

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
Telford & Wrekin

*October 2001*

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for the urban area of Telford & Wrekin is inserted inside the back cover of the report.



# WHAT IS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND?

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke CBE (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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, and the number of councillors, ward names and the frequency of elections. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils.



## SUMMARY

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Telford & Wrekin on 27 March 2001.

- **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 Telford & Wrekin:

- **in nine of the 34 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district;**
- **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 17 wards and by more than 20 per cent in five wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 101 – 102) are that:

- **Telford & Wrekin Council should have 54 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 33 wards, instead of 34 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 29 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one, and five wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **whole-council elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 24 of the proposed 33 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further with the number of electors per councillor in only one ward expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district in 2006.**

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 Great Dawley, Hadley, Lilleshall & Donnington, Madeley, Newport, Oakengates, Stirchley & Brookside, The Gorge and Wellington;**

- **new warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Church Aston, Dawley Hamlets, Ketley, Lawley & Overdale, St Georges & Priorslee and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 9 October 2001. 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, subject to Parliamentary approval, with effect from 1 April 2002 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 3 December 2001:

**Review Manager  
Telford & Wrekin Review  
LGCE  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU**

**Fax: 020 7404 6142  
E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)**

Table 1: Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Apley Castle	1	part of Hadley parish (the proposed Apley Castle parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
2	Arleston	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed Arleston town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
3	Brookside	2	part of Stirchley & Brookside parish (the proposed Brookside parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
4	Church Aston & Lilleshall	1	the parishes of Chetwynd Aston and Preston Upon the Weald Moors, part of Church Aston parish (the proposed Church Aston parish ward) and part of Lilleshall & Donnington parish (the proposed Lilleshall parish ward)	Map 2, Map A2 and Large Map
5	College	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed College town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
6	Cuckoo Oak	2	part of Madeley parish (the proposed Cuckoo Oak parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
7	Dawley Magna	3	part of Dawley Hamlets parish (the proposed Aqueduct parish ward) and part of Great Dawley parish (the proposed Dawley parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
8	Donnington	2	part of Lilleshall & Donnington parish (the proposed Donnington parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
9	Dothill	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed Dothill town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
10	Edgmond	1	<i>Unchanged</i> – the parishes of Chetwynd, Edgmond and Tibberton & Cherrington	Map 2
11	Ercall	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed Ercall town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
12	Ercall Magna	1	<i>Unchanged</i> – the parishes of Ercall Magna, Eyton Upon the Weald Moors, Kynnersley and Waters Upton	Map 2 and Large Map
13	Hadley & Leegomery	3	part of Hadley parish (the proposed Hadley & Leegomery parish ward) and part of Ketley parish (the proposed Beveley parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
14	Haygate	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed Haygate town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
15	Horsehay & Lightmoor	2	part of Dawley Hamlets parish (the proposed Dawley Hamlets parish ward), part of Lawley & Overdale parish (the proposed Lawley parish ward) and part of The Gorge parish (the proposed Lightmoor parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
16	Ironbridge Gorge	1	part of The Gorge parish (the proposed Ironbridge parish ward and the existing Coalport & Jackfield parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
17	Ketley & Oakengates	3	part of Ketley parish (the proposed Ketley parish ward) and part of Oakengates town (the proposed Oakengates town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
18	Lawley & Overdale	2	part of Lawley & Overdale parish (the proposed Central parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
19	Madeley	2	part of Madeley parish (the proposed Madeley parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
20	Malinslee	2	part of Great Dawley parish (the proposed Malinslee parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
21	Muxton	2	part of Lilleshall & Donnington parish (the proposed Muxton parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
22	Newport East	1	<i>Unchanged</i> – part of Newport town (the existing East town ward)	Map 2 and Map A2
23	Newport North	1	part of Newport town (the proposed North town ward)	Map 2
24	Newport South	1	part of Church Aston parish (the proposed Wallshead parish ward) and part of Newport town (the existing South town ward)	Map 2 and Map A2
25	Newport West	1	part of Newport town (the proposed West town ward)	Map 2 and Map A2
26	Park	1	part of Wellington town (the proposed Park town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
27	Priorslee	2	part of St Georges & Priorslee parish (the proposed Priorslee parish ward) and part of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish (the proposed East parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
28	Shawbirch	1	<i>Unchanged</i> – part of Wellington town (the existing Shawbirch town ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
29	St Georges	2	part of St Georges & Priorslee parish (the proposed St Georges parish ward) and part of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish (the proposed Wrockwardine Wood parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
30	The Nedge	3	the parish of Hollinswood & Randlay and part of Stirchley & Brookside parish (the proposed Stirchley parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
31	Woodside	2	<i>Unchanged</i> – part of Madeley parish (the existing Woodside parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
32	Wrockwardine	2	the parishes of Little Wenlock, Rodington and Wrockwardine and part of Lawley & Overdale parish (the proposed West parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map
33	Wrockwardine Wood & Trench	2	part of Oakengates town (the proposed North town ward) and part of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish (the proposed Trench parish ward)	Map 2 and Large Map

*Notes: 1 The district is entirely parished.*

*2 The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and Maps A1 and A2 in Appendix A.*

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

Table 2: Draft Recommendations for Telford & Wrekin

	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	Apley Castle	1	1,920	1,920	-11	2,256	2,256	0
2	Arleston	1	2,273	2,273	6	2,217	2,217	-2
3	Brookside	2	4,931	2,466	15	4,809	2,405	6
4	Church Aston & Lilleshall	1	2,463	2,463	14	2,382	2,382	5
5	College	1	2,190	2,190	2	2,132	2,132	-6
6	Cuckoo Oak	2	4,176	2,088	-3	4,150	2,075	-8
7	Dawley Magna	3	7,343	2,448	14	7,271	2,424	7
8	Donnington	2	4,396	2,198	2	4,306	2,153	-5
9	Dothill	1	2,077	2,077	-3	2,143	2,143	-5
10	Edgmond	1	2,172	2,172	1	2,126	2,126	-6
11	Ercall	1	2,322	2,322	8	2,261	2,261	0
12	Ercall Magna	1	2,270	2,270	6	2,257	2,257	0
13	Hadley & Leegomery	3	7,050	2,350	9	7,336	2,445	8
14	Haygate	1	2,128	2,128	-1	2,099	2,099	-7
15	Horsehay & Lightmoor	2	2,024	1,012	-53	4,384	2,192	-3
16	Ironbridge Gorge	1	2,016	2,016	-6	1,957	1,957	-14
17	Ketley & Oakengates	3	6,898	2,299	7	7,115	2,372	5
18	Lawley & Overdale	2	3,193	1,597	-26	4,618	2,309	2
19	Madeley	2	4,241	2,121	-1	4,136	2,068	-9
20	Malinslee	2	4,191	2,096	-3	4,179	2,090	-8
21	Muxton	2	4,062	2,031	-6	4,497	2,249	-1
22	Newport East	1	2,108	2,108	-2	2,059	2,059	-9
23	Newport North	1	2,181	2,181	1	2,133	2,133	-6
24	Newport South	1	2,137	2,137	-1	2,109	2,109	-7
25	Newport West	1	2,149	2,149	0	2,075	2,075	-8
26	Park	1	2,154	2,154	0	2,101	2,101	-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 %
27	Priorslee	2	3,863	1,932	-10	4,619	2,310	2
28	Shawbirch	1	2,274	2,274	6	2,247	2,247	-1
29	St Georges	2	4,885	2,443	14	4,762	2,381	5
30	The Nedge	3	6,917	2,306	7	7,339	2,446	8
31	Woodside	2	4,577	2,289	6	4,753	2,377	5
32	Wrockwardine	2	3,554	1,777	-17	4,712	2,356	4
33	Wrockwardine Wood & Trench	2	5,035	2,518	17	4,894	2,447	8
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>116,170</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>122,434</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,151</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by Telford & Wrekin Council.*

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

2 *There is a small anomaly in the electorate figures supplied between the total electorate data for 2001 and 2006 shown in tables 2 and 4 which is due to rounding.*



# 1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for Telford & Wrekin Council, on which we are now consulting. We reviewed the five two-tier districts in Shropshire in 1999 as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 The Shropshire (District of The Wrekin) (Structural Change) Order 1996, SI 1996 No. 1866 created a unitary authority for Telford & Wrekin which came into existence on 1 April 1998. The establishment of the unitary authority was preceded by a Directed Electoral Review (DER), carried out by this Commission following a direction from the Secretary of State dated 2 April 1996. This DER increased the number of councillors from 46 to 54 and the number of wards from 33 to 34. However, the DER did not fulfil the Commission's obligation under section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 to undertake a periodic electoral review of Telford & Wrekin.

3 In carrying out these reviews, we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, ie the need to:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Full details of the legislation under which we work are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the reviews.

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 district.

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been created locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local people are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configurations are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while also reflecting the identities and interests of local communities.

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as 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.

8 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against

upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in 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.

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

*Table 3: Stages of the Review*

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>
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 Secretary of State

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper called *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, ie in year one, half of the district council would be elected, in year two, half the county council would be elected, and so on. In unitary authority areas the White Paper proposed elections by thirds. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas and three-member wards in unitary authority areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral wards in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. The proposals were taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, states that the Secretary of State may make Orders to change authorities’ electoral cycles. However, until such time as the Secretary of State makes any Order under the 2000 Act, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas, and our current *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 27 March 2001, when we wrote to Telford & Wrekin Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified West Mercia Police Authority, the local authority associations, Shropshire Association of Parish & Town Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the West Midlands Region, the headquarters of the main political parties and local residents’ associations and community groups. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Telford & Wrekin Council to publicise the review further. The Commission’s Stage One consultation period was put into abeyance from 10 May 2001 until 7 June 2001 as a consequence of the General Election; the closing date for receipt of submissions at the end of Stage One was 16 July 2001.

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

13 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 9 October 2001 and will end on 3 December 2001, 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.**

14 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.

15 With effect from 1 April 2002, subject to Parliamentary approval, the Electoral Commission will assume the functions of the Local Government Commission for England and take over responsibility for making Orders putting in place the new arrangements resulting from periodic electoral reviews (powers which currently reside with the Secretary of State). As part of this transfer the Electoral Commission will set up a Boundary Committee for England which will take over responsibility for the conduct of PERs from the Local Government Commission for England. The Boundary Committee for England will conduct electoral reviews following the same rules and in the same manner as the Local Government Commission for England. The Boundary Committee for England's final recommendations on future electoral arrangements will then be presented to the Electoral Commission which will be able to accept, modify or reject the Boundary Committee for England's findings. Under these new arrangements there will remain a further opportunity to make representations directly to the Electoral Commission after the publication of the final recommendations, as was previously the case with the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to send comments to the Electoral Commission.



## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 Telford & Wrekin district is situated in the east of Shropshire and is bordered by Staffordshire to the east and the districts of North Shropshire to the north, Shrewsbury & Atcham to the west and Bridgnorth to the south. It was designated a New Town in 1968. Telford & Wrekin is an industrial district, comprising the ex-mining and steel towns of Madeley, Dawley, Oakengates and Donnington. Its largest urban centre is the old market town of Wellington. In the south of the district is the major tourist attraction of Ironbridge Gorge. Successful inward investment policies have led to a mix of manufacturing and services industries developing within Telford & Wrekin, and a growing population, which is currently approximately 151,500. It became a unitary authority in 1998. The district is entirely parished and contains 28 parishes.

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

18 The electorate of the district is 116,172 (February 2001). The Council presently has 54 members who are elected from 34 wards, three of which are relatively rural in the northern and western parts of the district with the remainder being predominantly urban. Three of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 14 are each represented by two councillors and 17 are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

19 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,151 electors, which the Council forecasts will increase to 2,267 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 nine of the 34 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average. The worst imbalance is in St Georges & Priorslee ward where each of the three councillors represents 19 per cent more electors than the district average.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Telford & Wrekin*

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	Arleston	1	2,056	2,056	-4	2,007	2,007	-11
2	Brookside	2	3,715	1,858	-14	3,623	1,812	-20
3	Church Aston & Lilleshall	1	2,292	2,292	7	2,249	2,249	-1
4	College	1	2,189	2,189	2	2,136	2,136	-6
5	Cuckoo Oak	2	4,040	2,020	-6	4,012	2,006	-12
6	Dawley Magna	3	6,954	2,318	8	7,577	2,526	11
7	Donnington	2	3,644	1,822	-15	3,554	1,777	-22
8	Donnington Wood & Muxton	2	4,974	2,487	16	5,375	2,688	19
9	Dothill	1	2,287	2,287	6	2,347	2,347	4
10	Edgmond	1	2,172	2,172	1	2,132	2,132	-6
11	Ercall	1	2,012	2,012	-6	1,964	1,964	-13
12	Ercall Magna	1	2,270	2,270	6	2,256	2,256	-1
13	Hadley	2	4,238	2,119	-2	4,185	2,093	-8
14	Haygate	1	2,202	2,202	2	2,178	2,178	-4
15	Hollinswood & Randlay	2	4,404	2,202	2	4,365	2,183	-4
16	Ironbridge Gorge	1	2,047	2,047	-5	2,960	2,960	31
17	Ketley	1	2,547	2,547	18	3,190	3,190	41
18	Ketley Bank	1	2,063	2,063	-4	2,063	2,063	-9
19	Lawley	2	3,796	1,898	-12	6,857	3,429	51
20	Leegomery	2	4,751	2,376	10	5,014	2,507	11
21	Madeley	2	4,375	2,188	2	4,268	2,134	-6
22	Malinslee & Langley	3	6,007	2,002	-7	5,867	1,956	-14
23	Newport East	1	2,097	2,097	-3	2,045	2,045	-10
24	Newport North	1	2,331	2,331	8	2,275	2,275	0
25	Newport South	1	2,034	2,034	-5	1,984	1,984	-12
26	Newport West	1	1,986	1,986	-8	1,937	1,937	-15

	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 %
27	Park	1	2,398	2,398	11	2,339	2,339	3
28	Shawbirch	1	2,274	2,274	6	2,247	2,247	-1
29	St Georges & Priorslee	3	7,685	2,562	19	8,356	2,785	23
30	Stirchley	2	3,729	1,865	-13	4,161	2,081	-8
31	Wombridge	2	4,397	2,199	2	4,300	2,150	-5
32	Woodside	2	4,579	2,290	6	4,751	2,376	5
33	Wrockwardine	2	3,518	1,759	-18	3,854	1,927	-15
34	Wrockwardine Wood	2	4,109	2,055	-5	4,011	2,006	-12
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>116,172</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>122,439</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,151</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Telford & Wrekin Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Wrockwardine ward are relatively over-represented by 18 per cent, while electors in St Georges & Priorslee ward are relatively under-represented by 19 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### 3 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

20 At the start of the review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Telford & Wrekin Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

21 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the LGCE visited the area and met officers and members from the Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received nine representations during Stage One, including a district-wide scheme from the Council, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of Telford & Wrekin Council.

#### **Telford & Wrekin Council**

22 The Council proposed retaining a council of 54 members serving 33 wards, compared to the existing 34. The Council's proposals provided a mixed pattern of single, two and three-member wards. It proposed that the rural and Newport area be represented by nine councillors overall, that northern Telford be represented by 24 councillors overall, and that southern Telford be represented by 21 councillors overall, which maintained the current balance of representation across the district. In order to facilitate its proposals, the Council's scheme provided for significant parish warding. The proposals would provide good electoral equality throughout the district with all wards varying by less than 10 per cent by 2006. The Council's submission also contained copies of representations received from interested parties during the Council's consultation period.

#### **The Wrekin & Telford Local Liberal Democrat Party**

23 The Wrekin & Telford Local Liberal Democrat Party ('The Liberal Democrats') supported the Council's proposals to retain single member wards in the towns of Newport and Wellington. However, they objected to the Council's proposed warding of Church Aston parish, and instead proposed that the whole of Church Aston parish be transferred to a revised Newport South ward. They also objected to the Commission's requirement that, in most cases, schemes should not provide wards with an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent, asserting that the figure was too low and stating that "It is fine in principle to aim for parity but communities that have grown should not be split in half just to satisfy this criterion."

#### **Parish Councils**

24 We received representations from five parish councils. Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council withdrew their original objection to the Council's proposals regarding its parish. Lawley & Overdale Parish Council objected to the Council's proposals to ward the parish, and instead proposed that the whole parish should form a three-member ward. Madeley Parish Council objected to the Council's proposal to include part of the existing Woodside ward in Ironbridge Gorge ward. Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council objected to the Council's proposed Brookside and The Nedge wards. Instead, it proposed combining the existing Brookside ward and the majority of the existing Stirchley ward to form a three-member ward.

25 Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council proposed an alternative boundary to that put forward by the Council for its proposed Wrockwardine Wood & Trench ward. It agreed that part of Wombridge should remain in the Oakengates area, but expressed concerns regarding the potentially confusing effect that any new arrangements might have on local residents.

### **Wrekin Area Committee – Shropshire Association of Parish and Town Councils**

26 The Wrekin Area Committee – Shropshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (‘The Wrekin Area Committee’) objected to the Council’s proposal to ward Lawley & Overdale and Stirchley & Brookside parishes for community reasons. It also expressed a preference for single and two-member wards.

### **Other Representations**

27 We received one further representation from a local resident who, in addition to her own letter to the Commission, forwarded copies of five pro-forma letters and a 34-signature petition which had been sent to Wellington Town Council. These were sent in objection to Wellington Town Council’s proposals to Telford & Wrekin Council, during its own consultation period, to transfer Haybridge Road from College ward to Arleston ward.

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

**28 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Telford & Wrekin and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, 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.**

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

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

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

32 Our *Guidance* states that 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 which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

### **Electorate Forecasts**

33 Since 1975 there has been a 54 per cent increase in the electorate of Telford & Wrekin district. The Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 5 per cent from 116,172 to 122,439 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Lawley, although a significant amount is also expected in Dawley Magna, Ironbridge Gorge, Ketley and St Georges & Priorslee wards. 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.

34 During the Commission’s analysis of proposals received during Stage One, we noted that figures which the Council had provided for part of its scheme in and around Newport were inaccurate. The Council resubmitted electorate figures for the area concerned, and also confirmed that they were

satisfied with the electorate figures for the remainder of the district. Advice from the Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

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

## **Council Size**

36 As explained earlier, we start 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.

37 Telford & Wrekin Council presently has 54 members. The Council's submission stated that the scheme would be based on retaining the present council size. They therefore proposed a council of 54 members, based on a mix of single, two and three member wards, the same as at present.

38 As part of its submission, the Council forwarded a proposal from Oakengates Regeneration Partnership which, in order to facilitate its proposals in the Wombridge/Oakengates area, would result in an increase in council size by one to 55 members. However, this proposal was not consulted upon locally, and we have received no other support for an increase in council size.

39 We noted that the Council's scheme divided the district into three for the purposes of gaining the correct allocation of councillors across the district as a whole. However, on closer inspection we noted that, in order to gain the correct balance, part of an urban parish, Lawley & Overdale, needed to be included in the rural area. While we do not consider this arrangement to be ideal, we propose adopting the Council's scheme, as any alternative would involve changing the proposed council size and significant re-warding of the district as a whole. 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 54 members.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

40 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 broadly based our recommendations on the Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements. However, to improve electoral equality further and having regard to local community identities and interests, we have decided to move away from the Council's proposals in three areas, both to reflect concerns raised by parish councils and to achieve improved electoral equality. For district warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Church Aston & Lilleshall, Edgmond, Ercall Magna and Wrockwardine wards
- (b) Newport (four wards)
- (c) Wellington (seven wards)
- (d) Hadley, Ketley, Ketley Bank, Leegomery and Wombridge wards
- (e) Donnington, Donnington Wood & Muxton, St Georges & Priorslee and Wrockwardine Wood wards
- (f) Brookside, Dawley Magna, Hollinswood & Randlay, Lawley, Malinslee & Langley and Stirchley wards
- (g) Cuckoo Oak, Ironbridge Gorge, Madeley and Woodside wards

41 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 map inserted at the back of this report.

### **Church Aston & Lilleshall, Edgmond, Ercall Magna and Wrockwardine wards**

42 The three single-member wards of Church Aston & Lilleshall, Edgmond and Ercall Magna and the two-member Wrockwardine ward are situated around the northern and western edge of the district. Church Aston & Lilleshall ward comprises the parishes of Chetwynd Aston, Church Aston and Lilleshall parish ward of Lilleshall & Donnington parish. Edgmond ward contains the parishes of Chetwynd, Edgmond and Tibberton & Cherrington. Ercall Magna ward comprises the parishes of Ercall Magna, Eyton upon the Weald Moors, Kynnersley and Waters Upton. Wrockwardine ward contains the parishes of Little Wenlock, Rodington and Wrockwardine. Under the existing electoral arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the district average in Church Aston & Lilleshall ward (1 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent above in Edgmond ward (6 per cent below by 2006), 6 per cent above in Ercall Magna ward (1 per cent below by 2006) and 18 per cent below in Wrockwardine ward (15 per cent below by 2006).

43 At Stage One, the Council proposed retaining the existing Edgmond and Ercall Magna wards, although it proposed amending the boundary between the two wards at the western boundary of Tibberton & Cherrington parish. It proposed that the existing Church Aston & Lilleshall ward be extended to include part of the existing Donnington ward (an area known as the Humbers) and the parish of Preston Upon the Weald Moors, currently in Hadley ward. It also proposed that Church Aston parish be warded so that a small part of the northernmost area be included in Newport South ward, to be discussed later. Finally, it proposed that the existing Wrockwardine ward be extended to include a new development being built in the western area of Lawley parish.

44 As part of the Council's submission, we noted that both Newport Town Council and Church Aston Parish Council objected to the Council's proposed warding of Church Aston parish. Also forwarded by the Council as part of its submission were letters from Waters Upton Parish Council and Little Wenlock Parish Council, which supported retaining the existing Ercall Magna ward and raised no objections to the proposed Wrockwardine ward respectively. Councillor Sadler (Ercall Magna ward) proposed transferring a small number of properties between Ercall Magna ward and Wrockwardine ward as under the current arrangements "this obviously causes some confusion and is unnecessary." However, the Council was unable to address this issue as it is not possible to modify external parish boundaries under the remit of this review nor were there enough electors involved to form a parish ward.

45 The Liberal Democrats objected to the Council's proposed warding of Church Aston parish and instead proposed that the whole of Church Aston parish be transferred to a revised Newport South ward, as it was of the view that "the whole of a parish Council should be in one District/Unitary ward".

46 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One for this area. As stated earlier, we noted that on detailed examination, the figures in the Council's submission for the Newport/Church Aston area were inaccurate, and the electorate projections for its proposed Church Aston & Lilleshall ward were affected by this. When the correct figures were applied to the Council's proposed wards, it resulted in the electoral variances for Church Aston & Lilleshall ward being 15 per cent above the district average (5 per cent above by 2006), while the electoral variances for Newport South ward, being the other ward affected, would be 6 per cent below the district average (13 per cent below by 2006).

47 However, in considering this area as a whole, we note that, by including part of Lawley & Overdale parish in the scheme for this area, it secures the correct allocation of councillors based on a council size of 54, while achieving improved levels of electoral equality. We therefore consider that the Council's proposals provide a balance between the need to provide for improved electoral equality and the statutory criteria and propose basing our draft recommendations in this area on its scheme.

48 We propose retaining the existing Edgmond and Ercall Magna wards, as proposed by the Council, in the light of the good electoral equality achieved and local support. However, we do not propose adopting the Council's proposed boundary amendment to the western boundary of Tibberton & Cherrington parish as this would create a parish ward comprising no electors. This matter could be addressed as part of a later parish review.

49 We note that the warding of Church Aston parish was opposed by both Church Aston Parish Council and Newport Town Council. However, notwithstanding the revised electorate figures (detailed above) we agree with the Council that some parish warding is necessary to secure good electoral equality in this area. In light of this, we propose adopting the Council's proposed Church Aston & Lilleshall ward while making the necessary adjustments to the figures in order to correctly reflect the number of electors in the proposed ward. We also propose amending its northern boundary so that all of Richmond Close is transferred to its proposed Newport South ward. We further propose two minor amendments to tie the boundaries to ground detail, firstly to ensure that the northern boundary follows the rear of properties on Humber Lane and secondly so that the boundary with the proposed Hadley & Leegomery ward follows a field edge.

50 For the remainder of the rural area, we propose adopting the Council's proposed Wrockwardine ward. While we have some reservations about this ward, given that it comprises a large, more rural area with some new urban development within Lawley & Overdale parish, in the absence of any viable alternatives, and given that it facilitates a good electoral scheme across the district as a whole and has achieved some local support, we propose adopting it as part of our recommendations. We would welcome comments on this ward at Stage Three.

51 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 14 per cent above the district average in Church Aston & Lilleshall ward (5 per cent above by 2006), 1 per cent above in Edgmond ward (6 per cent below by 2006), 6 per cent above in Ercall Magna ward (equal to the average by 2006) and 17 per cent below in Wrockwardine ward (4 per cent above by 2006). Our

draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Newport (four wards)**

52 The town of Newport is situated in the north-west of the district. The town currently comprises four single-member district wards: Newport East, Newport North, Newport South and Newport West, which are coterminous with the town wards of the same name. Under the existing electoral arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 3 per cent below the district average in Newport East ward (10 per cent below by 2006), 8 per cent above in Newport North ward (equal to the average by 2006), 5 per cent below in Newport South ward (12 per cent below by 2006) and 8 per cent below in Newport West ward (15 per cent below by 2006).

53 At Stage One, the Council proposed retaining a pattern of four single-member wards in Newport. However, it proposed modifying the boundaries to secure better electoral equality. In addition, as described earlier, it proposed transferring part of Church Aston parish into its proposed Newport South ward in order to increase the electorate in its proposed Newport South ward and secure better electoral equality. It proposed a revised Newport North ward, comprising the existing Newport North ward, less the whole of Farm Grove, Vauxhall Terrace and properties on Longford Road to the south-west of Broomfield Road, which would be transferred to a revised Newport West ward. The Council proposed that its revised Newport West ward would comprise the existing Newport West ward and the properties from the existing Newport North ward as described above, in addition to numbers 1 – 21 (odd numbers) Wellington Road and 1 – 33 (odd numbers) Upper Bar from the existing Newport South ward. As a consequence, it proposed further modifying the existing Newport South ward by incorporating part of Church Aston parish into the ward. This would involve transferring the northern part of Wallshead Way, Mulberry Close, Primrose Drive and properties on the north side of Richmond Close into its proposed Newport South ward.

54 In addition, the boundary between Newport South and Newport East wards would be modified to continue along the centre of Meadow Road, to the rear of properties on Meadow View Close, then northwards along the rear of properties on Stafford Road so that numbers 62 – 92 (even numbers) and all of the properties on High Meadows are transferred to a modified Newport East ward.

55 As part of the Council's submission, both Church Aston Parish Council and Newport Town Council objected to the proposed transfer of part of Church Aston parish to the Council's proposed Newport South ward, as described earlier.

56 Similarly, the Liberal Democrats objected to the warding of Church Aston parish and instead proposed that the whole of Church Aston parish be incorporated into a revised Newport South ward. However, they supported the Council's proposal to retain a pattern of single-member wards in the town.

57 We have carefully considered all representations received during Stage One for Newport. As stated earlier, the Council provided revised figures for both its proposed Church Aston & Lilleshall and Newport South wards. Consequently, given that we propose adopting the Council's proposed Church Aston & Lilleshall ward as detailed earlier, the Council's proposed wards in Newport required some modification to secure acceptable levels of electoral equality. We therefore propose adopting the Council's wards in Newport with some minor modifications. Firstly, we propose retaining the existing Newport East ward unchanged. We propose adopting the Council's proposed Newport North ward and

as a consequence we propose adopting the Council's modification to the north-western boundary of its proposed Newport West ward, although we propose retaining the south-eastern boundary of Newport West ward unchanged. Furthermore, in Newport South, we propose retaining the existing ward boundaries, other than the addition of the parish ward from Church Aston parish, as described earlier. These modifications ensure that all four Newport wards achieve as good levels of electoral equality as possible, based on the revised electorate figures, while also securing identifiable boundaries.

58 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent below the district average in Newport East ward (9 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent above in Newport North ward (6 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent below in Newport South ward (7 per cent below by 2006) and equal to the average in Newport West ward (8 per cent below by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A2 in Appendix A.

### **Wellington (seven wards)**

59 The town of Wellington is situated in the centre of the district. The town is currently represented by seven single-member district wards: Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch, which are coterminous with the town wards of the same name. Under the existing electoral arrangements, the number of electors is 4 per cent below the district average in Arleston ward (11 per cent below by 2006), 2 per cent above in College ward (6 per cent below by 2006), 6 per cent above in Dothill ward (4 per cent above by 2006), 6 per cent below in Ercall ward (13 per cent below by 2006), 2 per cent above in Haygate ward (4 per cent below by 2006), 11 per cent above in Park ward (3 per cent above by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Shawbirch ward (1 per cent below by 2006).

60 At Stage One, the Council proposed retaining a pattern of seven single-member wards in Wellington. However, it proposed modifying a number of the boundaries to secure better electoral equality. It proposed retaining the existing Shawbirch ward unchanged. It proposed a modified Dothill ward broadly transferring the area to the east of St Margarets Drive and Lime Tree Way into a revised College ward. The revised College ward would comprise the existing College ward and the properties transferred from the existing Dothill ward, while its revised southern boundary would follow the centre of the High Street, Mill Bank and Bank Road before running along the rear of properties on the south side of Regent Street, then running southwards to Watling Street. The properties to the south of this proposed southern boundary would be transferred to a revised Arleston ward. It proposed a revised Ercall ward, which would include that area to the south of Haygate Road from Haygate ward. Additionally, the northern boundary of Haygate ward would be modified to run along the centre of Sycamore Close and Elmpark Drive before running southwards along Admaston Road until it rejoins the existing boundary. Its proposed Park ward would therefore retain its existing boundaries less those properties being transferred to a modified Haygate ward.

61 Under the Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent above the district average in Arleston ward (2 per cent below by 2006), 2 per cent above in College ward (6 per cent below by 2006), 3 per cent below in Dothill ward (5 per cent below by 2006), 8 per cent above in Ercall ward (equal to the average by 2006), 1 per cent below in Haygate ward (7 per cent below by 2006), equal to the average in Park ward (7 per cent below by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Shawbirch ward (1 per cent below by 2006).

62 Included in the Council's submission was a letter from Wellington Town Council proposing alternative internal boundaries for the town. The Town Council proposed retaining the existing Shawbirch ward. It proposed amending the northern boundary of Park ward around Stokesay Road whilst modifying its eastern boundary to run along the rear of properties in Crescent Road. Finally it proposed a modification to the southern boundary to follow the rear of some properties on Wrockwardine Road, and also to transfer properties on Lindfield Drive and Vineyard Drive to its proposed Haygate ward. The northern boundary of its proposed Haygate ward would be modified as described earlier and its southern boundary would follow the rear of properties along Roseway, before following the remainder of the existing boundary, other than following the rear of properties on Herbert Avenue. Its proposed Ercall ward would be modified as already described. Its proposed Arleston ward would be extended to include some properties on Watling Street and Haybridge Road. College ward would therefore lose these properties, while gaining properties on Crescent Road and Leegomery Road. Dothill ward would therefore reflect these modifications. This scheme would produce broadly similar electoral equality to that achieved by the Council's scheme, although the electorate figures in its proposed Ercall ward would vary by 10 per cent from the average by 2006.

63 Under the Town Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the district average in Arleston ward (7 per cent below by 2006), 2 per cent above in College ward (5 per cent below by 2006), 2 per cent above in Dothill ward, both now and by 2006, 2 per cent below in Ercall ward (10 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent above in Haygate ward (5 per cent below by 2006), 7 per cent above in Park ward (5 per cent below by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Shawbirch ward (1 per cent below by 2006).

64 The Liberal Democrats supported the Council's proposals to retain seven single-member wards within Wellington. A local resident objected to the Town Council's proposal to transfer Haybridge Road from College ward to Arleston ward, which had been submitted to the Council during its own consultation period. She also included copies of five pro-forma letters and a 34-signature petition which had been sent to Wellington Town Council, and proposed that Haybridge Road should remain in College ward.

65 We have carefully considered all the representations received during Stage One for Wellington. We have noted Wellington Town Council's alternative proposals, but do not consider that these utilise such strong boundaries as those proposed by the Council. Furthermore, the proposals do not improve upon the good levels of electoral equality achieved by the Council's proposals. We also note that the Town Council's proposals include transferring an area of the existing College ward around Haybridge Road to its proposed Arleston ward, which attracted some objections during Stage One. Moreover, the Council, in their submission, did not take the Town Council's proposal forward. Therefore, given the better boundaries and slightly better electoral equality, we propose adopting the Council's proposals for seven single-member wards in Wellington as part of our draft recommendations. We have proposed some very minor boundary modifications to ensure that all the boundaries are tied to ground detail.

66 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch wards would be the same as under the Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Hadley, Ketley, Ketley Bank, Leegomery and Wombridge wards**

67 These five wards are situated in the centre of the district. The two-member Hadley ward contains the parish of Preston Upon the Weald Moors and Hadley parish ward of Hadley parish. The single-member Ketley ward is coterminous with the parish of the same name. Ketley Bank ward, which is also represented by a single member, contains Ketley Bank town ward of Oakengates town. The two-member Leegomery ward comprises Leegomery parish ward of Hadley parish. The two-member Wombridge ward comprises Wombridge town ward of Oakengates town. Under the existing arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent below the district average in Hadley ward (8 per cent below by 2006), 18 per cent above the average in Ketley ward (41 per cent above by 2006), 4 per cent below in Ketley Bank ward (9 per cent below by 2006), 10 per cent above in Leegomery ward (11 per cent above by 2006) and 2 per cent above in Wombridge ward (5 per cent below by 2006).

68 At Stage One, the Council proposed that the north-western part of the existing Hadley and Leegomery wards form a new single-member Apley Castle ward, with the boundary following the centre of Leegate Avenue, and then westwards to the north of Leegomery Cottages and properties on Granger Drive, before following the path westwards to the north of the playing fields to Whitchurch Drive. The remainder of the existing Leegomery ward would be joined with the remainder of the existing Hadley ward, less Preston Upon the Weald Moors parish, which would be transferred to Church Aston & Lilleshall ward (detailed earlier), together with the Beveley area of the existing Ketley ward. This new three-member ward would be named Hadley & Leegomery ward. The remainder of the existing Ketley ward would be joined with all of the existing Ketley Bank ward and the southern part of the existing Wombridge ward (the area to the south of Queensway) to form a new three-member Ketley & Oakengates ward.

69 Under the Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent below the district average in Apley Castle ward (equal to the average by 2006), 9 per cent above in Hadley & Leegomery ward (8 per cent above by 2006) and 7 per cent above in Ketley & Oakengates ward (5 per cent above by 2006).

70 As part of the Council's submission, Oakengates Town Council objected to the Council's proposal that Ketley and Ketley Bank form part of the same ward "as they feel that Ketley and Ketley Bank do not relate to each other in any way." As an alternative, Oakengates Town Council proposed that the existing Wombridge ward should be retained, and that the area around Shepherds Lane in Ketley parish be transferred to the existing Ketley Bank ward to improve electoral equality. Oakengates Regeneration Partnership proposed retaining the Wombridge and Oakengates area as a two-member ward, while taking in the Beveley area from the proposed Hadley & Leegomery ward and transferring the area around Shepherds Lane, currently in Ketley ward, into the existing Ketley Bank ward. In order to facilitate these proposals, the size of Telford & Wrekin Council would need to increase to 55. However, it did provide an alternative proposal which would involve reducing the representation in the proposed St Georges ward to a single member, "transferring the North-Western part of the proposed Saint George's Ward to Oakengates."

71 We have carefully considered all the representations received regarding these wards during Stage One. We propose adopting the Council's proposed Apley Castle ward as we consider that it utilises strong boundaries and did not receive any objections during the Council's consultation period. We have noted the objections raised to the Council's proposed Hadley & Leegomery and Ketley & Oakengates

wards. However, we consider that the Council's proposals secure the best balance currently available between electoral equality and reflecting local communities in this area, while also taking into account the significant growth forecast in some areas. Furthermore, the alternative proposal put forward by Oakengates Regeneration Partnership would involve an increase of council size by one, which in our view would not be supported locally nor facilitate the provision of a good electoral scheme across the district as a whole. We are also unable to consider any one area in isolation, but must consider the district as a whole, and its alternative would have consequential effects on other wards in the district, which we do not consider justified given the viable scheme for these wards put forward by the Council. We therefore propose adopting the Council's proposed Apley Castle, Hadley & Leegomery and Ketley & Oakengates wards, subject to a minor amendment to the boundary between Hadley & Leegomery and Church Aston & Lilleshall wards, as detailed earlier.

72 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Apley Castle, Hadley & Leegomery and Ketley & Oakengates wards would be the same as under the Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Donnington, Donnington Wood & Muxton, St Georges & Priorslee and Wrockwardine Wood wards**

73 The two-member wards of Donnington, Donnington Wood & Muxton and Wrockwardine Wood and the three-member ward of St Georges & Priorslee are situated in the east of the district. Donnington ward comprises Donnington parish ward of Lilleshall & Donnington parish and Donnington Wood & Muxton ward comprises Donnington Wood & Muxton parish ward of Lilleshall & Donnington parish. St Georges & Priorslee ward is coterminous with the parish of the same name. Wrockwardine Wood ward is coterminous with Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish. Under the existing arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 15 per cent below the district average in Donnington ward (22 per cent below by 2006), 16 per cent above in Donnington Wood & Muxton ward (19 per cent above by 2006), 19 per cent above in St Georges & Priorslee ward (23 per cent above by 2006) and 5 per cent below in Wrockwardine Wood ward (12 per cent below by 2006).

74 At Stage One, the Council proposed that the existing two-member Donnington ward should retain the majority of its existing boundaries, although an area in the far north of the ward, to the east of Station Road/Donnington Drive known as the Humbers, would be transferred to its proposed Church Aston & Lilleshall ward, as detailed earlier. In addition, the western part of the existing Donnington Wood & Muxton ward (the area to the west of Donnington Wood Way, to the north of The Fields, to the north-west of Church Road/St Matthews Road/Ashlea Drive and to the north of St Georges Road) would also be transferred into the Council's revised Donnington ward. As a consequence, the remainder of Donnington Wood & Muxton ward would form a new two-member Muxton ward.

75 To the south-west of these wards, the Council proposed a new two-member St Georges ward and a new two-member Priorslee ward. Its proposed St Georges ward would comprise the southern part of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish, to the south of Wrockwardine Wood Way and to the west of Moss Road, together with the north-western part of the existing St Georges & Priorslee ward, that area to the west of the Ragged Robin estate, to the west of the area around Duke Street and St Georges Methodist Church, to the west of Snow Hill and to the north-west of St Georges by-pass/Church Road. Its proposed Priorslee ward would comprise the remainder of the existing St Georges & Priorslee ward together with the southern part of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish, to the south of Wrockwardine Wood Way and to the east of Moss Road. Finally, its revised Wrockwardine Wood & Trench ward

would comprise the existing ward less the most southern part transferred to the proposed St Georges and Priorslee wards, together with the northern part of the existing Wombridge ward (to the north of the A442) as described earlier.

76 As part of its submission, the Council forwarded a letter from St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council who supported the Council's proposals for the parish. It also forwarded a letter from Councillor Barnes (Wombridge ward) who objected to the Council's proposals for the existing Wombridge ward. He expressed concerns that the proposals would lead to Wombridge losing both community identity and identifiable boundaries.

77 Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council proposed that Wrockwardine Wood Way should form the entire southern boundary of the proposed ward, while it agreed that part of Wombridge ward should remain with the Oakengates area.

78 Under the Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the district average in Donnington ward (5 per cent below by 2006), 6 per cent below in Muxton ward (1 per cent below by 2006), 10 per cent below in Priorslee ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 14 per cent above in St Georges ward (5 per cent above by 2006) and 17 per cent above in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench ward (8 per cent above by 2006).

79 We have carefully considered all the representations received regarding this area during Stage One. We note that the Council's proposed Donnington and Muxton wards retain most of their existing boundaries while achieving good electoral equality. We also note that its proposed St Georges and Priorslee wards address the significant growth forecast in the east of the parish, while having the support of St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council. We note the objections to the Council's proposed Wrockwardine Wood & Trench ward, but consider that the Council's proposals achieve good electoral equality while reflecting the statutory criteria. The alternative southern boundary proposed by Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council would mean that residents living in the Holyhurst Road/Wombridge Road area would have no direct vehicular access to the rest of the proposed Ketley & Oakengates ward. We therefore propose adopting the Council's scheme for this area in full.

80 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Donnington, Muxton, Priorslee, St Georges and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench wards would be the same as under the Council's recommendations. Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Brookside, Dawley Magna, Hollinswood & Randlay, Lawley, Malinslee & Langley and Stirchley wards**

81 These six wards are situated in the south of the district, to the south of the M54 and broadly to the north of the A4169 (Queens Way). Brookside ward is served by two members and comprises Brookside parish ward of Stirchley & Brookside parish. The three-member Dawley Magna ward comprises Dawley Hamlets parish and Dawley Central parish ward of Great Dawley parish. Hollinswood & Randlay ward is served by two councillors and is coterminous with the parish of the same name. The two-member Lawley ward comprises Lawley & Overdale parish. Malinslee & Langley ward is represented by three councillors and contains Malinslee and Langley parish wards of Great Dawley parish. The two-member Stirchley ward comprises Stirchley parish ward of Stirchley & Brookside parish. Under the existing arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 14 per cent below the

district average in Brookside ward (20 per cent below by 2006), 8 per cent above in Dawley Magna ward (11 per cent above by 2006), 2 per cent above in Hollinswood & Randlay ward (4 per cent below by 2006), 12 per cent below in Lawley ward (51 per cent above by 2006), 7 per cent below in Malinslee & Langley ward (14 per cent below by 2006) and 13 per cent below in Stirchley ward (8 per cent below by 2006).

82 At Stage One, the Council proposed extending the existing two-member Brookside ward northwards to include the area to the south-west of the playing fields and to the south-east of Stirchley Road, and the area to the south of Holmer Farm Road from the existing Stirchley ward in order to reduce the current over-representation in the ward. The remainder of the current Stirchley ward would be joined with the existing Hollinswood & Randlay ward to form a new three-member The Nedge ward.

83 The Council proposed warding Lawley parish so that the parish be divided between four district wards. It proposed that the western part of the existing Lawley ward (to the west of Lawley Drive) be transferred to its proposed Wrockwardine ward, as detailed earlier. Its proposed two-member Lawley & Overdale ward would comprise the area to the south of the M54, to the west of Old Park Way and Dawley Green Way, to the north-east of Station Road and to the east of Lawley Drive. The southern area of Lawley parish, to the south-west of Station Road and the Newdale roundabout, would be transferred to its proposed two-member Horsehay & Lightmoor ward, which would also include the part of Dawley Hamlets parish to the west of Fence Road/Pool Hill Road/Doseley Road and the dismantled railway in addition to the northern part of The Gorge parish, to the north of the A169. The remainder of Lawley parish, the area to the east of Old Park Way, known as Old Park, would be transferred to its proposed two-member Malinslee ward, which would also comprise the majority of the existing ward, less the area to the west of King Street and south of Dawley Green Road, the area around Conroy Drive and the area to the south of Hinksay Road (around Beechwood Road). Finally in this area, the Council's Dawley Magna ward would be modified to comprise these parts of the existing Malinslee & Langley ward, as described above and the remainder of Dawley Hamlets parish. This ward would continue to be represented by three councillors.

84 Under the Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 15 per cent above the district average in Brookside ward (6 per cent above by 2006), 14 per cent above in Dawley Magna ward (7 per cent above by 2006), 53 per cent below in Horsehay & Lightmoor ward (3 per cent below by 2006), 28 per cent below in Lawley & Overdale ward (7 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent below in Malinslee ward (1 per cent above by 2006) and 7 per cent above in The Nedge ward (8 per cent above by 2006).

85 As part of the Council's submission, a letter was forwarded from Councillor Barber (Lawley ward) who objected to the Council's plans to ward Lawley parish for community reasons. He was also concerned about what effect the proposals might have on the Sure Start funding which the existing Lawley ward currently receives.

86 The Wrekin Area Committee objected to the Council's proposals to ward Lawley & Overdale parish for community reasons. Lawley & Overdale Parish Council also objected to the Council's proposals, proposing that the whole parish should form a three-member ward.

87 Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council initially objected to the Council's proposed The Nedge ward, considering that, the variances for the existing Hollinswood & Randlay ward were within acceptable levels, and proposed retaining the existing arrangements for the ward. However, it later

withdrew its objections after receiving reassurances that the Council Leader would not seek a subsequent parish boundary review in the foreseeable future.

88 Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council objected to the Council's proposed Brookside and The Nedge wards. It stated that "The outcome of the proposal to combine part of Stirchley with Hollinswood & Randlay would be to include Stirchley with a community with whom it has no significant existing relationship and no combined activities." As an alternative, it proposed combining the existing Brookside ward and the majority of the existing Stirchley ward to form a three-member ward.

89 We have carefully considered all the submissions received regarding this area during Stage One. We note the objections to the Council's proposed The Nedge ward from both the Wrekin Area Committee and Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council. However, we consider that the Council's proposed Brookside ward utilises strong boundaries and secures reasonable electoral equality. Furthermore, we consider that the Council's proposed The Nedge ward would unite the residential areas to the north and south of Randlay Avenue, which we consider to share a community of interest. The alternative warding arrangements proposed by Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council would result in its proposed Stirchley & Brookside ward being under-represented by 14 per cent by 2006. We do not consider this level of electoral imbalance is justified given the viable alternative proposed by the Council. Additionally, we have noted that Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council withdrew their opposition to the Council's proposed The Nedge ward. We therefore propose adopting the Council's proposed Brookside and The Nedge wards subject to two minor amendments to the boundary between the two wards to ensure that it is tied to ground detail.

90 We also note the objections to the Council's proposed warding of Lawley & Overdale parish. We do not propose adopting the proposal from Lawley & Overdale Parish Council that the whole parish form a three-member ward, given the consequential effects on the district-wide scheme which would result. Furthermore we cannot take into account socio-economic factors when considering proposals. However, we do consider that the parish warding of Lawley & Overdale could be reduced and we therefore propose to move away from the Council's proposals in one area. We propose amending the Council's Lawley & Overdale and Malinslee wards to retain the Old Park area within Lawley & Overdale ward. This amendment would have a minimal effect upon electoral equality while, we consider, better reflecting community identity within the area. In the remainder of this area, we propose adopting the Council's proposed Dawley Magna and Horsehay & Lightmoor wards. We consider that these proposals achieve good levels of electoral equality while addressing the issue of significant future growth.

91 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 15 per cent above the district average in Brookside ward (6 per cent above by 2006), 14 per cent above in Dawley Magna ward (7 per cent above by 2006), 53 per cent below in Horsehay & Lightmoor ward (3 per cent below by 2006), 26 per cent below in Lawley & Overdale ward (2 per cent above by 2006), 3 per cent below in Malinslee ward (8 per cent below by 2006) and 7 per cent above in The Nedge ward (8 per cent above by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Cuckoo Oak, Ironbridge Gorge, Madeley and Woodside wards**

92 These four wards are situated in the very south of the district. The two-member Cuckoo Oak ward comprises Cuckoo Oak parish ward of Madeley parish. The single-member Ironbridge Gorge ward comprises all of The Gorge parish. The two-member Madeley ward comprises Madeley Central parish ward of Madeley parish. The two-member Woodside ward comprises Woodside parish ward of Madeley parish. Under the existing arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent below the district average in Cuckoo Oak ward (12 per cent below by 2006), 5 per cent below in Ironbridge Gorge ward (31 per cent above by 2006), 2 per cent above in Madeley ward (6 per cent below by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Woodside ward (5 per cent above by 2006).

93 At Stage One, the Council proposed broadly retaining the existing two-member Cuckoo Oak and Madeley wards, although it proposed transferring an area around Kemberton Drive and Oak Close from the existing Madeley ward into the existing Cuckoo Oak ward. The Council proposed modifying the western boundary of Woodside ward so that the area to the west of Woodbridge Avenue, which is due to have a significant new development built on it, would be transferred into a revised Ironbridge Gorge ward. Its proposed Woodside ward would continue to be represented by two councillors, and its revised Ironbridge Gorge ward would continue to be represented by a single member.

94 Under the Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the district average in Cuckoo Oak ward (8 per cent below by 2006), 3 per cent above in Ironbridge Gorge ward (6 per cent above by 2006), 1 per cent below in Madeley ward (9 per cent below by 2006) and 2 per cent above in Woodside ward (5 per cent below by 2006).

95 As part of its submission, the Council forwarded a letter from The Gorge Parish Council, which objected to the Council's proposals to transfer the new properties due to be built in Woodside ward to the proposed Ironbridge Gorge ward. It stated that "members consider that to add the new estates off Woodside Road to the Gorge Parish, when these have no community association with the Gorge, is a misplaced strategy." It proposed that, if part of the existing Woodside ward needed to be transferred to Ironbridge Gorge ward, "a more appropriate strategy would be to extend the boundaries up Lincoln Hill and Madeley Bank to include the older housing in the area of Beech Road, Roberts Road and School Road in the Gorge." However, regarding the new development at Lightmoor to the north of the A4169, which the Council proposed should be transferred to its new Horsehay & Lightmoor ward, it stated that it "can see the logic in excluding this area from the Gorge by 2006."

96 Madeley Parish Council also objected to the Council's proposals for the existing Woodside and Ironbridge Gorge wards, stating that "There is no relationship with Ironbridge Gorge – no road access – no service delivery – no history or affinity".

97 We have carefully considered all the representations received regarding the southern part of Telford & Wrekin during Stage One. We note that the Council's proposed Cuckoo Oak and Madeley wards retain most of the existing boundaries while achieving good electoral equality. We therefore propose adopting the Council's proposals for these two wards, subject to a minor amendment so that the boundary follows the centre of Legges Road, and a further amendment to the proposed boundary in order to tie it to ground detail, which does not affect any electors.

98 We note the objection from both Madeley Parish Council and The Gorge Parish Council regarding the Council's proposed Ironbridge Gorge and Woodside wards. We agree that the proposal to transfer the westernmost part of the existing Woodside ward to the proposed Ironbridge Gorge ward would not provide a good reflection of communities in this area, particularly given that this area would not have direct road links to the proposed Ironbridge Gorge ward. Therefore, in light of the local opposition, we propose retaining the existing boundary between Ironbridge Gorge and Woodside wards in order to better reflect the community identity in the area. Under these proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the district average in Ironbridge Gorge ward (14 per cent below by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Woodside ward (5 per cent above by 2006). While this would have the effect of worsening the electoral equality in the area when compared with the Council's proposals, we consider that the better reflection of community identities within both areas outweighs the potentially negative effect of the electoral imbalance which would occur as a result of our draft recommendations. However we do agree with the Council's proposals to create a parish ward in the northern part of The Gorge parish to place the proposed new development in the proposed Horsehay & Lightmoor ward.

99 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the district average in Cuckoo Oak ward (8 per cent below by 2006), 6 per cent below in Ironbridge Gorge ward (14 per cent below by 2006), 1 per cent below in Madeley ward (9 per cent below by 2006) and 6 per cent above in Woodside ward (5 per cent above by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Electoral Cycle**

100 At Stage One the Council supported the retention of whole-council elections every four years. In light of this support, and in the absence of any other representations, we therefore make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

## **Conclusions**

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

- a council of 54 members should be retained;
- there should be 33 wards;
- the boundaries of 29 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one ward, and five wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council every four years.

102 As already indicated, we have largely based our draft recommendations on the Council's proposals, subject to minor boundary amendments to ensure boundaries are tied to ground detail, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- in the Newport area, we propose retaining the existing Newport East ward and retaining the existing boundary between the proposed Newport South and Newport West wards;
- we propose that the Old Park area of Lawley & Overdale parish should be transferred from the Council's proposed Malinslee ward to our proposed Lawley & Overdale ward;
- finally, we propose that the existing boundary between Woodside and Ironbridge Gorge wards be retained.

103 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will affect 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 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	54	54	54	54
Number of wards	34	33	34	33
Average number of electors per councillor	2,151	2,151	2,267	2,267
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	9	9	17	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	0	2	5	0

104 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Telford & Wrekin Council would result in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent remaining the same. However, by 2006 only one ward is forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Telford & Wrekin Council should comprise 54 councillors serving 33 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. The Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

### **Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements**

105 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 district wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parishes and towns of Church Aston, Dawley Hamlets, Great Dawley, Hadley, Ketley, Lawley & Overdale, Lilleshall & Donnington, Madeley, Newport, Oakengates, St Georges & Priorslee, Stirchley & Brookside, The Gorge, Wellington and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench to reflect the proposed district wards.

106 Church Aston Parish Council is currently served by 10 parish councillors and the parish is not warded. In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that Church Aston should be warded into two: one parish ward covering the majority of Church Aston parish and the other parish ward covering the area nearest to Newport. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

107 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in the Church Aston parish area (broadly reflecting the Council's boundary proposals for Church Aston & Lilleshall and Newport South district wards) we propose that Church Aston parish should be warded accordingly. In addition, we propose that the parish ward covering the main Church Aston settlement should be named Church Aston parish ward and be represented by nine parish councillors, and the parish ward covering the area nearest to Newport around Wallshead Way (to be included in Newport South district ward) should be named Wallshead parish ward and be represented by one parish councillor, a total of 10 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Church Aston Parish Council should comprise 10 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Church Aston (returning nine councillors) and Wallshead (one). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on Map A2 in Appendix A.

108 Dawley Hamlets Parish Council is currently served by nine parish councillors and the parish is not warded. In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that Dawley Hamlets should be warded into two: one parish ward covering the south-eastern part of the parish, to be included in Dawley Magna district ward and the other parish ward covering the remainder of the parish, to be included in Horsehay & Lightmoor district ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

109 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Dawley Hamlets parish, reflecting the Council's proposals for Dawley Magna and Horsehay & Lightmoor wards, we propose adopting the Council's proposed parish ward boundaries to correspond with the district ward boundaries within the parish. In addition, we propose that the parish ward covering the south-eastern part of the parish should be named Aqueduct parish ward and be represented by six parish councillors, and the parish ward covering the remainder of the parish should be named Dawley Hamlets parish ward and be represented by three parish councillors, a total of nine councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Dawley Hamlets Parish Council should comprise nine councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Aqueduct (returning six councillors) and Dawley Hamlets (three). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

110 Great Dawley Parish Council is currently served by 14 parish councillors representing the three parish wards of Dawley Central, Langley and Malinslee, which are represented by four, four and six councillors respectively.

111 The Council proposed that Great Dawley parish be divided between two district wards and therefore proposed two revised parish wards: Dawley Magna district ward would contain one parish ward, and Malinslee district ward would contain the other parish ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

112 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Great Dawley parish, reflecting the Council's proposals for Dawley Magna and Malinslee wards, we propose adopting the Council's proposed parish ward boundaries. In addition, we propose that the parish ward covering the western part of the parish, to be included in Dawley Magna district ward, should be named Dawley parish ward and be represented by seven parish councillors, and the parish ward covering the eastern part of the parish, to be included in Malinslee district ward, should be named Malinslee parish ward and also be represented by seven parish councillors, a total of 14 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Great Dawley Parish Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Dawley and Malinslee, each returning seven councillors. The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

113 Hadley Parish Council is currently served by 16 parish councillors representing the two parish wards of Hadley and Leegomery, which are each represented by eight councillors.

114 The Council proposed that Hadley parish be divided between two district wards: Apley Castle district ward would contain one parish ward, and Hadley & Leegomery district ward would contain the other parish ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

115 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Hadley parish, reflecting the Council's proposals for Apley Castle and Hadley & Leegomery wards, we propose adopting the Council's proposed parish ward boundaries. In addition, we propose that the parish ward covering the north-western part of the parish, to be included in Apley Castle district ward, should be named Apley Castle parish ward and be represented by four parish councillors, and the parish ward covering the

remainder of the parish, to be included in Hadley & Leegomery district ward, should be named Hadley & Leegomery parish ward and be represented by twelve parish councillors, a total of 16 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Hadley Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Apley Castle (returning four councillors) and Hadley & Leegomery (twelve). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

116 Ketley Parish Council is currently served by 11 parish councillors and the parish is not warded. In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that Ketley parish should be warded into two: one parish ward covering the Beveley area of the parish and the other parish ward covering the remainder of the parish. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

117 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Ketley parish, reflecting the Council’s proposals for Hadley & Leegomery and Ketley & Oakengates wards, we propose adopting the Council’s proposed parish ward boundaries. In addition, we propose that the parish ward covering the Beveley area of the parish, to be included in Hadley & Leegomery district ward, should be named Beveley parish ward and be represented by two parish councillors and the parish ward covering the remainder of the parish, to be included in Ketley & Oakengates district ward, should be named Ketley parish ward and be represented by nine parish councillors, a total of 11 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Ketley Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Beveley (returning two councillors) and Ketley (nine). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

118 Lawley & Overdale Parish Council is currently served by eight parish councillors and the parish is not warded. The Council proposed that Lawley & Overdale parish should be warded into four in order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in the area. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed. However, under our draft recommendations we propose reducing the number of proposed parish wards in Lawley & Overdale to three in order to facilitate our proposals for district warding in this area: one parish ward covering the central area of the parish, one parish ward covering the south-west of the parish and the other parish ward covering the western area of the parish. We propose that the parish ward covering the central area of the parish, to be included in Lawley & Overdale district ward, should be named Central parish ward and be represented by five parish councillors, the parish ward covering the south-west of the parish, to be included in Horsehay

& Lightmoor district ward, should be named Lawley parish ward and be represented by two parish councillors and the parish ward covering the western area of the parish, to be included in Wrockwardine district ward, should be named West parish ward and be represented by one parish councillor, a total of eight councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Lawley & Overdale Parish Council should comprise eight councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Central (returning five councillors), Lawley (two) and West (one) . The boundaries of the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

119 Lilleshall & Donnington Parish Council is currently served by 15 parish councillors representing the three parish wards of Donnington, Donnington Wood & Muxton and Lilleshall, which are represented by seven, four and four councillors respectively.

120 The Council proposed that Lilleshall & Donnington parish be divided between three district wards: Church Aston & Lilleshall district ward would contain one parish ward, Donnington district ward would contain another parish ward and Muxton district ward would contain the other parish ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

121 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Lilleshall & Donnington parish, reflecting the Council’s proposals for Church Aston & Lilleshall, Donnington and Muxton wards, we propose adopting the Council’s proposed parish ward boundaries. We propose that the parish ward covering the northern area of the parish, to be included in Church Aston & Lilleshall district ward, should be named Lilleshall parish ward and be represented by three parish councillors, the parish ward covering the western area of the parish, to be included in Donnington district ward, should be named Donnington parish ward and be represented by six parish councillors and the parish ward covering the eastern area of the parish, to be included in Muxton district ward, should be named Muxton parish ward and also be represented by six parish councillors, a total of 15 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Lilleshall & Donnington Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Lilleshall (returning three councillors), Donnington (six) and Muxton (six). The boundaries of the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

122 Madeley Parish Council is currently served by 17 parish councillors representing the three parish wards of Cuckoo Oak, Madeley and Woodside, which are represented by five, five and seven councillors respectively.

123 The Council proposed that Madeley parish be divided between four district wards in order to facilitate its proposed district warding in this area, as described earlier. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed. However, under our draft recommendations we propose that Madeley parish be served by three district wards and three coterminous parish wards: Cuckoo Oak district ward would comprise Cuckoo Oak parish ward, Madeley district ward would comprise Madeley parish ward and Woodside district ward would comprise Woodside parish ward. We propose that Cuckoo Oak parish ward be represented by five parish councillors, Madeley parish ward be represented by five parish councillors and Woodside parish ward be represented by seven parish councillors, a total of 17 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Madeley Parish Council should comprise 17 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: Cuckoo Oak (returning five councillors), Madeley (five) and Woodside (seven). The boundaries of the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

124 Newport Town Council is currently served by 12 town councillors representing the four town wards of Newport East, Newport North, Newport South and Newport West, which are each represented by three councillors.

125 The Council proposed that Newport town be served by four district wards and four town wards: Newport East district ward would contain one town ward, Newport North district ward would contain another town ward, Newport South district ward would contain a further town ward and Newport West district ward would contain the other town ward. Neither town ward names nor the number and distribution of town councillors was proposed. However, as part of our draft recommendations, we proposed amendments to the Council's proposed boundaries for its proposed Newport East, Newport South and Newport West district wards, which have consequential effects on the boundaries of the town wards.

126 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Newport town, reflecting the Council's proposals for Newport North ward, while reflecting our proposed amendments for Newport East, Newport South and Newport West wards, we propose town ward boundaries to correspond with the district wards within the town. We propose retaining the existing Newport East town ward, which would be represented by three town councillors, as at present. The town ward comprising the Newport North district ward should be named Newport North town ward and be represented by three town councillors, the town ward comprising the majority of Newport South district ward should be named Newport South town ward and be represented by three town councillors and the town ward covering the Newport West district ward should be named Newport West town ward and be represented by three town councillors. Overall we propose retaining a total of 12 town councillors. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Newport Town Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Newport East, Newport North, Newport South and Newport West, each returning three councillors . The boundaries of the four town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

127 Oakengates Town Council is currently served by 13 town councillors representing the two town wards of Ketley Bank and Wombridge, which are represented by four and nine councillors respectively.

128 The Council proposed that Oakengates town be divided between two district wards: Ketley & Oakengates district ward would contain one town ward and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench district ward would contain the other town ward. Neither town ward names nor the number and distribution of town councillors was proposed.

129 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Oakengates town, reflecting the Council’s proposals for Ketley & Oakengates and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench wards, we propose modifying the town ward boundaries. We propose that the town ward covering the southern area of the town, to be included in Ketley & Oakengates district ward, should be named Oakengates town ward and be represented by nine town councillors and the town ward covering the northern area of the town, to be included in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench district ward, should be named North town ward and be represented by four town councillors, a total of 13 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Oakengates Town Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: North (returning four councillors) and Oakengates (nine). The boundary between the two town wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

130 St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council is currently served by 11 parish councillors and is not warded. In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that St Georges & Priorslee parish should be warded into two: one parish ward covering the eastern area of the parish and the other parish ward covering the western area of the parish. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

131 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in St Georges & Priorslee parish, reflecting the Council’s proposals for St Georges and Priorslee wards, we propose adopting the Council’s proposed parish ward boundaries. We propose that the parish ward covering the eastern area of the parish, to be included in Priorslee district ward, should be named Priorslee parish ward and be represented by six parish councillors and the parish ward covering the western area of the parish, to be included in St Georges district ward, should be named St Georges parish ward and be represented by five parish councillors, a total of 11 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Priorslee (returning six councillors) and St Georges (five). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

132 Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council is currently served by 13 parish councillors representing the two parish wards of Brookside and Stirchley, which are represented by seven and six councillors respectively.

133 In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that Stirchley & Brookside parish be divided between two district wards: Brookside district ward would contain one parish ward and The Nedge district ward would contain the other parish ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

134 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in this area, reflecting the Council’s proposals for Brookside and The Nedge wards, we propose modifying the parish ward boundaries accordingly. We propose that the parish ward covering the southern area of the parish, comprising Brookside district ward, should be named Brookside parish ward and be represented by eight parish councillors and the parish ward covering the northern area of the parish, to be included in The Nedge district ward, should be named Stirchley parish ward and be represented by five parish councillors, a total of 13 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Brookside (returning eight councillors) and Stirchley (five). The boundary between the two parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

135 The Gorge Parish Council is currently served by eight parish councillors representing the three parish wards of Coalbrookdale, Coalport & Jackfield and Ironbridge, which are represented by three, two and three councillors respectively.

136 The Council proposed that The Gorge parish be divided between two district wards: Horsehay & Lightmoor district ward would contain one parish ward and Ironbridge Gorge district ward would contain the other parish ward. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

137 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in this area, reflecting the Council’s proposals for Horsehay & Lightmoor ward and our modified Ironbridge Gorge ward, we propose modifying the current parish ward boundaries accordingly. We propose retaining the existing Coalport & Jackfield parish ward, to be represented by two councillors. We propose that the area to be included

in Horsehay & Lightmoor ward should be named Lightmoor parish ward and be represented by three councillors and the remainder of the parish should form a new Ironbridge Gorge parish ward and be represented by three councillors. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

The Gorge Parish Council should comprise eight councillors, as at present, representing three wards. The existing Coalport & Jackfield parish ward (returning two councillors) should be retained. That part of the The Gorge parish which lies within the proposed Horsehay & Lightmoor district ward should be named Lightmoor parish ward (returning three councillors). The remainder of the parish which lies in Ironbridge Gorge district ward should be named Ironbridge Gorge parish ward (returning five councillors). The new boundary between the two parish wards of Ironbridge Gorge and Lightmoor are illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

138 Wellington Town Council is currently served by 21 town councillors representing the seven town wards of Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch, which are each represented by three councillors.

139 Under its proposals, the Council proposed that Wellington town should continue to be served by seven district wards and seven coterminous town wards: Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch. Neither town ward names nor the number and distribution of town councillors was proposed.

140 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Wellington town, reflecting the Council's proposals for Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch wards, we propose modifying the town ward boundaries accordingly to provide for coterminosity between district and town wards. In addition, we propose that each town ward should be represented by three town councillors, a total of 21 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Wellington Town Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards: Arleston, College, Dothill, Ercall, Haygate, Park and Shawbirch, each returning three councillors. The boundaries of the seven parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

141 Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council is currently served by 11 parish councillors and is not warded. In order to facilitate its proposals for district warding in this area, the Council proposed that Wrockwardine Wood & Trench should be divided between three district wards: one parish ward covering the south-eastern area of the parish, another parish ward covering the northern area of the parish and the other parish ward covering the south-western area of the parish. Neither parish ward names nor the number and distribution of parish councillors was proposed.

142 In light of our draft recommendations for district warding in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench parish, reflecting the Council's proposals for Priorslee, St Georges and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench wards, we propose adopting the Council's proposed parish ward boundaries. We propose that the parish ward covering the south-eastern area of the parish, to be included in Priorslee district ward, should be named East parish ward and be represented by one parish councillor, the parish ward covering the northern area of the parish, to be included in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench district ward, should be named Trench parish ward and be represented by eight parish councillors and the parish ward covering the south-western area of the parish, to be included in St Georges district ward, should be named Wrockwardine Wood parish ward and be represented by two parish councillors, a total of 11 councillors, as at present. We would welcome comments on these names and the number and distribution of councillors at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**

Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards: East (returning one councillor), Trench (eight) and Wrockwardine Wood (two). The boundaries of the three parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of the report.

143 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the district.

**Draft Recommendation**

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

*Map 2: Draft Recommendations for Telford & Wrekin*



## 5 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

144 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Telford & Wrekin contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 3 December 2001. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

145 Express your views by writing directly to us:

Review Manager  
Telford & Wrekin Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142  
E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)  
[www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)

146 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 Telford & Wrekin: Detailed Mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Telford & Wrekin area.

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

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding of Newport Town.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the urban area of Telford & Wrekin.

*Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Telford & Wrekin: Key Map*

*Map A2: Proposed Warding of Newport Town*



## 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. Non-Departmental Public Bodies, such as the Local Government Commission 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 D1: LGCE 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.