)	3	Higher Croft ward; part of Queen's Park ward	Map 2 and the large map
10	Little Harwood (Blackburn)	3	part of Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward	Map 2 and the large map
11	Livesey with Pleasington	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; parishes of Livesey and Pleasington	Map 2 and the large map
12	Marsh House (Darwen)	3	part of Marsh House ward	Map 2 and the large map
13	Meadowhead (Blackburn)	3	part of Meadowhead ward	Map 2 and the large map
14	Mill Hill (Blackburn)	3	Mill Hill ward; part of Meadowhead ward	Map 2 and the large map
15	North Turton with Tockholes	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; the parishes of North Turton and Tockholes	Map 2 and the large map
16	Queen's Park (Blackburn)	3	part of Queen's Park ward	Map 2 and the large map
17	Roe Lee (Blackburn)	3	Roe Lee ward; part of Beardwood with Lammack ward	Map 2 and the large map
18	Shadsworth with Whitebirk (Blackburn)	3	part of Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward; part of Shadsworth ward	Map 2 and the large map
19	Shear Brow (Blackburn)	3	Shear Brow ward; part of Bastwell ward	Map 2 and the large map
20	Sudell (Darwen)	3	part of Marsh House ward; part of Sudell ward	Map 2 and the large map
21	Sunnyhurst (Darwen)	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Sunnyhurst ward	Map 2 and the large map

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
22	Wensley Fold (Blackburn)	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Wensley Fold ward	Map 2 and the large map
23	Whitehall (Darwen)	2	<i>unchanged</i> ; Whitehall ward	Map 2 and the large map

Notes: 1 *Blackburn and Darwen urban areas are the only unparished part of the borough.*

2 *The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A1 in Appendix A.*

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 Blackburn with Darwen

	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	Audley (Blackburn)	3	5,697	1,899	19	5,247	1,749	8
2	Bastwell (Blackburn)	3	4,692	1,564	-2	4,787	1,596	-1
3	Beardwood with Lammack (Blackburn)	3	4,460	1,487	-7	4,455	1,485	-8
4	Corporation Park (Blackburn)	3	4,836	1,612	1	4,783	1,594	-2
5	Earcroft (Darwen)	2	3,361	1,681	5	3,512	1,756	8
6	East Rural	1	1,607	1,607	0	1,593	1,593	-2
7	Ewood (Blackburn)	3	4,779	1,593	0	4,817	1,606	-1
8	Fernhurst (Blackburn)	3	2,700	900	-44	4,281	1,427	-12
9	Higher Croft (Blackburn)	3	4,922	1,641	2	4,842	1,614	0
10	Little Harwood (Blackburn)	3	4,469	1,490	-7	4,532	1,511	-7
11	Livesey with Pleasington	3	5,407	1,802	13	5,402	1,801	11
12	Marsh House (Darwen)	3	4,680	1,560	-3	4,834	1,611	0
13	Meadowhead (Blackburn)	3	4,663	1,554	-3	4,621	1,540	-5
14	Mill Hill (Blackburn)	3	4,874	1,625	1	4,822	1,607	-1
15	North Turton with Tockholes	2	3,438	1,719	7	3,467	1,734	7
16	Queen's Park (Blackburn)	3	4,069	1,356	-15	4,420	1,473	-9
17	Roe Lee (Blackburn)	3	4,789	1,596	0	4,739	1,580	-2
18	Shadsworth with Whitebirk (Blackburn)	3	5,446	1,815	13	5,335	1,778	10
19	Shear Brow (Blackburn)	3	5,283	1,761	10	5,214	1,738	7
20	Sudell (Darwen)	3	5,238	1,746	9	5,047	1,682	4
21	Sunnyhurst (Darwen)	3	4,931	1,644	3	4,948	1,649	2
22	Wensley Fold (Blackburn)	3	4,905	1,635	2	4,648	1,549	-4

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 %
23 Whitehall (Darwen)	2	3,199	1,600	0	3,251	1,626	0
Totals	64	102,445	-	-	103,597	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,601	-	-	1,619	-

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Blackburn with Darwen 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 final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Blackburn with Darwen. We are reviewing Blackburn with Darwen as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England started by the LGCE in 1996. We have inherited that programme, which we currently expect to complete in 2004.

2 Blackburn with Darwen became a Unitary Authority on 1 April 1998. The establishment of a unitary authority was preceded by a Directed Electoral Review (DER), carried out by the LGCE following a direction from the Secretary of State. The LGCE published its final recommendations in September 1996. The DER increased the number of councillors serving Blackburn with Darwen from 60 to 62, representing 22 wards.

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:
 - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - (b) secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - (c) achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Blackburn with Darwen was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (LGCE, fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

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

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 per cent in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

7 The LGCE was not prescriptive on council size. Insofar as Blackburn with Darwen is concerned, it started from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but was willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, the LGCE found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and that any proposal for an increase in council size would need to be fully justified. In particular, it did 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 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 12 June 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified Lancashire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Lancashire Association of Town & Parish Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the district, the Members of the European

Parliament for the North West region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 3 September 2001. At Stage Two it considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared its draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 15 January 2002 with the publication of the LGCE's report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Blackburn with Darwen*, and ended on 11 March 2002. 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

10 Blackburn with Darwen is a unitary authority covering an area of 13,701 hectares and serving a population of 139,381. The borough comprises the two main urban areas of Blackburn and Darwen with a surrounding rural area of six parishes. Blackburn with Darwen was once the weaving centre of the world, but it is no longer pre-eminently a textile area. It now has a diverse manufacturing and service economy and is also a recognised market and retail centre. The borough has excellent transport links to Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester with the M65 bisecting the borough from east to west. The borough contains six parishes, but Blackburn and Darwen urban areas are unparished. Blackburn town comprises 69 per cent of the borough's total electorate.

11 The electorate of the borough is 102,445 (February 2001). The Council currently has 62 members who are elected from 22 wards, 19 of which are relatively urban with the remainder being predominantly rural. Nineteen of the wards are each represented by three councillors, two are each represented by two councillors and one is a single-member ward. The Council is elected by thirds.

12 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, the LGCE calculated, in percentage terms, 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'.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,652 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,670 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 four of the 22 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. The worst imbalance is in Earcroft ward, where the councillor represents 18 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Blackburn with Darwen

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 Audley (Blackburn)	3	5,390	1,797	9	4,940	1,647	-1
2 Bastwell (Blackburn)	3	5,037	1,679	2	5,132	1,711	2
3 Beardwood with Lammack (Blackburn)	3	4,555	1,518	-8	4,539	1,513	-9
4 Corporation Park (Blackburn)	3	4,836	1,612	-2	4,772	1,591	-5
5 Earcroft (Blackburn)	3	5,827	1,942	18	6,847	2,282	37
6 East Rural	1	1,607	1,607	-3	1,589	1,589	-5
7 Ewood (Blackburn)	3	5,013	1,671	1	5,670	1,890	13
8 Higher Croft (Blackburn)	3	4,647	1,549	-6	4,557	1,519	-9
9 Little Harwood with Whitebirk (Blackburn)	3	5,625	1,875	13	5,566	1,855	11
10 Livesey with Pleasington	3	5,407	1,802	9	5,389	1,796	8
11 Marsh House (Darwen)	3	5,230	1,743	6	5,610	1,870	12
12 Meadowhead (Blackburn)	3	4,777	1,592	-4	4,724	1,575	-6
13 Mill Hill (Blackburn)	3	4,760	1,587	-4	4,696	1,565	-6
14 North Turton with Tockholes	2	3,348	1,719	4	3,459	1,730	4
15 Queen's Park (Blackburn)	3	4,344	1,448	-12	4,647	1,549	-7
16 Roe Lee (Blackburn)	3	4,694	1,565	-5	4,633	1,544	-8
17 Shadsworth (Blackburn)	3	4,290	1,430	-13	4,281	1,427	-15
18 Shear Brow (Blackburn)	3	5,245	1,748	6	5,176	1,725	3
19 Sudell (Darwen)	3	4,688	1,563	-5	4,493	1,498	-10
20 Sunnyhurst (Darwen)	3	4,931	1,644	-1	4,936	1,645	-1
21 Wensley Fold (Blackburn)	3	4,905	1,635	-1	4,637	1,546	-7

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 %
22 Whitehall (Darwen)	2	3,199	1,600	-3	3,243	1,622	-3
Totals	62	102,445	-	-	103,597	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,652	-	-	1,670	-

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Blackburn with Darwen 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 Earcroft ward were relatively under-represented by 18 per cent, while electors in Shadsworth ward were relatively over-represented by 13 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One the LGCE received four representations, including a borough-wide scheme from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, and representations from the Conservative Group Leader, Livesey with Pleasington Conservative Association, and one parish council. In the light of these representations and evidence available to it, the LGCE reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Blackburn with Darwen*.

15 The LGCE's draft recommendations were based on the Borough Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, and provided a pattern of mixed-member wards in the borough. However, it moved away from the Borough Council's scheme in a number of areas, affecting Audley, Bastwell, Beardwood with Lammack and Shear Brow wards, using its own proposals. It proposed that:

- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council should be served by 64 councillors, compared with the current 62, representing 23 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified, while seven wards should retain their existing boundaries.

Draft Recommendation

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council should comprise 64 councillors, serving 23 wards. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

16 The LGCE's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in five of the 23 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with only one ward, Livesey with Pleasington, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average by 2006.

4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

17 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, eight 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 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

18 The Borough Council supported the draft recommendations apart from the proposed Earcroft North and Ewood wards. It supported Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's alternative for this area but also provided its own alternative should the Community Association's proposal not be adopted due to its proposed Fernhurst ward having too high an electoral variance.

Parish Councils

19 Pleasington Parish Council welcomed no change to the current parish council composition or the electoral ward boundary for Livesey with Pleasington ward.

Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association

20 Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association objected to the proposed Earcroft North and Ewood wards and proposed an alternative ward boundary in this area including more of the proposed Earcroft North ward in the proposed Ewood ward. They also proposed that Earcroft North ward be renamed Fernhurst ward.

Other Representations

21 A further five representations were received in response to the draft recommendations from local organisations and residents.

22 Blackburn Rovers FC expressed their concern at the proposed Ewood ward. They stated that it dissects land belonging to Blackburn Rovers Football Club and has moved half the residents who are close to the football ground into a new ward. They considered that the proposals may hamper communication between the club and local residents in the future. A local resident objected to the proposed Ewood ward and Earcroft North wards as he considered that they would cause confusion regarding more councillors. The Federation of Stadium Communities urged consideration of Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's proposed alternative for this area.

23 A local councillor objected to the proposed boundary between Marsh House and Sudell wards, highlighting misgivings expressed with relation to the draft recommendations and the 1996 review concerning both these wards.

24 One local resident stated that, since the entirety of Whitebirk is proposed to be transferred into the recommended Shadsworth ward, Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward should be renamed Little Harwood ward and Shadsworth ward be renamed Shadsworth with Whitebirk ward.

5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

25 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Blackburn with Darwen 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”.

26 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.

27 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.

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

Electorate Forecasts

29 Since 1975 there has been a minimal increase in the electorate of Blackburn with Darwen borough. At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately one per cent from 102,445 to 103,597 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be spread throughout the borough. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, the LGCE stated in its draft recommendations report that it was satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

30 No comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts were received during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

Council Size

31 As already explained, the LGCE started its review by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

32 In its draft recommendations report the LGCE adopted the Borough Council’s proposal for a council of 64 members as it considered that it provided for the correct allocation of

councillors throughout the borough, and in particular either side of the motorway. An increase in two members also facilitated the splitting of Earcroft ward on an east/west axis by using the motorway which grouped similar communities in single wards. This also addressed the existing electoral inequality in Earcroft ward by allocating the correct number of councillors north and south of the motorway to redress the imbalance.

33 During Stage Three we received no representations in relation to council size and are content to endorse a 64-member council as final.

Electoral Arrangements

34 As set out in the draft recommendations report, all the representations received during Stage One were carefully considered, including the borough-wide scheme put forward by the Borough Council.

35 In formulating the draft recommendations the LGCE adopted a 64-member council as proposed by the Borough Council and subsequently implemented the majority of its scheme, albeit moving away from it in some areas in order to provide better boundaries or to group similar communities in single wards.

36 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the majority of the draft recommendations but supported Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's counter proposal to the proposed Ewood and Earcroft North wards. This alternative proposal was also supported by the Federation of Stadium Communities. We noted the level of local opposition to the draft recommendations in this area and have decided to adopt Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's proposal, as it does not split the community surrounding the local football club and nearby commercial area which many consider to be the community's focus.

37 We have also decided to confirm the draft recommendations for the remainder of the borough subject to four ward name changes.

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

- a) Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park, Queen's Park, Shear Brow and Wensley Fold wards;
- b) Audley, Bastwell, Little Harwood with Whitebirk, Roe Lee and Shadsworth wards;
- c) Earcroft, Ewood, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards;
- d) Marsh House, Sudell, Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards;
- e) East Rural, Livesey with Pleasington and North Turton with Tockholes wards.

39 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 map inserted at the back of this report.

Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park, Queen's Park, Shear Brow and Wensley Fold wards

40 The existing wards of Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park, Queen's Park, Shear Brow and Wensley Fold cover the north central area of Blackburn town and each ward is currently represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 62-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the five wards varies from the borough average by 8 per cent, 2 per cent, 12 per cent, 6 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Queen's Park and Shear Brow wards while deteriorating slightly in Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park and Wensley Fold wards

to vary by 7 per cent, 3 per cent, 9 per cent, 5 per cent and 7 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

41 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be represented by five wards, as at present, with each ward retaining their existing boundaries and current number of members.

42 The LGCE proposed substantially adopting the Borough Council's proposals for this area, subject to some boundary amendments. It proposed transferring the properties on Arnold Close, Delius Close, Holst Gardens, Tippet Close, Walton Crescent (part), Williams Drive and the urban growth along Blackamoor Road and Pickering Fold from Queen's Park ward into Higher Croft ward in the interests of community identity, as it considered that these areas are an integral part of the estates which are in Higher Croft ward rather than the existing Queen's Park ward. The LGCE proposed transferring part of the existing Bastwell ward, west of Birley Street, into Shear Brow ward in the interests of community identity as it considered the transferred area to have more in common with Shear Brow ward than the existing Bastwell ward. Similarly, it proposed transferring those properties north of Ramsgreave Drive, as far as those west of the football ground, formerly in Beardwood with Lammack ward into Roe Lee ward in the interests of community identity as it considered that the two sides of Ramsgreave Drive should be united within Roe Lee ward, rather than the northern side of the road being retained in a ward with electors in the west of the borough. These additional changes allowed for similar communities to be grouped within single wards and also provided for good levels of electoral equality. There were minor boundary amendments to Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park and Roe Lee wards in order to tie the boundary to ground detail. These changes did not affect any electors.

43 Under the draft recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be relatively good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park, Queen's Park, Shear Brow and Wensley Fold wards by 7 per cent, 1 per cent, 15 per cent, 10 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Queen's Park and Shear Brow wards and deteriorate in Beardwood with Lammack, Corporation Park and Wensley Fold wards to vary from the borough average by 9 per cent, 7 per cent, 8 per cent, 2 per cent and 4 per cent by 2006.

44 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations in this area. Having considered the representation received carefully, we have decided to confirm the draft recommendations for this area in full as they achieve reasonable electoral equality and promote community identity by grouping similar communities in single wards.

45 Under our final recommendations for a 64-member council, the electoral variances would be the same as at draft. Our final proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Audley, Bastwell, Little Harwood with Whitebirk, Roe Lee and Shadsworth wards

46 The existing wards of Audley, Bastwell, Little Harwood with Whitebirk, Roe Lee and Shadsworth cover the eastern area of Blackburn town, and are each currently represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 62-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the five wards varies from the borough average by 9 per cent, 2 per cent, 13 per cent, 5 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Audley and Little Harwood with Whitebirk wards while deteriorating slightly in Roe Lee and Shadsworth wards to vary by 1 per cent, 11 per cent, 8 per cent and 15 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance in Bastwell ward is expected to remain constant over the five-year period.

47 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be represented by five wards, as at present, with each ward retaining their current number of members. It proposed minor changes to the area with the only relatively major change occurring in Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward. This involved transferring all those properties south of Burnley Road, currently in Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward, into the existing Shadsworth ward as this would “keep together a community which has a clear coherence”. It proposed no change to Audley, Bastwell and Roe Lee wards.

48 Having received no further representations concerning this area, the LGCE proposed adopting the Borough Council’s proposals as the basis of the draft recommendations but proposed its own boundary between Little Harwood with Whitebirk and Shadsworth wards with some boundary amendments to Audley, Bastwell and Roe Lee wards. It considered the rationale behind the Borough Council’s proposal to transfer the southernmost estate in Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward had some merit. However, the LGCE considered that the whole of the estate should be transferred to Shadsworth ward, as it is separated from the remainder of Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward by the Hole House industrial estate. Therefore, the proposed Little Harwood with Whitebirk and Shadsworth ward boundary would follow the Leeds & Liverpool canal. The LGCE noted the relatively high electoral variance of 10 per cent but considered that the community benefits outweighed the higher electoral variance.

49 The LGCE proposed transferring part of the existing Bastwell ward into Audley ward in the interests of community identity, as it considered the transferred area to have more in common with the existing Audley ward, uniting those properties south of Whalley Old Road and east of Birley Street in a single ward. The remaining properties, west of Birley Street, would be transferred into Shear Brow ward, uniting this community in a single Shear Brow ward. It also proposed transferring the properties north of Ramsgreave Drive, as far as those west of the football ground, formerly in Beardwood with Lammack ward, into Roe Lee ward. This new boundary promoted community identity by uniting both sides of the Ramsgreave Drive in a single ward. The southern boundary of the proposed Shadsworth ward would be amended in order to tie it to better ground detail, however, this change did not affect any electors.

50 Under the draft recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be generally good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Audley, Bastwell, Little Harwood with Whitebirk, Roe Lee and Shadsworth wards by 19 per cent, 2 per cent, 7 per cent, equal to the average and 13 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Audley, Bastwell and Shadsworth wards and deteriorate in Roe Lee ward to vary from the borough average by 8 per cent, 1 per cent, 10 per cent and 2 per cent respectively by 2006. The electoral variance of Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years.

51 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the recommendations in this area. One local resident suggested that Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward be renamed Little Harwood ward and Shadsworth ward be renamed Shadsworth with Whitebirk ward as the Whitebirk estate has been transferred into the proposed Shadsworth ward.

52 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received and have decided to confirm the draft recommendations for this area in full, subject to the two ward name changes as proposed by a local resident.

53 Under our final recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be generally good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Audley, Bastwell, Little Harwood, Roe Lee and Shadsworth with Whitebirk wards by 19 per cent, 2 per cent, 7 per cent, equal to the average and 13 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Audley, Bastwell

and Shadsworth with Whitebirk wards and deteriorate in Roe Lee ward to vary from the borough average by 8 per cent, 1 per cent, 10 per cent and 2 per cent respectively by 2006. The electoral variance of Little Harwood ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years. Our final proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Earcroft, Ewood, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards

54 The existing wards of Earcroft, Ewood, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill cover the central area of Blackburn town and each ward is currently represented by three members. Under the current arrangements of a 62-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the five wards varies from the borough average by 18 per cent, 1 per cent, 6 per cent, 4 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate in all wards to vary by 37 per cent, 13 per cent, 9 per cent, 6 per cent and 6 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

55 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should be represented by six wards, one more than at present, with the proposed Earcroft North, Ewood, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards being represented by three councillors and the proposed Earcroft South ward being represented by two councillors. It proposed dividing, on a east/west axis, the existing Earcroft ward using the M65 motorway as the boundary, creating new Earcroft North and Earcroft South wards. Its proposed boundary between Earcroft North and Ewood wards would follow the Bolton Road, Branch Road, Fernhurst Street and to the rear of properties on Tiverton Drive and Arkwright Fold until it reached the existing boundary. It proposed retaining the existing Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards.

56 Councillor Rigby, Conservative Group Leader, supported the overall proposals made by the Borough Council but proposed an alternative arrangement for Earcroft North and Ewood wards. He proposed a two-member Earcroft North ward, while retaining the existing Earcroft ward northern boundary and transferring properties from Ewood ward into the adjoining Higher Croft and Queen's Park wards. He considered that this arrangement would have the benefit of bringing the electoral variance in the two wards closer to the borough average and have no disadvantage in terms of community identity.

57 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One carefully, the LGCE proposed substantially adopting the Borough Council's proposals in this area, subject to some boundary amendments. It proposed adopting its own boundary between the proposed Earcroft North and Ewood wards. The proposed boundary would run from the railway line in the east, along the eastern and southern sides of Ewood Park football ground and follow the rear of properties on the Bolton Road, along Kidder Street and Livesey Branch Road, then to the rear of properties on Fernhurst Street, continuing to follow the rear of properties until it rejoined the original boundary at Arkwright Fold. This boundary was considered to be more definable and to group natural communities together. Councillor Rigby's alternative proposal was noted and, while it was considered to have merit, the LGCE were unable to pursue this proposal as it was adopting a 64-member council and his proposal was based on a 63-member council, thereby resulting in poorer levels of electoral equality. The proposed Higher Croft ward would also contain properties transferred from two areas of Queen's Park ward as mentioned above. It was also proposed at Stage One that part of Bonsall Street and Henry Whalley Street be transferred from the existing Meadowhead ward into Mill Hill ward in the interest of reflecting community identity, as the transferred properties were considered to have more in common with the existing Mill Hill ward. The southern boundary of the proposed Earcroft South ward would be amended in order to tie it to ground detail. This change does not affect any electors.

58 Under the draft recommendations for a 64-member council the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Earcroft North, Earcroft South, Ewood, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards by 39 per cent, 5 per cent, 6 per cent, 2 per cent, 3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Earcroft North and Higher Croft wards while deteriorating in Earcroft South and Meadowhead wards to vary from the borough average by 7 per cent, equal to the average, 8 per cent and 5 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in Ewood and Mill Hill wards is expected to remain constant over the next five years.

59 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations in this area subject to supporting Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's counter proposal for Ewood and Earcroft North wards. The Borough Council also provided an alternative arrangement between Ewood and Earcroft North wards should the Community Association's suggestion not be adopted due to poor electoral equality in its proposed Fernhurst ward. This alternative involved transferring part of Ewood ward east of Heys Lane and all those properties in Arkwright Fold, into the proposed Fernhurst ward in order to address the otherwise relatively high electoral variance. Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association objected to the proposed Ewood and Earcroft North wards and submitted a counter proposal. This counter proposal provided a new boundary between Ewood and Earcroft North wards and grouped all properties, on both sides of the Bolton Road as far as the Fernhurst Hotel and 543 Bolton Road, in a single ward. However, the proposal would result in a 12 per cent electoral variance in the proposed Earcroft ward. It also proposed that Earcroft North be renamed Fernhurst ward and Earcroft South ward be renamed Earcroft ward.

60 Blackburn Rovers Football Club stated that it was concerned about the proposed Ewood ward and stated that the proposed boundary dissected the club's grounds, and also moved half the local residents into a different ward. The club considered that this transfer of residents would hamper local relations that have been built up over time. The Federation of Stadium Communities expressed concern that any change to the ward boundary in the Ewood area would have a detrimental effect on community cohesion and local governance. It urged that the draft recommendations be reconsidered and supported Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association's counter proposal. A local resident also objected to the proposed Ewood and Earcroft North wards, arguing that a change to the current Ewood ward would result in a lot of confusion involving more councillors.

61 We have considered all the representations received at Stage Three carefully and note the volume of opposition and alternatives to the proposed Ewood and Earcroft North wards. In light of these, we propose confirming the draft recommendations for this area subject to a boundary amendment between the proposed Earcroft North and Ewood wards as proposed by Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association and also propose two ward name changes with Earcroft North ward being renamed Fernhurst ward and Earcroft South ward being renamed Earcroft ward.

62 We consider that the proposal from Ewood & Fernhurst Community Association reflects a strong sense of community identity in the proposed Ewood ward. It groups those properties which have Blackburn Rovers Football Club and the nearby commercial area as their community focus within a single ward. It also unites the club's surrounding land in a single ward. This locally generated and locally supported scheme places the Fernhurst Hotel, which is a local landmark, and a proposed new build area, which has its access roads within the proposed Fernhurst ward, in the new Fernhurst ward. We note that the proposed Fernhurst ward has an electoral variance of 12 per cent and, although we would not normally recommend such a high variance in an urban area, we consider that, in the light of the evidence received during Stage Three, the community benefits outweigh the poor level of electoral equality. We sought to redress the high variance in the proposed Fernhurst ward but were hampered by it being bounded by a railway line, a motorway and green field. We note the Borough Council's alternative scheme to redress the electoral variance in the proposed

Fernhurst ward but considered that this did not provide for effective and convenient local government as it grouped an integral part of Ewood ward in the proposed Fernhurst ward with which had no direct transport or access links.

63 Under our final recommendations for a 64-member council the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Earcroft, Ewood, Fernhurst, Higher Croft, Meadowhead and Mill Hill wards by 5 per cent, 0 per cent, 44 per cent, 2 per cent, 3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Fernhurst and Higher Croft wards while deteriorating in Earcroft, Ewood and Meadowhead wards to vary from the borough average by 12 per cent, equal to the average, 8 per cent, 1 per cent and 5 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in Mill Hill ward is expected to remain constant over the next 5 years. Our final proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Marsh House, Sudell, Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards

64 The existing wards of Marsh House, Sudell, Sunnyhurst and Whitehall cover the urban area of Darwen to the south of the M65. The existing Marsh House, Sudell and Sunnyhurst wards are currently represented by three members, with Whitehall ward being represented by two members. Under the current arrangements of a 62-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the four wards varies from the borough average by 6 per cent, 5 per cent, 1 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate slightly in Marsh House and Sudell wards to vary by 12 per cent and 10 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance in Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards is expected to remain constant over the five-year period.

65 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area be represented by four wards, as at present, with each ward retaining the current number of members. The Borough Council proposed minimal change in this area, with the only change being a boundary amendment between Sudell and Marsh House wards. It proposed that the new boundary should follow Sudell Road, Marsh House Lane until it reaches number 118 when the boundary would directly join the existing boundary on Ellison Fold Terrace at number 187. It proposed no change to the existing Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards.

66 Having received no further representations for this area the LGCE proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposals in full, with one minor boundary amendment that would not affect any electors. It proposed that the Marsh House and Sudell ward boundary, when it reached 118 Marsh House Lane, should follow the rear of properties on Marsh House Lane, Cambridge Street, Ely Close and Sudell Close before rejoining the original boundary on Ellison Fold Terrace; this boundary was considered to be more identifiable than that proposed by the council. The south western boundary of the proposed Marsh House ward would be amended in order to tie it to better ground detail. This change would not affect any electors.

67 Under the draft recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Marsh House, Sudell, Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards by 3 per cent, 9 per cent, 3 per cent and equal to the average respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Marsh House, Sudell and Sunnyhurst wards to equal the borough average and vary by 4 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in Whitehall ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years.

68 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations. One local councillor objected to the proposed boundary between Marsh House and Sudell wards. He highlighted the misgivings of the draft recommendations and the 1996 directed review in relation to Marsh House and Sudell wards in that neither promoted community identity.

69 Having considered carefully the representations received at Stage Three we propose to confirm the draft recommendations in full for this area. We note the objection raised by the local councillor to the draft recommendation but unfortunately we cannot consider previous reviews when formulating our final recommendations. We consider that our final recommendations use easily identifiable boundaries and group similar communities together in single wards therefore promoting community identity.

70 Under our final recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Marsh House, Sudell, Sunnyhurst and Whitehall wards by 3 per cent, 9 per cent, 3 per cent and equal to the average respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Marsh House, Sudell and Sunnyhurst wards to equal the borough average and vary by 4 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in Whitehall ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years. Our final recommendations are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

East Rural, Livesey with Pleasington and North Turton with Tockholes wards

71 The existing wards of East Rural (comprising the parishes of Eccleshill and Yate & Pickup Bank), Livesey with Pleasington (comprising the parishes of Livesey and Pleasington) and North Turton with Tockholes (comprising the parishes of North Turton and Tockholes) surround the urban areas of Blackburn and Darwen. Livesey with Pleasington ward is currently represented by three councillors, North Turton with Tockholes ward is represented by two councillors and East Rural ward is represented by a single councillor. Under the current arrangements of a 62-member council, the number of electors per councillor in the three wards varies from the borough average by 3 per cent, 9 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve in Livesey with Pleasington ward and deteriorate slightly in East Rural ward to vary by 8 per cent and 5 per cent from the borough average by 2006. The electoral variance in North Turton with Tockholes ward is expected to remain constant over the five-year period.

72 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that this area should continue to be represented by three wards, as at present, with each ward retaining their existing boundaries and councillors. Under the Borough Council's proposal for a 64-member council the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in East Rural, Livesey with Pleasington and North Turton with Tockholes wards by equal to the average, 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Livesey with Pleasington ward and to deteriorate slightly in East Rural ward, to vary from the borough average by 11 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance is expected to remain constant in North Turton with Tockholes ward over the next five years.

73 Livesey with Pleasington Conservative Association fully endorsed the Council's proposals and objected to any proposed removal of Pleasington Village from its current ward. Pleasington Parish Council stated that it wished to retain its present number of parish councillors (five) and that it did not want to be included in any proposed Beardwood ward.

74 Having considered carefully all the representations received at Stage One, the LGCE proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposal in full. It considered that the Borough Council's proposal to retain the parishes in their existing wards promoted community identity and respected the wishes of the local community. The high electoral variance of Livesey with Pleasington ward was noted but it was considered to be justified by the local support for retaining the existing ward.

75 Under the draft recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be relatively good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in East Rural, Livesey with Pleasington and North Turton with Tockholes wards to equal the borough average and vary by 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Livesey with Pleasington ward while slightly deteriorating in East Rural ward to vary by 11 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in North Turton with Tockholes ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years.

76 At Stage Three the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations for this area while Pleasington Parish Council said that it was pleased that no change had been made to its current electoral arrangements or to its existing parish council make up.

77 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three we propose confirming the draft recommendations for this area in full. Under our final recommendations for a 64-member council, there would be relatively good levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in East Rural (comprising the parishes of Eccleshill and Yate & Pickup Bank), Livesey with Pleasington (comprising the parishes of Livesey and Pleasington) and North Turton with Tockholes (comprising the parishes of North Turton and Tockholes) wards to equal the borough average and vary by 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Livesey with Pleasington ward while slightly deteriorating in East Rural ward to vary by 11 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006. The electoral variance in North Turton with Tockholes ward is expected to remain constant over the next five years. Our final proposals are illustrated on Tables 1 and 2, on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Electoral Cycle

78 By virtue of the amendments made to the Local Government Act 1992 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001, we have no powers to make recommendations concerning electoral cycle.

Conclusions

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

- we propose amending the boundary between the proposed Earcroft North and Ewood wards;
- we propose four ward name changes; Earcroft North ward be renamed Fernhurst ward, Earcroft South ward be renamed Earcroft ward, Little Harwood with Whitebirk ward be renamed Little Harwood ward and Shadsworth ward be renamed Shadsworth with Whitebirk ward.

80 We conclude that, in Blackburn with Darwen:

- there should be an increase in council size from 62 to 64;
- there should be 23 wards, one more than at present;
- the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified.

81 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 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	62	64	62	64
Number of wards	22	23	22	23
Average number of electors per councillor	1,652	1,601	1,670	1,619
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	4	5	5	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	0	1	1	0

82 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a slight increase in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from four to five with one ward varying by more than 20 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with only two wards, Livesey with Pleasington and Fernhurst, varying by more than 10 per cent from the average, at 11 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council should comprise 64 councillors serving 23 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A including the large map inside the back cover.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

83 When reviewing parish electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards, it should also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough.

84 In response to the consultation report, no comments were received in relation to parish and town council electoral arrangements.

Final Recommendation

We propose no change to parish and town council electoral arrangements in the borough.

Map 2: Final Recommendations for Blackburn with Darwen

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

85 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Blackburn with Darwen 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).

86 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 18 July 2002.

87 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be sent to the Electoral Commission at the address below, to arrive no later than 18 July 2002:

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

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Blackburn with Darwen: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Blackburn with Darwen area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed warding arrangements for Blackburn with Darwen and highlights the area shown in the large map at the back of the report.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Blackburn with Darwen.

Map A1: Final Recommendations for Blackburn with Darwen: Key Map