

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
Wigan

*February 2003*

© Crown Copyright 2003

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

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

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

This report is printed on recycled paper.

# Contents

	Page
What is The Boundary Committee for England?	5
Summary	7
1. Introduction	11
2. Current electoral arrangements	13
3. Submissions received	17
4. Analysis and draft recommendations	19
5. What happens next?	39
Appendices	
A Draft recommendations for Wigan: detailed mapping	41
B Code of practice on written consultation	43



## What is The Boundary Committee for England?

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

Members of the Committee are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

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



# Summary

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Wigan on 14 May 2002.

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

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

- **In 16 of the 24 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough, and four wards vary by more than 20% from the average.**
- **By 2006 this situation is expected to improve slightly, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 14 wards and by more than 20% in four wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 129–130) are that:

- **Wigan Borough Council should have 75 councillors, three more than at present;**
- **there should be 25 wards, instead of 24 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one ward.**

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

- **In all of the proposed 25 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 9% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 6% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 25 February 2003. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, which will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 22 April 2003:

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

Table 1: Draft recommendations: summary

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large map reference</b>
1	Abram	3	Part of Abram ward; part of Leigh Central ward	2,3 and 4
2	Ashton	3	Part of Ashton-Golborne ward; part of Bryn ward	2 and 4
3	Aspull	3	The parishes of Haigh and Worthington; part of Aspull-Standish ward; part of Whelley ward	1, 2 and 3
4	Astley Mosley Common	3	Part of Bedford-Astley ward; part of Tyldesley East ward	3 and 5
5	Atherleigh	3	Part of Atherton ward; part of Hindley Green ward; part of Leigh East ward	3
6	Atherton	3	Part of Atherton ward; part of Hindsford ward	3
7	Bryn	3	Part of Bryn ward; part of Orrell ward	2 and 4
8	Douglas	3	Newtown ward; part of Worsley Mesnes ward	2
9	Golborne & Lowton West	3	Part of Ashton-Golborne ward; part of Lightshaw ward	4 and 5
10	Hindley	3	Part of Hindley ward	2 and 3
11	Hindley Green	3	Part of Hindley ward; part of Hindley Green ward; part of Leigh Central ward	3
12	Ince Whelley	3	Part of Abram ward; part of Aspull-Standish ward; part of Hindley ward; part of Ince ward; part of Whelley ward	2
13	Leigh East	3	Part of Atherton ward; part of Bedford-Astley ward; part of Leigh East ward	3 and 5
14	Leigh South	3	Part of Bedford-Astley ward; part of Hope Carr ward; part of Leigh East ward	5
15	Leigh West	3	Part of Hindley Green ward; part of Leigh Central ward; part of Leigh East ward	2,3,4 and 5
16	Lowton East	3	Part of Hope Carr ward; part of Lightshaw ward	4 and 5
17	Orrell	3	Part of Orrell ward	2
18	Pemberton	3	Part of Norley ward; part of Winstanley ward	2
19	Shevington with Langtree	3	The parish of Shevington; part of Aspull-Standish ward; part of Beech Hill ward; part of Langtree ward	1 and 2
20	Standish	3	Part of Aspull-Standish ward; part of Langtree ward	1
21	Tyldesley	3	Part of Hindsford ward; part of Tyldesley East ward	3
22	Wigan Central	3	Part of Swinley ward; part of Whelley ward	1 and 2

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large map reference</b>
23	Wigan West	3	Part of Beech Hill ward; part of Norley ward; part of Swinley ward	1 and 2
24	Winstanley	3	Part of Winstanley ward	2
25	Worsley Mesnes	3	Part of Ince ward; part of Worsley Mesnes ward	2

**Notes:**

1. *There are three parishes in the borough and they comprise parts of two wards as indicated above.*
2. *The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*
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 Wigan

	Ward name	No. of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abram	3	8,805	2,935	-7	9,552	3,184	1
2	Ashton	3	9,266	3,089	-2	9,015	3,005	-5
3	Aspull	3	9,858	3,286	4	9,717	3,239	2
4	Astley Mosley Common	3	9,547	3,182	1	9,540	3,180	1
5	Atherleigh	3	8,801	2,934	-7	9,399	3,133	-1
6	Atherton	3	10,164	3,388	8	9,906	3,302	4
7	Bryn	3	9,391	3,130	-1	9,141	3,047	-4
8	Douglas	3	9,386	3,129	-1	9,159	3,053	-3
9	Golborne & Lowton West	3	8,836	2,945	-6	8,955	2,985	-6
10	Hindley	3	9,431	3,144	0	10,056	3,352	6
11	Hindley Green	3	9,076	3,025	-4	9,980	3,327	5
12	Ince Whelley	3	9,197	3,066	-3	9,190	3,063	-3
13	Leigh East	3	10,136	3,379	7	9,909	3,303	4
14	Leigh South	3	10,229	3,410	8	10,005	3,335	5
15	Leigh West	3	10,303	3,434	9	9,978	3,326	5
16	Lowton East	3	8,552	2,851	-9	8,888	2,963	-6
17	Orrell	3	9,175	3,058	-3	9,179	3,060	-3
18	Pemberton	3	9,679	3,226	2	9,343	3,114	-2
19	Shevington with Langtree	3	9,642	3,214	2	9,434	3,145	-1
20	Standish	3	9,192	3,064	-3	9,029	3,010	-5
21	Tyldesley	3	9,904	3,301	5	9,991	3,330	5
22	Wigan Central	3	9,295	3,098	-2	9,098	3,033	-4
23	Wigan West	3	9,997	3,332	6	9,873	3,291	4
24	Winstanley	3	8,816	2,939	-7	9,827	3,276	4
25	Worsley Mesnes	3	9,399	3,133	0	9,024	3,008	-5
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>236,077</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>237,188</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,148</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,163</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Wigan Borough Council's submission.

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

# 1 Introduction

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

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Wigan. Wigan's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in March 1979 (Report No. 324).

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
  - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
  - secure effective and convenient local government; and
  - achieve equality of representation;
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Wigan is being conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews* (published by The Electoral Commission in July 2002). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the review.

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

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

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, or that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit on the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

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

*Table 3: Stages of the review*

<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 Electoral Commission

10 Stage One began on 14 May 2002, when we wrote to Wigan Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Greater Manchester Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Lancashire Local Councils Association, parish councils in the borough, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, Members of the European Parliament for the North West Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Wigan Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 16 September 2002.

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

12 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 25 February 2003 and will end on 22 April 2003, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

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

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

14 Wigan borough is situated in the extreme west of Greater Manchester and lies to the west of Bolton and Salford, to the north of Warrington, to the east of St Helens and to the south of West Lancashire and Chorley. The borough consists of a number of former mining and textile towns and new residential suburbs grouped around the two larger towns of Wigan and Leigh. Wigan's historic industries of coal and cotton have all but disappeared but there has been an influx of new firms of many kinds.

15 Wigan borough has three parishes, Haigh, Shevington and Worthington, and these are all situated in the northwest of the borough.

16 The electorate of the borough is 236,077 (December 2001). The Council presently has 72 members who are elected from 24 wards, the majority of which are relatively urban. All wards are three-member wards.

17 At present each councillor represents an average of 3,279 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 3,294 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 16 of the 24 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average, in four wards by more than 20% and in two wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in Norley ward where councillors represent 31% fewer electors than the borough average.

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

*Map 1: Existing wards in Wigan*

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements in Wigan

	Ward name	No. of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abram	3	8,886	2,962	-10	9,633	3,211	-3
2	Ashton-Golborne	3	11,046	3,682	12	10,773	3,591	9
3	Aspull-Standish	3	11,737	3,912	19	11,564	3,855	17
4	Atherton	3	8,622	2,874	-12	9,273	3,091	-6
5	Bedford-Astley	3	8,216	2,739	-16	7,955	2,652	-20
6	Beech Hill	3	9,032	3,011	-8	8,978	2,993	-9
7	Bryn	3	9,885	3,295	0	9,596	3,199	-3
8	Hindley Green	3	10,933	3,644	11	11,087	3,696	12
9	Hindley	3	10,552	3,517	7	11,744	3,915	19
10	Hindsford	3	10,910	3,637	11	10,905	3,635	10
11	Hope Carr	3	10,248	3,416	4	10,048	3,349	2
12	Ince	3	7,618	2,539	-23	7,660	2,553	-22
13	Langtree	3	11,654	3,885	18	11,332	3,777	15
14	Leigh Central	3	8,445	2,815	-14	8,267	2,756	-16
15	Leigh East	3	10,735	3,578	9	10,466	3,489	6
16	Lightshaw	3	12,203	4,068	24	12,773	4,258	29
17	Newtown	3	8,333	2,778	-15	8,133	2,711	-18
18	Norley	3	6,813	2,271	-31	6,575	2,192	-33
19	Orrell	3	9,315	3,105	-5	9,361	3,120	-5
20	Swinley	3	8,573	2,858	-13	8,251	2,750	-17
21	Tyldesley East	3	11,790	3,930	20	11,830	3,943	20
22	Whelley	3	8,137	2,712	-17	8,096	2,699	-18
23	Winstanley	3	12,928	4,309	31	13,797	4,599	40
24	Worsley Mesnes	3	9,466	3,155	-4	9,091	3,030	-8
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>236,077</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>237,188</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,279</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,294</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Norley ward were relatively over-represented by 31%, while electors in Winstanley ward were relatively under-represented by 31%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 Submissions received

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

20 During this initial stage of the review, officers from The Boundary Committee visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received nine representations during Stage One, including three borough-wide schemes from Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council, the Greater Manchester Conservatives and the Wigan and Leigh Liberal Democrats. All of the representations received at Stage One may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council.

#### Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

21 The Borough Council proposed a council of 75 members, three more than at present, serving 25 wards, compared to the existing 24. The Council's scheme provided a reasonably good level of electoral equality, with no wards having an electoral variance of more than 10% by 2006. The Council consulted locally on its scheme prior to finalising its proposals.

#### Political groups

22 We received three representations from political parties. The Greater Manchester West Conservative Party (the Conservatives) also proposed a council of 75 members but proposed amendments to a number of the wards contained in the Borough Council's proposals. The Conservatives considered that the Council's submission paid too much attention to community identity at the expense of electoral equality and also queried the projected electorate figures produced by the Council. The Conservatives were unable to provide 2001 figures for all of their proposed wards but, under their proposals, by 2006, no ward would have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

23 Wigan and Leigh Liberal Democrats (the Liberal Democrats) also proposed an increase of three councillors from a council size of 72 to 75. The Liberal Democrats considered that the Council's proposals did not provide for a good level of electoral equality and put forward their own proposals. Under their proposals no ward would have an electoral variance of more than 9% by 2006.

24 The Ince Branch of the Makerfield Constituency Labour Party opposed the Council's proposed Ince Whelley ward and put forward its own proposal in this area to move Scholes back into Ince ward and part of Whelley back into Central ward.

#### Other representations

25 A further five representations were received from local residents' associations. The One Voice Residents Association opposed the Council's proposed Ince Whelley ward and enclosed a petition from local residents opposing the Council's proposals for the area. Four pro-forma letters from the Hag Fold Residents Association proposed that the Hag Fold estate be included in a ward with Atherton town centre.



## 4 Analysis and draft recommendations

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

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

28 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.

29 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.

30 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

31 Since 1975 there has been a 6% increase in the electorate of Wigan borough from 222,709 to 236,077 in 2001. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 0.5% from 236,077 to 237,188 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to unitary development plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

32 The Conservatives queried the projected electorate figures produced by the Council but acknowledged that they were unable to provide alternative projections. We asked the Council to respond to the questions raised by the Conservatives concerning new developments and occupancy rates and officers from the Council confirmed that, in their professional opinion, the projections were the best estimates currently available.

33 During Stage Two we queried the Council's figures as there appeared to be significant fluctuations in individual wards between 2001 and 2006 without a significant increase or

decrease in the overall electorate. The Council responded that the disparity was due 'to the fact that the Register used to compile the scheme was the July 2002 version and this incorporates claims for inclusion in the Register received since December 2001'. However, we do not take into account rolling registration and therefore requested figures for the existing wards based on the December 2001 electorate which the Council duly provided.

34 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered the Borough Council's figures for 2006, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

## Council size

35 Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council currently has 72 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 75 members, an increase of three. Wigan Council adopted a Leader and Cabinet style of political management in May 2002 and the Council argued that as a result of this new style of decision-making the Council required an increase in size to enable it to fulfil its functions. Under the new arrangements a Cabinet of ten members (the Executive Leader and nine Portfolio Holders) takes all executive decisions apart from those delegated to Chief Officers. The Cabinet is supported by seven Policy Advisory Panels each dealing with a particular area such as Environment or Regeneration. The Council also has a number of Committees dealing with issues such as Development Control, Overview & Scrutiny and Regulation. The Council stated that it was 'aware of the Government's expectation that, where a Council adopts a Leader and Cabinet style, backbench Members will be freed up from taking Executive decisions so that they can assume the role of Ward Champion'. It went on to say that 'the number of meeting places expected of each member has been reduced [from three] to two to achieve this' and stated that there were a total of 149 places to be filled on the various committees and panels and that this fact pointed towards a council of 75 members. While we noted this argument we did not consider that sufficient evidence was provided in the Council's original submission to fully justify this increase and we therefore asked the Council to provide further evidence in support of its proposal.

36 The Council provided further information mainly concerning the representational role of councillors and included details of the many external bodies that councillors represent the Council on, from bodies such as the Greater Manchester Fire and Civil Defence Authority, to bodies like the North West Regional Assembly and the North West Museums and Art Gallery Service. The Council also pointed to the establishment of a series of Township Fora across the borough and stated that 'All members will serve on their appropriate Township Forum to agree with stakeholders local plans and priorities'. The Fora are expected to start their work in the summer of 2003 and 'members will be expected to provide time and commitment to ensure their success'. The Council stressed the importance of the representational role of councillors both at a ward level and on external bodies and argued that a council size of 75 was necessary to enable the council to provide effective and convenient local government without having an adverse effect on the ability of councillors to fulfil their representational roles.

37 The Conservatives stated that 'we do not question the proposals for a twenty-five ward and thus a seventy-five member Council, as this is the view of the current members'. The Liberal Democrats did not refer to council size in their submission.

38 We looked for evidence of how the proposed council size would enable councillors to fulfil the three traditional functions of councillors: to represent the interests of residents, to formulate and monitor the local authority's policies and priorities, and to represent the interests of both residents and the authority on and to a wide range of external bodies. We consider that the Council has demonstrated its revised structure under the new political management arrangements and recognise the drive to free up backbench members from taking executive decisions by streamlining the decision-making process. However, the Council also stressed the importance of the representational roles of councillors and considered that the increase was

necessary to enable councillors to adequately fulfil these representational roles as well as enabling them to formulate and monitor the local authority's policies and priorities. Evidence such as the establishment of Township Fora and the range of external bodies that councillors represent the council on has persuaded us that members are spending more time on their representational roles and we consider that the Council's proposal for an increase of three members has been based on a well thought through examination of what council size would best enable councillors to fulfil their three roles. We also note that the proposal for a council size of 75 members has the support of the Conservatives and that we have received no opposition, during Stage One, to the proposed council size of 75.

39 Therefore, having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area and the support for the proposed council size, together with the responses received, we conclude that the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 75 members.

## Electoral arrangements

40 We have carefully considered all representations received at Stage One. We received three borough-wide schemes from the Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, and all three proposed schemes consisted of 25 three-member wards based on a council size of 75 members.

41 The Council stated that its proposals represented 'the best fit that can be achieved to meet the Boundary Committee's criteria for electoral equality whilst recognising the disparate communities across the Borough'. The Council's scheme would provide a generally good level of electoral equality, with just one ward having a variance of 10% by 2006.

42 Both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats took the Council's scheme as their starting point and put forward amendments in many areas to provide what they considered to be a better balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identity. The Conservatives stated that they made 'suggestions that will make for greater equality and at the same time do little to harm "community" representation' and 'commended these proposals as a constructive contribution to the debate'. The Liberal Democrats considered that the Council's proposals provided 'a serious imbalance of numbers' and stated that 'although a disparity of up to 10% is allowed, this should be the exception rather than the rule and the majority of the wards should fall within the 5% bounds'. They also considered that many wards to the north of Wigan were under-subscribed while many wards to the south were over-subscribed and stated that 'we therefore started our proposed changes by attempting to move sensible areas to wards in the north and west in order to leave enough capacity to ensure that wards in the Leigh and Worsley area could be kept as near to the 5% bands as possible'.

43 One Voice Residents Association considered that the Council had undertaken 'no public consultation or open public meetings to discuss the impact of what the boundary changes will be or indeed whether local people agree or disagree with the council's proposals'. However, we are satisfied that the Council consulted locally during Stage One, including the publishing of public notices in the *Wigan* and *Leigh Reporters* and the issuing of press releases to local papers.

44 Having carefully considered all the submissions at Stage One, we have based our scheme on the Council's proposals as we consider that they provide a generally good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. However, in a number of areas, most notably in Ince and Shevington, we have moved away from the Council's proposals to take account of local views including those of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, and to provide a better reflection of community identities. The majority of our amendments are in the western part of the borough.

We consider that our proposals provide the best balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of effective and convenient local government.

45 In Shevington and Aspull we have had to move away from local proposals as endorsing them would have led to the creation of parish wards containing few, if any, electors and we do not consider that this provides for effective and convenient local government. These issues, where proposals were generally to tie boundaries to ground detail, could be addressed by a parish review following this review which would have the power to change the external boundaries of parish councils. Consequential changes to the new borough ward boundaries to tie them to the new parish boundaries could then be requested of The Electoral Commission. Any parish review may also wish to look at the existence of Worthington parish, which has very few electors.

46 We have made a number of minor amendments in unparished areas to tie boundaries to ground detail, none of which would affect any electors. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- i. Abram, Hindley, Ince and Whelley wards;
- ii. Aspull-Standish, Beech Hill, Langtree and Swinley wards;
- iii. Newtown, Norley, Orrell, Winstanley and Worsley Mesnes wards;
- iv. Ashton Golborne, Bryn, Hope Carr and Lightshaw wards;
- v. Hindley Green, Leigh Central and Leigh East wards;
- vi. Atherton, Bedford-Astley, Hindsford and Tyldesley East wards.

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

### **Abram, Hindley, Ince and Whelley wards**

48 These four wards are situated in the centre and north of the borough and are unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Abram, Ince and Whelley wards is 10%, 23% and 17% below the borough average respectively (3%, 22% and 18% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Hindley ward is 7% above the borough average (19% by 2006).

49 The Council proposed a revised warding arrangement in this area consisting of three wards each to be represented by three members. It proposed a new Ince Whelley ward to comprise parts of the existing Ince and Whelley wards. It also proposed retaining the existing Abram ward with one minor amendment in the southeast of the proposed ward. This amendment would not affect any electors and would tie the boundary to ground detail. Finally the Council proposed a revised Hindley ward comprising the majority of the existing Hindley ward and a western area of the existing Hindley Green ward.

50 The Conservatives proposed a revised Ince ward comprising part of the existing Ince ward and the southern part of the existing Whelley ward. They also proposed a revised Abram ward with an area in the west of the existing Abram ward transferring to a revised Golborne & Lowton West ward. Finally the Conservatives proposed an amended Hindley ward with an area in the north of the existing ward transferring to a revised Aspull ward and an area in the east transferring to an amended Hindley Green ward.

51 The Liberal Democrats stated that 'we do not think that there is any major discrepancy between our proposals and those of the cabinet for Abram ward'. They proposed an amended Hindley ward comprising the majority of the existing Hindley ward with the exception of an area in the north, which would form part of a new Aspull-Hindley North ward, and two areas in the east, which would form part of an amended Hindley Green ward.

52 Finally the Liberal Democrats also proposed a revised Whelley-Ince ward consisting of the majority of the existing Ince ward and the southern part of the existing Whelley ward.

53 The Ince Branch of the Makerfield Constituency Labour Party stated that 'the people of the Ince ward are strongly opposed to the changes suggested by the Council and can see no affinity between the existing Ince ward and the proposed Douglas ward (presently Newtown)'. It proposed an alternative that 'part of Whelley goes into "Central Ward" and the High Rise Flats (6 in total) would be better served in the proposed "Douglas Ward"'. It proposed an amendment to the Council's proposal that would retain the Scholes area in a revised Ince Whelley ward and suggested transferring electors on and to the north of Platt Lane into an amended Wigan Central ward to improve electoral equality.

54 The One Voice Residents Association based in Scholes stated that 'the residents of Ince ward are strongly objecting to the proposed boundary changes Wigan Council are wishing to adopt and we are asking you to reject the proposals Wigan are planning to submit which puts Darlington Street East, streets off Darlington Street East and the High Rise flats in Scholes into Newtown, known as Douglas ward'. It considered that there had been no public consultation over the proposed changes and submitted 500 letters of objection to Wigan Council. It stated that 'we have no ties to Newtown especially historically and cannot develop any historic ties for the future' and that 'we are not connected directly to the new boundary by road or rail and the Leeds/Liverpool Canal stops short of Newtown itself'. It also stated that 'to travel on public transport from Ince to Newtown takes two bus journeys and is approximately a half-hour journey'. The Residents Association stated that its 'community links are with areas which we are directly attached to, for example Higher Ince, Lower Ince, Spring View, Manchester Road Ince, Darlington Street East and streets off, Warrington Lane taking in three sets of high rise flats, onto Scholes taking in Schofield Lane and rejoining at Manchester Road'. The Residents Association also enclosed a petition signed by 265 people opposing the Council's proposals for this area.

55 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One regarding this area. We do not believe that the proposal put forward by the Council and the Conservatives to transfer the electors to the north of Highfield Road, Hindley Station and Railway Street from Hindley ward into an amended Aspull ward provides a good reflection of community identity, especially given the distance of this area from the majority of the properties of the proposed Aspull ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed transferring a slightly larger area of the existing Hindley ward into a new Aspull-Hindley North ward, and again we do not consider that this proposal would provide a good reflection of community identity. We therefore propose retaining the existing boundary in this area as we consider that it provides a better reflection of community identity than any of the other proposals that we have received.

56 In the Ince area we are not convinced that electors in the area of Scholes that the Council proposes transferring to the new Douglas ward share a community identity with electors in the proposed Douglas ward. We have been persuaded by the evidence of the One Voice Residents Association and the Ince Branch of the Makerfield Constituency Labour Party that electors in this area share more of a community identity with the rest of Scholes and Ince and, given the relative lack of links between this area and the rest of the existing Newtown ward, we are retaining this area in the proposed Ince Whelley ward, reflecting in part the proposals of the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats.

57 To improve electoral equality, and as proposed by the Ince Branch of the Makerfield Constituency Labour Party, we are proposing to transfer electors on and to the north of Platt Lane out of the proposed Ince Whelley ward. However, to improve electoral equality following our decision regarding the Aspull/Hindley boundary we are proposing to transfer electors in this area into an amended Aspull ward rather than into an amended Wigan Central ward as proposed by the Ince Branch of the Makerfield Constituency Labour Party. Again to improve electoral equality we are proposing an amendment to the southern boundary of the proposed

Ince Whelley ward to include a development in the Spring View area in the amended Ince Whelley ward. The development is on the northern edge of Spring View and as it is a new development we do not consider that it will have any strong community ties with the existing Spring View area. The One Voice Residents Association also stated that its 'community links are with areas which we are directly attached to, for example Higher Ince, Lower Ince, Spring View' and we therefore consider that this proposal has some local support. We do not consider that the Conservatives' proposal to transfer the northeastern part of the existing Ince ward into an amended Aspull ward would provide a good reflection of community identities due to the geographical distance between the communities in the proposed ward. Our proposed Ince Whelley ward is broadly similar to that proposed by the Liberal Democrats.

58 The western boundary of our proposed Ince Whelley ward would follow the existing boundary along the Wigan to Crewe railway line apart from a small amendment to run to the west of properties on Mount View. It would then run along River Way, Douglas Street, to the east of Douglas House before running along Scholes and Platt Lane. The boundary would then run to the south of properties on Leyburn Close, Trecastell Close, Baclaw Close and Swinside to join the boundary between the existing Ince and Whelley wards. The eastern boundary of our proposed ward would follow the boundary between the existing Ince and Aspull-Standish wards with some minor amendments to tie it to ground detail which would not affect any electors. The southern boundary would run along the Wigan to Manchester railway line, Seaman Way and Ince Brook before running to the south of the proposed development in Spring View.

59 In light of our proposals for an amended Ince Whelley ward we are proposing an amended Abram ward to improve electoral equality. Adopting part of the proposal put forward by the Liberal Democrats, we are proposing a revised eastern boundary of the Council's proposed Abram ward to move all electors to the west of the Ince to Bickershaw railway line from the existing Leigh Central ward into the proposed Abram ward. We are also proposing minor amendments to the northern boundary of the proposed Abram ward to tie the boundary to ground detail, none of which affect any electors.

60 Finally, we are adopting the Council's proposed Hindley ward as we consider that it provides a good balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities, retaining as it does the western part of Hindley in a single ward. However, we propose the amendments outlined above and an amendment to the boundary with the proposed Hindley Green ward to further improve the balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities. The amendment to the boundary with the proposed Hindley Green ward is to improve electoral equality and would result in the retention of the existing boundary, to run along Mornington Road and Borsdane Avenue as proposed by the Liberal Democrats, rather than running the boundary to the west of properties on Kenilworth Drive, Hamilton Road and Silverdale Road, as proposed by the Council. The southern boundary of our proposed Hindley ward would follow the existing boundary while the eastern boundary would follow the existing boundary with two amendments. The first of these would be to run the boundary along Atherton Road, Park Road and Close Lane to rejoin the existing boundary. The second amendment would not affect any electors and would tie the boundary to ground detail in the north of the ward.

61 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Abram and Ince Whelley wards would be 7% and 3% below the borough average respectively (1% above and 3% below by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hindley ward would be equal to the borough average (6% above by 2006).

### **Aspull-Standish, Beech Hill, Langtree and Swinley wards**

62 These four wards are situated in the northwest of the borough. Langtree ward consists of Shevington parish and an unparished area, and Aspull-Standish ward consists of Haigh and Worthington parishes and an unparished area. The remainder of these wards are unparished.

The number of electors per councillor in Aspull-Standish and Langtree wards is 19% and 18% above the borough average respectively (17% and 15% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Beech Hill and Swinley wards is 8% and 13% below the borough average respectively (9% and 17% below by 2006).

63 In this area the Council proposed a revised warding arrangement consisting of five wards each to be represented by three members. A new Aspull ward would contain the majority of the existing Aspull-Standish ward along with a northern part of the existing Hindley ward and an area in the northeast of the existing Whelley ward. The Council proposed a new Standish ward comprising the majority of the part of the existing Aspull-Standish ward to the west of the Wigan to Preston railway line, the Standish Lower Ground area of the existing Beech Hill ward and an area in the northeast of the existing Langtree ward. The Council's proposed Shevington with Langtree ward would contain the majority of the existing Langtree ward, including Shevington parish. It would also include small unparished areas of the existing Aspull-Standish, Beech Hill and Winstanley wards.

64 The Council proposed a revised Wigan West ward comprising the majority of the existing Beech Hill ward, an area in the west of the existing Swinley ward and small areas of the existing Norley and Winstanley wards. Finally the Council proposed a new Wigan Central ward largely based on the existing Swinley ward but also including the western part of the existing Whelley ward.

65 The Conservatives proposed a revised Aspull ward containing Haigh parish, the majority of the existing Swinley ward and an unparished area of the existing Aspull-Standish ward to the west of Haigh parish. They stated that 'the Aspull proposal is a more widespread ward with several different communities each with their own identities even if there is not a common unity for the whole ward'.

66 The Conservatives also proposed a revised Shevington with Langtree ward comprising Shevington parish and the Standish Lower Ground unparished area. A revised Standish ward would comprise Worthington parish, the western unparished area of the existing Aspull-Standish ward and the unparished area in the northeast of the existing Langtree ward. A revised Beech Hill ward would comprise the majority of the existing Beech Hill ward with the exception of the Standish Lower Ground area, an area in the north of the existing Norley ward and a small area in the southwest of the existing Swinley ward.

67 The Liberal Democrats proposed a new Aspull-Hindley North ward to comprise the eastern part of the existing Aspull-Standish ward, an area in the northeast of the existing Whelley ward and the northern part of the existing Hindley ward. They stated that 'the more recently built estates near Hindley station form a small community of their own which can just as acceptably be serviced by councillors from Aspull ward as from Hindley ward'. They proposed a new Standish ward to contain the western part of the existing Aspull-Standish ward and the northern part of the existing Langtree ward.

68 The Liberal Democrats proposed a revised Langtree ward comprising Shevington parish, an unparished area in the north of the existing Langtree ward and an unparished area in the west of the existing Beech Hill ward. They also proposed an amended Beech Hill ward comprising the majority of the existing Beech Hill ward and a small area in the southwest of the existing Swinley ward. They stated that 'we believe that Beech Hill should lose the area at the western end of Wigan Lower Road to Shevington ward and we wish to make changes to its [Beech Hill] eastern boundary, following the railway line to include Park Road and all the area south of Park Road bounded by the two railway lines'. Finally the Liberal Democrats proposed a new Wigan Central ward comprising the majority of the existing Swinley ward and the western part of the existing Whelley ward.

69 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One and are proposing to base our proposals in this area on the Council's scheme as we consider that it provides a generally good balance between electoral equality and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. However, we are proposing a number of amendments to the Council's proposed wards to provide a better balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities, particularly in the Aspull and Shevington areas.

70 In the Shevington and Standish area we are proposing to move away from the Council's proposals to adopt a slightly amended version of the Conservatives' proposed Shevington with Langtree ward. We consider that the Conservatives' proposal to include the Standish Lower Ground area in Shevington ward provides a better reflection of community identity in this area than the Council's proposed Shevington ward. The Council proposed including the Standish Lower Ground community in a ward with Standish village, and we consider that the Standish Lower Ground community has stronger geographical links with the communities of Beech Hill and Shevington. For reasons of electoral equality we cannot retain Standish Lower Ground in a revised Beech Hill ward but we consider that the Conservatives' proposal to include Standish Lower Ground in a ward with Shevington provides a better reflection of community identity than the Council's proposal. We also consider that this proposal provides a better reflection of community identity than the Liberal Democrats' proposal which would divide the Standish Lower Ground community between two wards, and we are therefore placing the Standish Lower Ground community in a ward with Shevington village.

71 However, we are proposing two amendments to the Conservatives' proposed ward to provide stronger and more easily identifiable boundaries. The first of these is that we are proposing to move away from the Shevington parish boundary in the Shevington Moor area to include an unparished area to the west of the B5206 in our proposed Shevington with Langtree ward. The existing parish boundary runs through the village, and we consider that all the properties in this area should be contained in a single ward. As discussed earlier, this parish boundary is one of the issues that could be addressed in a parish review following this review. The second amendment that we are proposing would include an unparished area to the south of Shevington parish, to the north of the Manchester to Southport railway line and to the west of Ackenhurst Brook in the proposed Shevington with Langtree ward. This amendment would affect no electors.

72 The eastern boundary of our proposed Shevington with Langtree ward would follow Shevington parish's boundary to where it meets the existing boundary between Aspull-Standish and Beech Hill wards, apart from in the Shevington Moor area where we propose including an unparished area to the west of the B5206 as described above. The proposed boundary would then follow the existing boundary between Aspull-Standish and Beech Hill wards before running southwest between the Beech Hill and Standish Lower Ground estates to the River Douglas. It would follow the River Douglas before running down Ackenhurst Brook, west along the Manchester to Southport railway line and then east along Shevington parish's boundary to the borough boundary.

73 In light of our amended Shevington with Langtree ward, we are proposing our own Standish ward, which we consider provides a good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong boundaries. Our proposed ward would contain the area to the west of the Liverpool to Preston railway line of the existing Aspull-Standish ward and the unparished area of the existing Shevington ward with the exception of the small unparished area west of the B5206 described above. Our proposed Standish ward would follow the Liverpool to Preston railway line for the majority of its eastern boundary before leaving the railway line to follow the western boundary of Worthington parish.

74 We are proposing to adopt the Council's proposed Wigan West ward with one small amendment, described above, to include a small unparished area in our proposed Shevington with Langtree ward to provide a stronger boundary. This proposed ward is very similar to the

one put forward by the Liberal Democrats, but we consider that the Council's proposal to use the Liverpool to Preston railway line for the entire eastern boundary of the ward provides a stronger boundary than both the Liberal Democrats' and the Conservatives' proposals to retain electors to the west of the Liverpool to Preston railway line in a ward with electors to the east of it. This proposed Wigan West ward would use the Manchester to Southport railway line and the Liverpool to Preston railway line as the southern and eastern boundaries. The northern boundary of the proposed ward would follow the southern boundary of the existing Aspull-Standish ward before running southwest between the Beech Hill and Standish Lower Ground estates to the River Douglas. It would follow the River Douglas in a westerly direction before running south at Ackenhurst Brook to join the Manchester to Southport railway line.

75 We are proposing to adopt the Council's proposed Wigan Central ward in its entirety as we consider that it provides the best balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. This new Wigan Central ward would be largely based on the existing Swinley ward, and the western and southern boundaries of the proposed ward would be the Liverpool to Preston railway line while the northern boundary would follow the southern boundary of the existing Aspull-Standish ward before turning south to run along Whelley Road and Scholes Road. The proposed boundary would then pass to the east of Douglas House, west along Douglas Street and then south along River Way to the Liverpool to Preston railway line.

76 In light of our proposals in the Ince area described above, we are proposing an amended version of the Council's Aspull ward. To improve electoral equality we are transferring electors in and to the north of Platt Lane from the existing Whelley ward into an amended Aspull ward. The Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats all proposed transferring electors to the north of Highfield Road, Hindley Station and Railway Street from Hindley ward into an amended Aspull ward, which we do not consider would provide a good reflection of community identity. Electors in this area are currently in Hindley ward and we consider that their community links are stronger with Hindley than with Aspull. We therefore propose retaining the boundary between the existing Aspull-Standish and Hindley wards. The southern boundary of our revised ward would then run north along the existing boundary between Hindley and Ince wards before following the existing boundary of the Aspull-Standish ward. It would then run southwest along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and to the south of properties on Swinside, Baclaw Close, Trecastell Close and Leyburn Close before running along Platt Lane. The proposed boundary would then follow Scholes Road before following the existing Aspull-Standish boundary to the Wigan to Preston railway line. It would follow this railway line north before running along the western boundary of Worthington parish to the borough boundary. The northern and eastern boundary of our proposed Aspull ward would be formed by the borough boundary.

77 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Aspull (including the parishes of Haigh and Worthington) and Wigan West wards would be 4% and 6% above the borough average respectively (2% and 4% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Standish and Wigan Central wards would be 3% and 2% below the borough average respectively (5% and 4% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Shevington with Langtree ward (including the parish of Shevington) would be 2% above the borough average (1% below by 2006).

### **Newtown, Norley, Orrell, Winstanley and Worsley Mesnes wards**

78 These five wards are situated in the west of the borough and are unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Newtown, Norley, Orrell, and Worsley Mesnes wards is 15%, 31%, 5% and 4% below the borough average respectively (18%, 33%, 5% and 8% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Winstanley ward is 31% above the borough average (40% by 2006).

79 The Council proposed a revised warding arrangement in this area consisting of five wards each to be represented by three members. The Council proposed retaining the existing Worsley

Mesnes ward in its entirety and retaining the majority of the existing Winstanley ward. A revised Orrell ward would contain the majority of the existing Orrell ward and part of the existing Winstanley ward, while an amended Pemberton ward would comprise the existing Norley ward and the northern part of the existing Winstanley ward. Finally the Council proposed a new Douglas ward comprising Newtown ward and parts of the existing Ince ward.

80 The Conservatives proposed a revised Orrell ward comprising the majority of the existing ward with the exception of an area in the southeast of the existing ward which would be transferred to a revised Bryn ward. The revised Orrell ward would also contain a small area to the north which is currently in the existing Langtree ward. A new Pemberton ward would comprise the majority of the existing Norley ward with the exception of an area to the north which would be transferred to a revised Beech Hill ward as described above. This new Pemberton ward would also contain the northern part of the existing Winstanley ward.

81 The Conservatives proposed a revised Winstanley ward comprising the majority of the existing ward with the exception of an area in the north and a small area in the east which it proposed transferring to a revised Worsley Mesnes ward. This amended Worsley Mesnes ward would comprise the entirety of the existing Worsley Mesnes ward together with a small area in the east of the existing Winstanley ward. Finally, the Conservatives proposed a new Douglas ward which would comprise the existing Newtown ward and an area in the southwest of the existing Ince ward.

82 The Liberal Democrats proposed a revised Newtown ward consisting of the majority of the existing Newtown ward, an area in the southwest of the existing Ince ward and a small area in the northeast of the existing Worsley Mesnes ward. They also proposed a new Pemberton ward comprising the majority of the existing Norley ward, an area in the southwest of the existing Newtown ward and the northern part of the existing Winstanley ward.

83 The Liberal Democrats stated that they were 'happy with the cabinet proposals for Orrell and Winstanley wards' and that their 'suggestions for Pemberton, Newtown and Worsley Mesnes are very similar to those of the cabinet except that we have included the whole of Ince with Whelley instead of putting part of Lower Ince with Newtown and calling it Douglas ward'.

84 We carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One regarding this area and we note that the Council and the Liberal Democrats put forward very similar proposals in this area. We are basing our proposals on the Council's scheme as we consider that it generally provides a good balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities while providing for strong and easily identifiable boundaries. However, we are proposing amendments to the Council's proposed Douglas and Pemberton wards in light of our proposals in the Ince area and we are also amending the proposed Orrell and Worsley Mesnes wards to improve electoral equality and provide a better reflection of community identities.

85 We are adopting the Council's proposed Winstanley ward without amendment as we consider that it provides a good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identity and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. The only change to the existing Winstanley ward would be to run the northern boundary from Brook Lane west along Smithy Brook to the M6. With two amendments we are also adopting the Council's proposed Worsley Mesnes ward. The first of these amendments is to transfer the area bounded by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and Wigan to Liverpool railway line from the proposed Douglas ward into an amended Worsley Mesnes ward as we consider that the railway line would provide a stronger eastern boundary for the proposed Worsley Mesnes ward. This amendment would not affect any electors. We are also proposing one small amendment to provide a better reflection of community identity. This minor amendment is to include all electors on Tipping Street and Beverley Close in the new Douglas ward. To retain the existing boundary in this area would mean that residents would have no vehicular access to the rest of Worsley Mesnes ward without leaving the ward and we do not consider that this would provide for

effective and convenient local government. Our proposed Worsley Mesnes ward would follow the boundaries of the existing Worsley Mesnes ward for the remainder of the ward except in the south where we have tied the boundary to ground detail in a number of places. None of these minor amendments would affect any electors.

86 In light of our proposals in the Ince Whelley area detailed earlier, we are proposing an amended Douglas ward. For reasons of electoral equality we are proposing to transfer part of the existing Norley ward into a revised Douglas ward. All properties on and to the south of Thorburn Road, on and to the east of School Way and Norley Hall Avenue, and all properties in the Chiswell Street, Fairfield Street and Leopold Street area in the existing Norley ward, would be transferred into the revised Douglas ward. The southern boundary of our proposed Douglas ward would follow the Wigan to Pemberton railway line, Poolstock Brook and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, as discussed above, while the northern boundary would follow the Wigan to Liverpool and Manchester to Southport railway lines.

87 As a result of our amendment to the boundary between the proposed Douglas and Pemberton wards and also as we consider that it would provide a better reflection of community identities, we are adopting the suggestion put forward by the Conservatives to retain the M6 as the boundary between Orrell and Pemberton wards. We thus propose an amended Pemberton ward with the northern boundary of the Manchester to Southport railway line, the western boundary of the M6 and the southern boundary of Smithy Brook and the Wigan to Orrell railway line. As a result of this amendment to the boundary between the proposed Pemberton and Orrell wards our proposed Orrell ward is very similar to that proposed by the Conservatives, with two minor amendments. The first of these is that in the north we propose retaining the existing boundary with Langtree ward since to utilise the railway line as suggested by the Conservatives would involve the creation of a parish ward containing no electors. We are also proposing a minor amendment to the boundary with the proposed Bryn ward to tie the boundary to ground detail, and this change would affect no electors.

88 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Douglas, Orrell and Winstanley wards would be 1%, 3% and 7% below the borough average respectively (3% below, 3% below and 4% above by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Pemberton and Worsley Mesnes wards would be 2% above and equal to the borough average respectively (2% and 5% below by 2006).

### **Ashton-Golborne, Bryn, Hope Carr and Lightshaw wards**

89 These four wards are situated in the south of the borough and are unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Ashton-Golborne, Bryn, Hope Carr and Lightshaw wards is 12%, equal to, 4% and 24% above the borough average respectively (9% above, 3% below, 2% above and 29% above by 2006).

90 The Council proposed a revised warding arrangement in this area consisting of five wards each to be represented by three members. It proposed a revised Bryn ward consisting of the majority of the existing Bryn ward and the southeastern part of the existing Orrell ward. It also proposed a new Ashton ward comprising the majority of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward and part of the existing Bryn ward. A new Golborne & Lowton West ward would comprise the western part of the existing Lightshaw ward and an area in the southeast of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward. A new Lowton East ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Lightshaw ward and the western part of the existing Hope Carr ward. Finally in this area, the Council proposed a new Leigh South ward which would comprise the remainder of the existing Hope Carr ward, the western part of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and a small part of the existing Leigh East ward.

91 The Conservatives proposed a new Ashton ward comprising the majority of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward with the exception of two areas in the west and southeast of the existing

ward. It would also include an area in the south of the existing Abram ward and an area in the south of the existing Bryn ward.

92 They proposed an amended Bryn ward comprising the majority of the existing Bryn ward with the exception of an area in the south of the existing ward which they proposed transferring to a revised Ashton ward. This amended Bryn ward would also include an area in the southeast of the existing Orrell ward and an area in the west of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward.

93 The Conservatives also proposed a new Golborne & Lowton West ward comprising the southeastern part of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward and the western part of the existing Lightshaw ward. They proposed a new Lowton East ward which would comprise the remainder of the existing Lightshaw ward and the western part of the existing Hope Carr ward.

94 Finally in this area the Conservatives proposed a new Leigh South ward which would comprise the remainder of the existing Hope Carr ward, the western part of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and southern parts of the existing Leigh Central and Leigh East wards.

95 The Liberal Democrats stated that 'there is no disagreement between ourselves and the cabinet in this area and we believe that our proposals are substantially the same as the cabinet recommendations'. They proposed a new Golborne ward consisting of the western part of the existing Lightshaw ward and an area in the southeast of the existing Ashton-Golborne ward. The Liberal Democrats also proposed a new Lowton ward comprising the eastern part of the existing Lightshaw ward and the western part of the existing Hope Carr ward. Finally the Liberal Democrats proposed a new Leigh South ward comprising the majority of the existing Hope Carr ward and an area in the west of the existing Bedford-Astley ward.

96 Having carefully considered all representations received at Stage One regarding this area, we are basing our proposals on those of the Borough Council as we consider that, in general, they provide a good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. The proposals of the Liberal Democrats in this area are very similar to those of the Council and we believe that these proposals provide a better reflection of community identities than those of the Conservatives' whose proposals would involve dividing the community in the Landside and Pennington areas.

97 However, we are proposing two amendments to the Council's proposals to provide an improved level of electoral equality. We are proposing an amendment to transfer the Alderton Drive and Woodedge estate from the existing Bryn ward to an amended Ashton ward. Our proposed boundary would follow Wigan Road south before running to the west of properties on Bryn Street and would then follow a boundary proposed by the Conservatives to run west along Millingford Brook to the borough boundary. Our proposed Bryn ward would comprise the existing Bryn ward with the addition of all electors to the east of Winstanley Road and the south of the M6, currently in Orrell ward, and an amendment to the southern boundary discussed above.

98 Again to improve electoral equality, we are proposing an amendment to the boundary between the Council's proposed Golborne & Lowton West and Lowton East wards. The eastern boundary of the proposed Golborne & Lowton West ward would follow Plank Lane before running to the east of the properties on Slag Lane and Stone Cross Lane North and then west along the East Lancashire Road and south down the Wigan to Crewe railway line to the borough boundary. The borough boundary would form the southern boundary of the proposed ward, and the western boundary would run to the west of the properties on Helen Street before following Golborne Road and Edge Green Road. It would then run eastwards along a path before following Edge Green Road and Nan Holes Brook. The northern boundary of the proposed Golborne & Lowton West ward would consist of the boundary between the existing Abram and Lightshaw wards.

99 We are adopting the Council's proposals without amendment in the remainder of the area as we consider that they provide the best balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. The proposed Lowton East ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Lightshaw ward and the western part of the existing Hope Carr ward. The eastern boundary of this proposed ward would be formed by Atherleigh Way before running generally northwest through Pennington Flash Country Park to Plank Lane.

100 The northern boundary of the proposed Leigh South ward would follow the boundary between the existing Hope Carr and Leigh Central wards before leaving the Bridgewater Canal and running north to Spinning Jenny Way. The proposed boundary would then run east along Spinning Jenny Way and Chapel Street, north along Mill Lane and east along Bedford Brook and Manchester Road. The eastern boundary would run south from Manchester Road to the East Lancashire Road which would form the southern boundary of the proposed ward.

101 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Ashton, Bryn, Golborne & Lowton West and Lowton East wards would be 2%, 1%, 6% and 9% below the borough average respectively (5%, 4%, 6% and 6% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Leigh South ward would be 8% above the borough average (5% by 2006).

### **Hindley Green, Leigh Central and Leigh East wards**

102 These three wards are situated in the centre and east of the borough and are unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Hindley Green and Leigh East wards is 11% and 9% above the borough average respectively (12% and 6% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Leigh Central ward is 14% below the borough average (16% below by 2006).

103 The Council proposed a revised warding arrangement consisting of three wards each to be represented by three members. A revised Hindley Green ward would comprise parts of the existing Hindley, Hindley Green and Leigh Central wards while a new Leigh West ward would comprise parts of the existing Hindley Green, Leigh Central and Leigh East wards. Finally the Council proposed an amended Leigh East ward comprising parts of the existing Atherton, Bedford-Astley and Leigh East wards.

104 The Conservatives proposed a revised Hindley Green ward comprising the northern part of the existing ward and an area in the east of the existing Hindley ward. They also proposed a new Leigh Bedford ward comprising part of the existing Atherton ward, part of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and part of the existing Leigh East ward. Finally they proposed a revised Leigh West ward comprising the majority of the existing Leigh Central ward, an area in the south of the existing Hindley Green ward and a small area in the west of the existing Leigh East ward.

105 The Liberal Democrats proposed an amended Hindley Green ward comprising part of the existing Hindley Green ward, two areas in the eastern part of the existing Hindley ward and an area in the north of the existing Leigh Central ward. They proposed a new Leigh West ward to comprise the eastern part of the existing Leigh Central ward, the southern part of the existing Hindley Green ward and a small area in the west of the existing Leigh East ward.

106 The Liberal Democrats also proposed a new Leigh Bedford ward comprising the eastern part of the existing Leigh East ward, the western part of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and an area in the east of the existing Leigh Central ward.

107 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, we are basing our proposals in this area on those of the Borough Council as we consider that their

proposals provide a good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. However we are proposing some amendments to improve electoral equality and provide a better reflection of community identities.

108 In light of our proposals in the Ince Whelley area and the fact that we are unable to consider any area in isolation, we are proposing amendments to the Council's Hindley Green ward to improve electoral equality and provide a better reflection of community identity. In the west of the proposed ward we are retaining the existing boundary to run along Mornington Road and Borsdane Avenue, while in the south we are moving away from the Council's proposals to run the boundary south along the old Ince to Bickershaw railway line. Our proposed boundary would then run northeast to the east of the properties in the Bolton House Road and Bickershaw Lane area before rejoining the Council's proposed boundary at Smith's Lane. In the east of the proposed ward we are also proposing an amendment to provide a better reflection of community identity. Our proposed boundary would run to the west of properties on Minehead, Taunton and Tiverton Avenue's before running east to the south of properties on Corner Lane and then north along Westleigh Lane and a path to the borough boundary. This would include all electors in the Bexhill Drive estate in an amended Hindley Green ward, and we consider that this would provide a better reflection of community identity than the Council's proposals.

109 With the exception of an amendment to tie a boundary to ground detail which would not affect any electors, we are proposing to adopt the Council's proposed Leigh East and Leigh West wards without modification as we consider that these wards provide a good balance between electoral equality, the recognition of community identities and the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries. We considered the proposals of both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats but we consider that neither of these proposals provide strong, easily identifiable boundaries or a good reflection of community identities in the town of Leigh. We are also unable to consider any area in isolation and, in light of the warding pattern we have adopted elsewhere, we remain convinced that the Council's proposals provide the best balance between the statutory criteria in this area.

110 The southern boundary of our proposed Leigh West ward would follow the boundary between the existing Leigh Central and Hope Carr wards while the western boundary of the proposed ward with the proposed Hindley Green ward is described above. The northern boundary would run east along a path to the south of properties on Minehead Avenue and Honiton Close. The eastern boundary of the proposed ward would run south along Westleigh Brook before running along Westleigh Lane and Nel Pan Lane and then south along Westleigh Brook again. It would then follow the boundary between the existing wards of Hindley Green and Leigh East before running east along Victoria Street and Kirkhall Lane. The proposed boundary would then run south along Leigh Road, Market Place, Market Street and King Street.

111 Finally we are proposing an amended Leigh East ward, the western boundary of which would follow Leigh Road, Market Place, Market Street and King Street. The southern boundary of the proposed ward would share a boundary with the proposed Leigh South ward, as described earlier. The eastern boundary of the proposed ward would run to the west of properties on Debdale Lane and Rufford Place before running generally north along a track to the boundary between the existing wards of Bedford-Astley and Tyldesley East. It would then run along South Lane, Maden Street, Lord Street, Meanley Road and Cooling Lane. The northern boundary of the proposed ward would follow the boundary between the existing Bedford-Astley and Hindsford wards before running west along Atherton Lake Brook, north along The Avenue and east along Orchard Lane.

112 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Leigh East and Leigh West wards would be 7% and 9% above the borough average respectively (4% and 5% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hindley Green ward would be 4% below the borough average (5% above by 2006).

## **Atherton, Bedford-Astley, Hindsford and Tyldesley East wards**

113 These four wards are situated in the east of the borough and are entirely unparished. The number of electors per councillor in Atherton and Bedford-Astley wards is 12% and 16% below the borough average respectively (6% and 20% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Hindsford and Tyldesley East wards is 11% and 20% above the borough average respectively (10% and 20% by 2006).

114 The Council proposed a revised warding pattern of four wards each to be represented by three councillors. It proposed a new Atherleigh ward comprising parts of the existing Atherton, Hindley Green and Leigh East wards. A revised Atherton ward would comprise parts of the existing Atherton and Hindsford wards while a new Tyldesley ward would comprise parts of the existing Tyldesley and Hindsford wards. Finally a new Astley Mosley Common ward would comprise the majority of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and part of the existing Tyldesley East ward.

115 The Conservatives proposed a revised Atherton ward comprising a western area of the existing Atherton ward, a southern area of the existing Hindley Green ward and a northern area of the existing Leigh East ward. They proposed a new Atherleigh ward comprising the northern part of the existing Atherton ward and the northern part of the existing Hindsford ward.

116 They also proposed a new Tyldesley ward comprising the northern part of the existing Tyldesley East ward and the eastern part of the existing Hindsford ward and finally a new Astley & Mosley Common ward comprising the southern and eastern part of the existing Tyldesley East ward and the majority of the existing Bedford-Astley ward.

117 The Liberal Democrats proposed a new Atherleigh ward comprising the western part of the existing Atherton ward, an area in the north of the existing Leigh East ward and a small area in the east of the existing Hindley Green ward. They also proposed an amended Atherton ward comprising the eastern part of the existing Atherton ward and the western part of the existing Hindsford ward. The Liberal Democrats stated that 'the cabinet proposals for dividing up this township into two wards are totally unacceptable' and considered that 'where an arbitrary boundary is required to even up numbers, it is best to place it across a more recently built estate where loyalties tend to be to the local area rather than to the town itself and it can be a big advantage to the local residents to have six councillors concerned with their estate rather than three'. Therefore the Liberal Democrats 'have accordingly placed the boundary between Atherton ward and Atherleigh ward in the centre of the Hag Fold estate'.

118 The Liberal Democrats proposed a new Tyldesley ward comprising the eastern part of the existing Hindsford ward and the northwestern part of the existing Tyldesley East ward. Finally they proposed a new Astley-Mosley Common ward comprising the majority of the existing Bedford-Astley ward and the southeastern part of the existing Tyldesley East ward. The Liberal Democrats stated that they were 'happy with the cabinet proposals for Tyldesley ward and Astley/Mosley Common ward'.

119 At Stage One we also received four pro-forma letters from the Hag Fold Residents Association stating that 'it is very important to local people that the Hag Fold estate is not seen as separate from the town of Atherton itself'. The Residents Association considered that 'local people feel very strongly that with any boundary change they want to be included with Atherton centre and not detached from prosperity and opportunity'. It also considered that 'there is a real concern that unless Hag Fold is attached to Atherton town centre that the improvements seen over the past few years will be reversed and Hag Fold will once again be seen as a "sink" estate with few facilities and poor opportunities for its residents'.

120 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One we are basing our proposals for this area on those of the Council, which are similar to those of the

Conservatives, as we consider that their proposals provide a good balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities. The Liberal Democrats supported the Council's proposed Astley Mosley Common and Tyldesley wards but put forward substantially different Atherleigh and Atherton wards. We do not consider that the Liberal Democrats' proposal to divide the Hag Fold estate between these two wards would provide a good reflection of community identity, especially in light of the representations from the Hag Fold Residents Association, and we remain convinced that the Council's proposals provide the best balance between the statutory criteria in this area.

121 We are, however, proposing three amendments to the Council's proposals to provide an improved level of electoral equality in light of our proposals in the rest of the borough. The first of these amendments is a revised boundary between the proposed Atherleigh and Hindley Green wards, and this amendment is described in the previous section. To provide an improved level of electoral equality we are also proposing an amendment to the boundary between the proposed Atherleigh and Atherton wards. Our proposed boundary would run along Leigh Road before running to the south of numbers 34–62 Leigh Road and then turning north along Liscard Street and then to the west of properties on Gadbury Avenue and Worthing Grove. It would then run west along Wigan Road before rejoining the Council's proposed boundary to run north to the borough boundary.

122 In light of our proposals for Atherleigh ward we are also proposing an amendment to the boundary between the proposed Atherton and Tyldesley wards to improve electoral equality. Our proposal would involve transferring all the electors in the Lodge Lane, Lodge Road and Lord Street area of Hindsford from Atherton ward into Tyldesley ward. We note that the Council's proposed Atherton ward takes into account the representations received from the Hag Fold Residents Association and are content to endorse the majority of this ward with the two amendments described above. In the rest of this area we are content to endorse the Council's proposals as we consider that they provide a good balance between the statutory criteria.

123 A revised Atherton ward would have a southern boundary with the proposed Atherleigh ward as described above. It would then follow Market Street, Tyldesley Road and Miller's Lane before running to the north of all properties in the Lodge Lane, Lodge Road and Lord Street area of Hindsford. The proposed boundary would then run north along Hindsford Brook to the Wigan to Manchester railway line which it would follow east to the borough boundary. The northern boundary would follow the borough boundary.

124 The western boundary of our proposed Atherleigh ward would be the boundary with the proposed Hindley Green and Leigh West wards as described earlier. The southern boundary of the proposed ward would follow Victoria Street, Kirkhall Lane, Orchard Lane, The Avenue and Atherton Lake Brook while the eastern boundary of the proposed ward would follow Miller's Lane and Tyldesley Road. The northern boundary of the proposed Atherleigh ward would follow the boundary with the proposed Atherton ward as described above

125 With the exception of the above amendment we propose adopting the Council's proposed Tyldesley ward. The eastern boundary of the proposed ward would follow Mort Lane before running to the north and east of properties on Dewberry Close and Bank House Close. It would then run to the east of properties on Makant's Close and Sale Lane before running west along a dismantled railway. The southern boundary of the proposed ward would follow Honksford Brook, Bodmin Road, Helston Way, Stour Road and Ennerdale Road before running to the west of properties on Coniston Road. It would then run west along Ley Road, Meanley Road and Cooling Lane. The western boundary of the proposed ward would follow Atherton Lake Brook and Miller's Lane while the northern boundary would follow the Wigan to Manchester railway line and Hindsford Brook before running to the north of all the properties in the Lodge Lane, Lodge Road and Lord Street area of Hindsford as described above.

126 Finally we are adopting the Council's proposed Astley Mosley Common ward. The southern and eastern boundaries of the proposed Astley Mosley Common ward would be the borough boundary, while the western boundary would run south along and then to the east of properties on Mort Lane before running to the east of properties on Dewberry Close, Bank House Close, Makant's Close and Sale Lane. The boundary would then run west along a dismantled railway line and west along Honkford Brook, Bodmin Road, Helston Way, Stour Road and Ennerdale Road. It would then run to the west of properties on Coniston Road and west along Ley Road before following the boundary between the existing Bedford-Astley and Tyldesley East wards. The proposed boundary would leave the existing boundary and run along paths generally southwest before running to the west of properties on Rufford Place and Debdale Lane. It would then follow Manchester Road before running south to the East Lancashire Road which it would follow west to the borough boundary.

127 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors in the proposed Astley Mosley Common, Atherton and Tyldesley wards would be 1%, 8% and 5% above the borough average respectively (1%, 4% and 5% by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in the proposed Atherleigh ward would be 7% below the borough average (1% by 2006).

## Electoral cycle

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

## Conclusions

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

- there should be an increase in council size from 72 to 75;
- there should be 25 wards;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one ward.

130 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- In Ince we propose adopting an amended Ince Whelley ward, having taken into account local opposition to the Council's proposals.
- In Shevington we propose adopting an amended version of the Conservatives' proposed ward.
- In light of these decisions and to provide a better balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities we propose a number of other amendments across the borough.

131 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 electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	72	75	72	75
Number of wards	24	25	24	25
Average number of electors per councillor	3,279	3,148	3,294	3,163
Number of wards with a variance of more than 10 per cent from the average	16	0	14	0
Number of wards with a variance of more than 20 per cent from the average	4	0	4	0

132 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Wigan Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 16 to none. By 2006 no wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 6%.

*Draft recommendation*

Wigan Borough Council should comprise 75 councillors serving 25 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

*Map 2: Draft recommendations for Wigan*



## 5 What happens next?

133 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Wigan contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 22 April 2003. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

134 Express your views by writing directly to us:

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

135 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 Wigan: detailed mapping

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

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

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

*Map A1: Draft recommendations for Wigan: key map*

# Appendix B

## Code of practice on written consultation

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

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

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

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