



LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE
FUTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF
HEREFORD & WORCESTER

A REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

London: HMSO

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the recommendations for the structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester, as agreed by the Commission:

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The Local Government Commission for England

Sir John Banham
Chairman

Dear Secretary of State

THE FUTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF HEREFORD & WORCESTER

With this letter the Local Government Commission is submitting its final recommendations for the structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester.

You will be aware that the Commission originally put forward a structure of three unitary authorities to serve the areas of: the former county of Herefordshire, North Worcestershire and South Worcestershire. The Commission also put forward two alternative structures, firstly two unitary authorities, one for Herefordshire and one for Worcestershire and secondly, a modified two-tier structure with a unitary authority for Herefordshire and the retention of a two-tier structure in Worcestershire.

Since our draft recommendations were published on 5 July 1994, we have heard directly from over 54,000 respondents, including local authorities, voluntary organisations, businesses, parish and town councils and other local interests. We have also commissioned a survey of a representative sample of local residents.

The Commission did not set out to conduct a referendum and it is aware that there have been vigorous local campaigns, both for unitary structures and for no change to the present two-tier structure, in certain parts of the present county. The Commission appreciates that these may have influenced people's opinions. Nevertheless the Commission is satisfied that it has obtained a fair reflection of local opinion.

This consultation has caused the Commission to reconsider its draft recommendations. We are now proposing that a unitary authority is established to serve the area of the former county of Herefordshire, with the retention of the two-tier structure in the Worcestershire part of the present county. Map 1 sets out our recommendations. We estimate that the cost of setting up the new structure will be of the order of £6 million to £9 million.

We also estimate that there will be some change in the continuing cost of administration compared with the present arrangements which may range from savings of the order of £2 million, to additional costs of up to £1 million. It must be remembered that administrative costs account for only 10 per cent of total local government expenditure in Hereford & Worcester. Our consultation shows support for the structure we have finally recommended.

The review process has brought to the surface a number of useful proposals for enhancing the management and effectiveness of local government, whether in a two-tier or unitary structure.

Indeed, the Commission has been mindful of the fact that the manner in which any given structure is managed is probably as important as the structure itself and in any case there is a constant need to revise and update practices. We hope that such improvements will be pursued with appropriate vigour. In particular, we would like to see more management authority and responsibility devolved to local communities, and a more meaningful consultative role for parish and town councils.

In a further general report to be published when its structural review programme has been completed, the Commission will discuss the establishment of unitary authorities where these come into existence, and their on-going evolution; the same report will consider the improvements that can and need to be made in two-tier structures where they continue.

Yours sincerely,

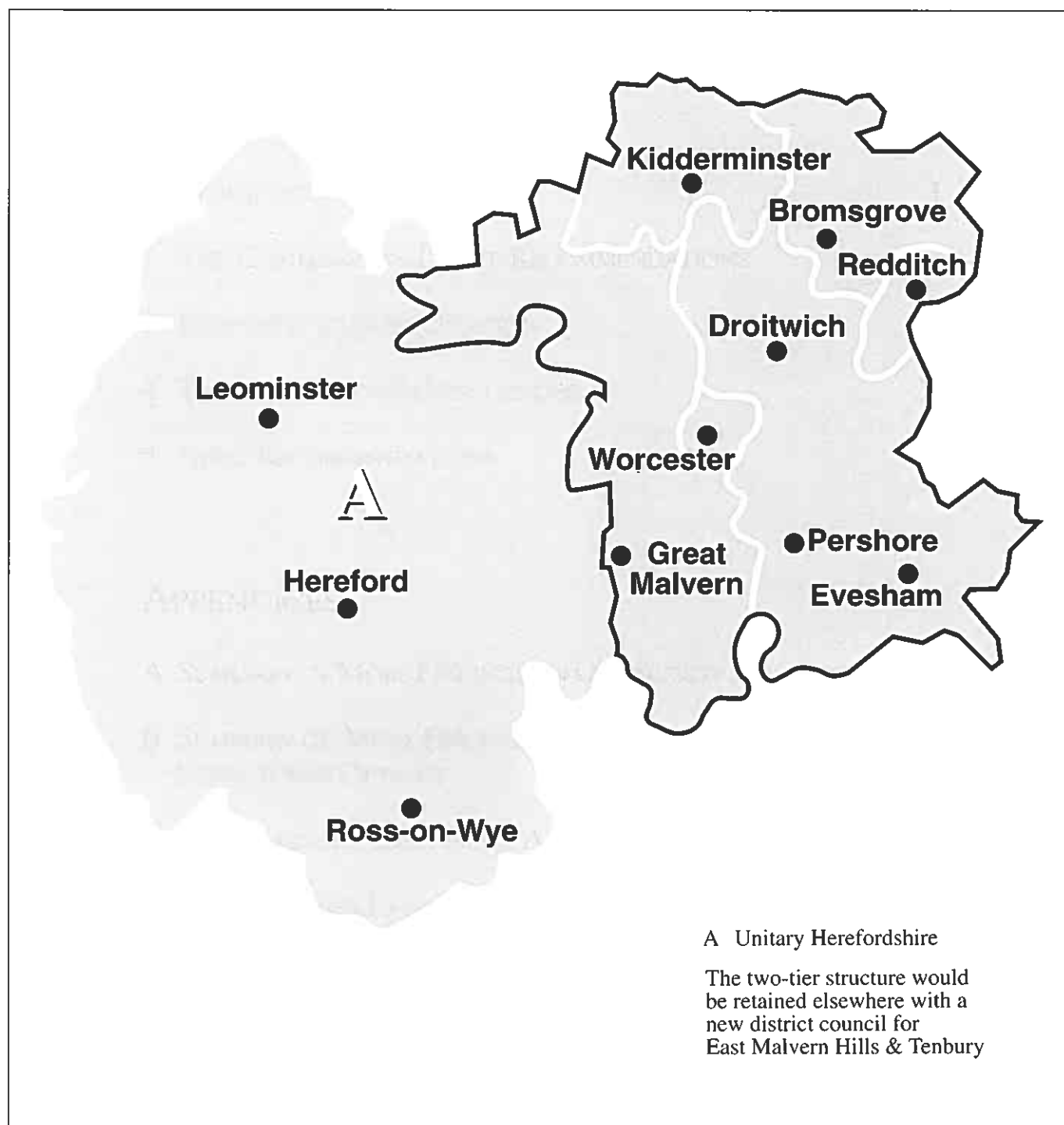
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Banham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sir John Banham

Chairman

15 December 1994

Map 1: RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN HEREFORD & WORCESTER



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report contains the Commission's final recommendations for changes to the structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester. It represents the culmination of 12 months work by the Commission, during which time it received the views of over 58,000 individuals and organisations.
- 2 The report is in four main parts:
 - (i) Chapter 2 describes the Commission's draft recommendations;
 - (ii) Chapter 3 details the responses to consultation on the draft recommendations;
 - (iii) Chapter 4 sets out the Commission's conclusions;
 - (iv) Chapter 5 contains the Commission's final recommendations.
- 3 The review commenced on 13 December 1993 and was conducted under the provisions of Part II of the Local Government Act 1992, having regard to the Secretary of State's November 1993 Policy and Procedure Guidance as amended by the courts. In accordance with the Procedure Guidance, the Commission wrote to all the principal authorities in Hereford & Worcester, informing them of the review's commencement. Copies were also sent to the other organisations and individuals listed in Annex A to the Guidance.
- 4 A period of some 20 weeks, until 29 April 1994, was given for all local authorities and any other body or person interested in the review to put their views to the Commission on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government in the county, to any boundary or to electoral arrangements and, if so, what those changes should be.
- 5 The Commission's draft recommendations were published in its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester* on 5 July 1994. Copies were sent to all who had been informed of the commencement of the review, to organisations which wrote to the Commission during the initial consultation stage, to appropriate representative organisations, and to the organisations and individuals listed in Annex A of the Secretary of State's Procedure Guidance. Copies were also made available to local residents on request.
- 6 In addition, principally through the Royal Mail, the Commission distributed some 300,000 leaflets with a questionnaire to households in the county. The leaflets summarised its draft recommendations and other structural options. The Commission also advertised extensively in the local press, drawing residents' attention to the review and to its draft recommendations and other structural options.

2 THE COMMISSION'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 At the start of the review, local authorities, members of the public and all other interested parties were invited to write to the Commission giving their views on the future local government of Hereford & Worcester. Mr Brian Hill and Mr Clive Wilkinson, the Commissioners with particular responsibility for the review, visited the county and met numerous local authority members and officers, interest groups, business organisations and individuals.
- 8 Before considering the options for local government in Hereford & Worcester, the Commission endeavoured to learn about local perceptions of community identity, and to determine how much local people knew both about the Commission's work and the principle of unitary local government. As part of the review, a county-wide survey among a representative cross-section of the population was undertaken by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) on behalf of the Commission. The survey, similar to those carried out in other review areas, covered interviews with 1,992 residents aged 18 and over. The results were published by MORI in February 1994. A summary is given in appendix A.
- 9 The Commission received some 650 representations at this stage. Almost 500 were from individuals. The remainder were from a mixture of interest groups, the voluntary sector, parish councils and the business community. A number of groups who expressed an interest in a particular local authority service supported the principle of larger rather than smaller unitary authorities. However, there was considerable support for the existing two-tier system, especially from individuals. One-third of respondents (33 per cent) wished the present two-tier arrangements to continue, while just over one in four (28 per cent) supported some form of unitary structure. Some 29 per cent of submissions supported the restoration of the pre-1974 boundary between Herefordshire and Worcestershire, or an approximation to this boundary. Over half the submissions supporting the historic boundary also supported some form of unitary structure, while the remainder either did not specify a structure or supported a structure which included two-tier authorities.
- 10 The Commission also received a wide spectrum of views from national organisations with a particular interest in the issues raised by local government reorganisation. A majority of those advocating change recommended unitary authorities larger than the existing districts. However, there were also expressions of support for the retention of the existing two-tier structure. Each of the principal local authorities in Hereford & Worcester also made their views known to the Commission.
- 11 Some 2,800 views were also expressed to the Commission in the form of petitions. Of these 2,777 were included in one petition in favour of the creation of a parish for Kidderminster.

THE STRUCTURAL OPTIONS FOR HEREFORD & WORCESTER

- 12 The Commission is required by section 13(5) (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 1992 to have regard to the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government. The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance to the Commission states that proposals which are put forward by groups of authorities should be an important starting point for the Commission. The Policy Guidance also advises that, where such proposals demonstrate that a range of options have been considered, along with the implications for individual services, the Commission should give them particular weight. Accordingly, the Commission examined carefully the main options suggested by the existing local authorities. In doing so, however, it was mindful of the need to arrive at draft recommendations or alternative options which were viable, which had been assessed against the existing two-tier structure, and which met the statutory criteria set out in section 13(5) of the 1992 Act.
- 13 The existing local authorities in Hereford & Worcester submitted four main options. These were:
- (i) **A unitary authority for Herefordshire on its pre-1974 boundaries with the retention of a two-tier structure in Worcestershire.** This was the preference of Hereford & Worcester County Council, who also argued that if there is to be structural change in Worcestershire, a single unitary authority best meets the statutory criteria.
 - (ii) **Six new unitary authorities.** A Herefordshire unitary authority comprising the existing district council areas of Hereford City, South Herefordshire, Leominster (excluding Tenbury) and the western part of Malvern Hills district; and unitary authorities for the district council areas of Bromsgrove, Redditch, Worcester and Wyre Forest (including Tenbury). The sixth would comprise the eastern part of Malvern Hills district merged with Wychavon district. This was the preference of Hereford & Worcester Association of District Councils (ADC).
 - (iii) **A unitary authority for Herefordshire and two unitary authorities in Worcestershire.** A unitary Herefordshire authority on pre-1974 boundaries; a unitary North Worcestershire authority comprising Wyre Forest (plus Tenbury), Bromsgrove and Redditch; and a South Worcestershire authority comprising: Wychavon, Worcester City and eastern Malvern Hills. This was the preferred option of Wychavon District Council.
 - (iv) **An alternative three unitary authorities.** A 'greater' Herefordshire unitary authority incorporating the whole of historic Herefordshire together with the eastern part of Malvern Hills and the Tenbury area from Leominster district. The other two authorities would comprise: Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest on the one hand, and Worcester and Wychavon on the other. This was the preference of Malvern Hills District Council, and Leominster District Council were prepared to support it.
- 14 The Commission's draft recommendations provided full details of its consideration of these

structures, together with an alternative structure of two unitary authorities: Herefordshire, and Worcestershire.

- 15 Having considered all the evidence submitted by others and collected by itself, the Commission concluded that the statutory criteria would best be satisfied by replacing the existing structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester. It consulted on the following draft recommendation:

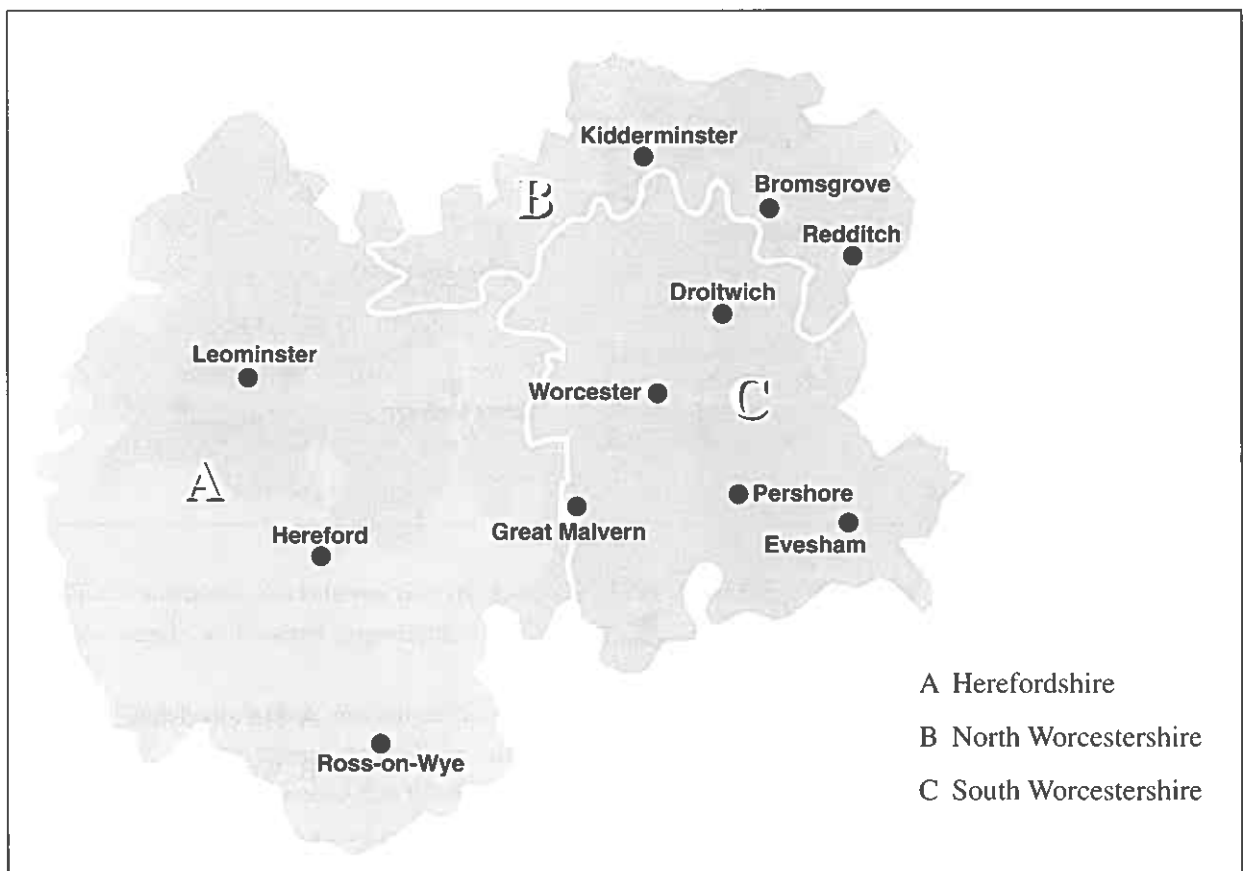
DRAFT RECOMMENDATION (OPTION 1)

The existing structure of ten councils should be abolished and replaced by three unitary authorities:

- (i) a unitary Herefordshire based on traditional historic boundaries;
- (ii) a unitary authority for North Worcestershire comprising Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest (including the Tenbury area);
- (iii) a unitary authority for South Worcestershire comprising Worcester City, Wychavon and the eastern part of the existing Malvern Hills District.

- 16 Map 2 illustrates the Commission's draft recommendation for structural change.

Map 2: THREE UNITARY AUTHORITIES



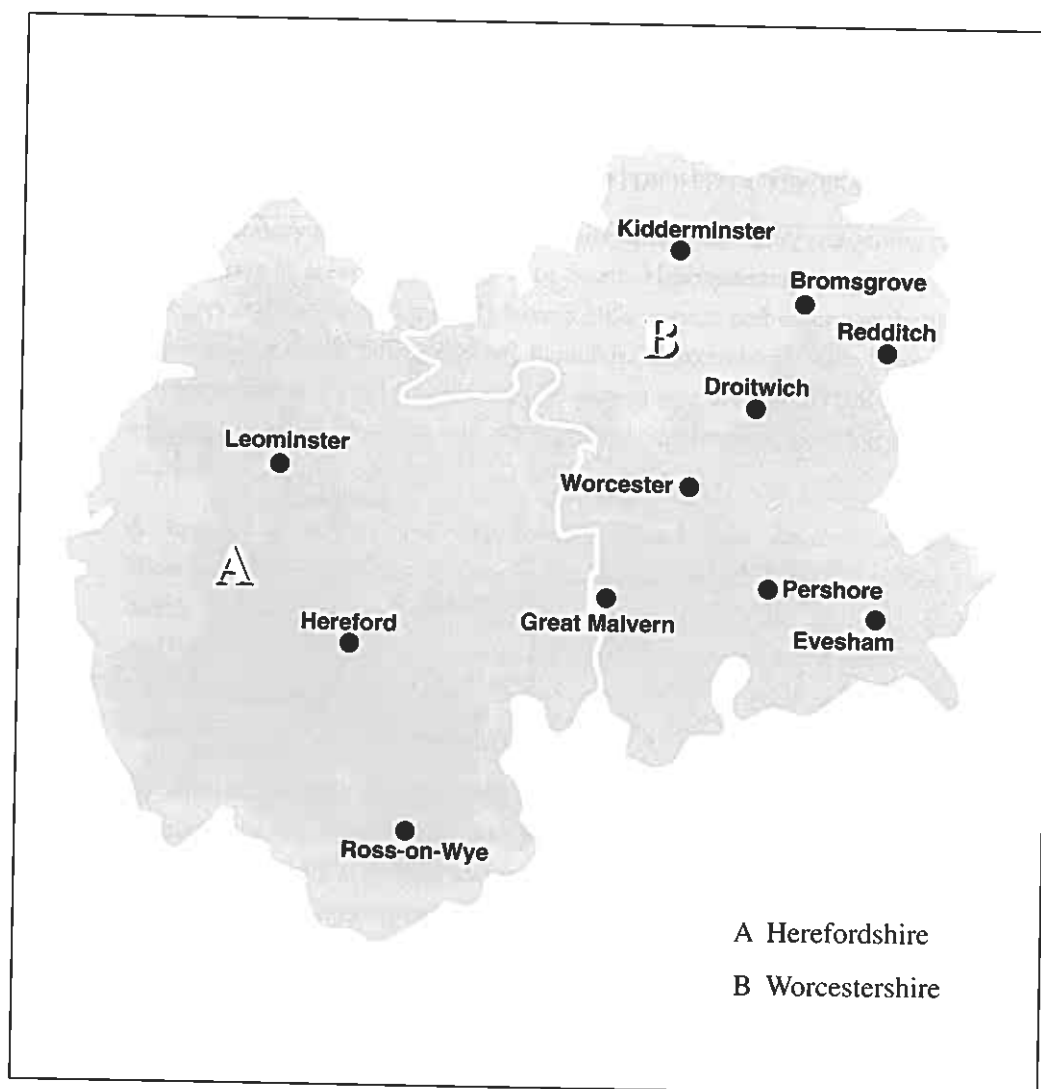
- 17 On consideration, the Commission believed that there were two other viable alternative structures which might also meet the statutory criteria, either one of which it would be prepared to recommend to the Secretary of State if new evidence, including evidence about the level of local support, justified this. Accordingly, in addition to its draft recommendation, the Commission decided to consult the people of Hereford & Worcester on the two alternative structures. These are illustrated in maps 3 and 4.

ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE (OPTION 2)

The existing structure of ten councils should be abolished and replaced by two new unitary authorities, each responsible for the broad range of services now provided by the county and district councils, as follows:

- (i) a unitary Herefordshire based on traditional historic boundaries;
- (ii) a unitary Worcestershire.

Map 3: TWO UNITARY AUTHORITIES

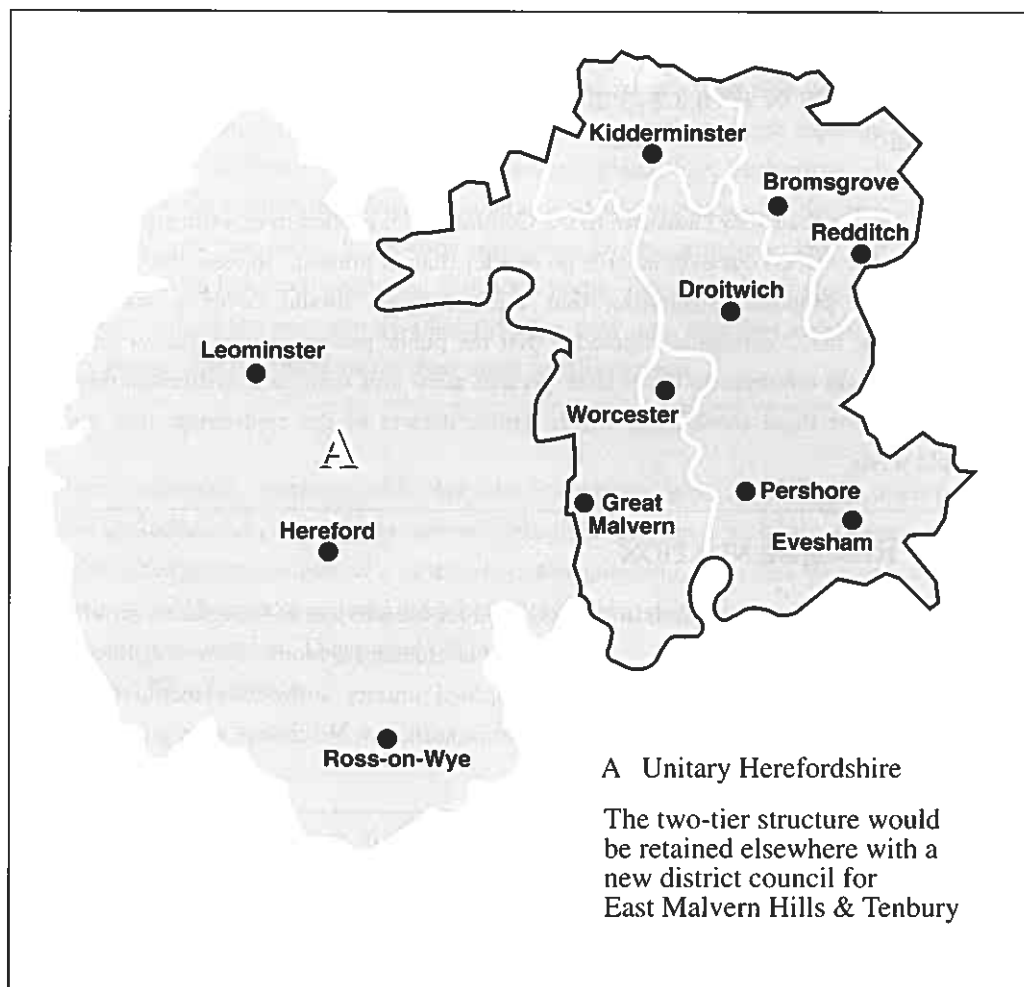


ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE (OPTION 3)

The existing structure of ten councils should be replaced by:

- (i) a unitary Herefordshire based on traditional historic boundaries;
- (ii) a two-tier structure within Worcestershire comprising a county council, the existing district councils of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wychavon and Worcester City, and a new district council for the eastern part of Malvern Hills and the Tenbury area of Leominster District.

Map 4: MODIFICATION OF THE TWO-TIER STRUCTURE



- 18 The Commission also believed that the names of any new authorities should be decided by local people, and invited suggestions.
- 19 The Commission's draft recommendation and its two alternative structures involved the abolition of the county council for, and the county of, Hereford & Worcester. The Commission recommended that the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire should be re-established as a focus for loyalty and identity, as well as for historic ceremonial, sporting and other purposes. Accordingly, it consulted over the following draft recommendation.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

The existing county of Hereford & Worcester should be abolished. The historic counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire should be re-established.

OTHER MATTERS

- 20 In addition to reviewing the structure of local authorities in Hereford & Worcester, the Commission is also required to consider the delivery of certain local authority services, to make recommendations about future electoral arrangements, and to take account of the role which parish and town councils could play in the review area. The Commission's consideration of these issues, and its draft recommendations in respect of them, are set out below.

PUBLIC PROTECTION (POLICE, FIRE AND OTHER SERVICES RELATED TO LAW AND ORDER)

- 21 The Government's Policy Guidance to the Commission is explicit in requiring police and fire services to be carried out over an area no smaller than at present. Indeed, the Commission received no proposals suggesting that these services should cover a smaller area. Accordingly, the Commission concluded that the public protection and the law and order services should continue to cover their present areas and that joint authorities should be established for these services on which representatives of the appropriate new councils should serve.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

There should be a combined authority established for fire services in the county, on which representatives of the new unitary councils for Herefordshire, North Worcestershire and South Worcestershire should serve. The proposed unitary authorities should also be represented on the present West Mercia joint police authority. No change is proposed in the probation and magistrates' court service.

- 22 The Commission also concluded that under the alternative structures there should be a combined authority established for fire services in the county, on which representatives of the new unitary councils would serve, or in the case of the two-tier alternative for Worcestershire, representatives of Worcestershire County Council. For police services, the existing West Mercia joint authority would require representatives from the new unitary authority for Herefordshire and from Worcestershire County Council or from the unitary authorities proposed for that area.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 23 The Commission is invited by section 14 of the 1992 Act to consider whether unitary authorities should be empowered to prepare unitary development plans rather than, as at

present, structure plans and local plans.

- 24 The Commission was concerned that strategic land-use planning for Hereford & Worcester should not be undermined by changes to the structure of local government in the county. This matter is fully discussed in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*.
- 25 The Commission invited further evidence on this issue from interested parties during consultations on its draft recommendations. However, for consultation purposes, it adopted the following as its draft recommendation.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

For strategic planning the three new authorities should assume joint responsibility for structure planning for the whole of their combined areas. The new unitary authorities should also be mineral and waste planning authorities with strategic minerals and waste policies being included in the joint structure plan. The authorities should have responsibility for formulating detailed minerals and waste policies for the area in general conformity with the policy framework established by the structure plan, and should be authorised to include such policies in their local plans. Responsibility for local plans should rest with each of the new unitary authorities for their area and they should also exercise development control functions for their areas for all purposes.

- 26 The Commission considered that this same recommendation could also be appropriate for the alternative structure of two unitary authorities consulted on by the Commission. The other alternative structure of a unitary Herefordshire and a two-tier Worcestershire would require the Herefordshire unitary authority and Worcestershire County Council to prepare a joint structure plan. There would be no change to current planning functions within the two-tier Worcestershire.

OTHER SERVICES

- 27 The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance advises the Commission that, where it recommends unitary authorities, the aim should be to make the individual authorities responsible for all local government services. The exception is law and order services where necessary. The Guidance further advises the Commission that it should recommend shared arrangements for particular functions where a satisfactory structure is unlikely to be achieved without them. The Commission has had regard to these aspects of the Guidance in the conduct of its review of Hereford & Worcester.
- 28 From the information submitted during the initial stage of the review, the Commission was satisfied that both the new unitary authorities proposed in its draft recommendation and the alternative structures canvassed would command sufficient resources to carry out the other main local government services, whether directly or by contracting out to other local authorities or to the private sector.

- 29 The Commission was also satisfied that the local authorities in the area would be in a position to put in place adequate structures for any shared arrangements necessary to function efficiently. It therefore made no draft recommendations in this respect. However, the Commission expressed its expectation that the new authorities should work closely together to ensure that specialist expertise would not be unnecessarily broken up. In particular, it was concerned that the existing levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of relatively small-scale but important functions, such as trading standards, archive provision and emergency planning, would not be reduced by reorganisation.

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 30 The Commission examined alternative means by which local democratic control and accountability could be made secure within the new structure. The present electoral arrangements in Hereford & Worcester create an element of confusion in that some councils hold elections most years because they hold elections by thirds, whereas the others have elections for the whole council every four years. In addition, accountability is blurred by the fact that some wards return either two or three councillors. The Commission generally supports the view of the Committee of Inquiry into the Conduct of Local Authority Business 1986 that there should be one councillor for every electoral ward, and that the whole council should be elected together once every four years.
- 31 The Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires* set out the Commission's view that the ratio of local councillors to residents should generally be around 1 to 4,000. This ratio is midway between the existing ratios for district and for county councils. It is not a hard and fast rule and the Commission applied it sensitively, taking into account local custom and practice and any special local needs, especially in very rural areas. Nevertheless, it reflects the Commission's wish to see a different role for councillors with more back-up made available to assist them in carrying out their demanding task.
- 32 The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance states that the Commission should take account of local practice and that 'where a new authority covers the area of an existing county or district...the Commission should recommend that the wards or electoral divisions should be transferred to the new authority.' The Commission adopted this approach in determining the electoral arrangements associated with its draft recommendation and alternative structural options.
- 33 The Commission's draft recommendations for electoral changes, set out in detail in its consultation report, are summarised below.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Elections to the new unitary authorities for Herefordshire, North Worcestershire and South Worcestershire should be held every four years. The initial number of councillors for Herefordshire should be 57, for North Worcestershire 88, and for South Worcestershire 79. The wards in each authority should be based on existing county divisions with adjustments to take account of the historic boundary of Herefordshire with Worcestershire.

- 34 The detailed electoral arrangements for this recommendation and for the alternative structures proposed were shown in an appendix to the consultation report.
- 35 The Commission proposes to review electoral arrangements generally throughout England during the next five years as part of a periodic electoral review it is required to undertake. In Hereford & Worcester, as elsewhere, this review will look further at the electoral arrangements proposed in this report.

LOCAL COUNCILS

- 36 The Commission considered that the structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester should build on the strong sense of identity with immediate neighbourhoods, as found by the MORI survey. It received a number of submissions suggesting how this might be achieved.
- 37 Since parish and town councils can be an important reflection of people's sense of identity with their community, the Commission believes that their role should be enhanced. This should include regular meetings with the principal local authorities, improved consultation on planning and highways issues and, where there is a demand from a local council, devolved management of local facilities such as sports grounds and libraries. Members of parish and town councils would also be well placed to help residents secure assistance or redress when faced with problems about local services. These proposals enlarge on existing practice, and reflect suggestions in many of the submissions to the Commission both nationally and locally.
- 38 The Commission does not envisage an increase in the statutory powers of parish and town councils, nor the establishment of another tier of local government. However, the Commission does see an important role for parish and town councils in empowering local communities. The Commission agreed with many of its respondents that a clear consultative framework should be established between principal local authorities and parish and town councils. This framework, or 'local charter', could ensure that parish and town councils have rights to the following:
 - (i) a clear statement of matters affecting the local community upon which they will be consulted, with the areas for consultation being widely drawn;
 - (ii) sufficient information from principal authorities about local matters on which local councils' views have been requested;
 - (iii) the right to a written explanation from a principal authority if it does not accede to the views of the parish or town council, as it may legitimately decide;
 - (iv) regular meetings between representatives of the principal authorities and the parish and town councils to discuss matters of common interest.
- 39 The Commission recognised that the enhanced role it proposes would require the creation of parish or, in the case of large towns or cities, neighbourhood councils for areas of the county that are currently unparished. At present Hereford & Worcester has a total of 432

parishes covering some 96 per cent of land area but only 53 per cent of the population. At the time the Commission published its draft recommendations, this had not been translated into a direct and widespread demand for local councils in the unparished areas of the county, in spite of the evidence of strong local identity.

- 40 The Commission did, however, receive representations concerning the parishing of a number of unparished areas of Hereford & Worcester:
- The Herefordshire districts of Hereford City, South Herefordshire and Leominster considered that a town council should be created for the existing area of Hereford City.
 - The Malvern Hills District Council proposed in its submission that the unparished area of Malvern should be parished. This area comprises mainly the areas of Great Malvern, Malvern Link and Barnards Green.
 - Within South Herefordshire, the Commission received a representation for the separation of two wards within the parish of Clehonger, with a new parish council being created from the eastern ward. This proposal was supported by South Herefordshire District Council who suggest that the new parish council be called Belmont Parish Council.
 - The Charter Trustees of the Town of Kidderminster submitted a request for the creation of a town council for Kidderminster. This proposal for the creation of a town council was supported by Wyre Forest District Council. The proposal included the utilisation of the existing eight district council wards of: Franche; Broadwaters; Habberley and Blakebrook; Greenhill; Offmore; Sutton Park; Aggborough and Spennells, and Oldington and Foley Park as the basis for the town council wards. It was proposed to elect three members per ward to give a town council of 24 councillors.
- 41 The Commission noted that, with a population of 55,000 comprising more than one fifth of the whole district, the population of Kidderminster exceeds the indicative limits outlined in Department of the Environment Circular 121/77. Nevertheless, in view of the level of local support expressed for the proposals at the first stage of the review, the Commission considered that it should consult on the creation of a parish for Kidderminster, indicating that evidence from local people on whether a parish should be established would inform its final recommendations.
- 42 The Commission has no power to recommend the establishment of parish councils; that is the prerogative of the Secretary of State or the appropriate district council. Nor may it make recommendations as to the electoral arrangements within any parished area for which a parish council has yet to be created. Nevertheless, the Commission felt it appropriate to indicate in its draft recommendations report what had been suggested to it in respect of such matters, and to seek the views of the public.
- 43 The Commission indicated that it would welcome comments about parishing from residents. Should it become evident that there is a demand for parishing generally, the Commission indicated that it would recommend to the Secretary of State that it should be directed to undertake an area electoral and boundary review, with a view to considering the parishing arrangements in the county.

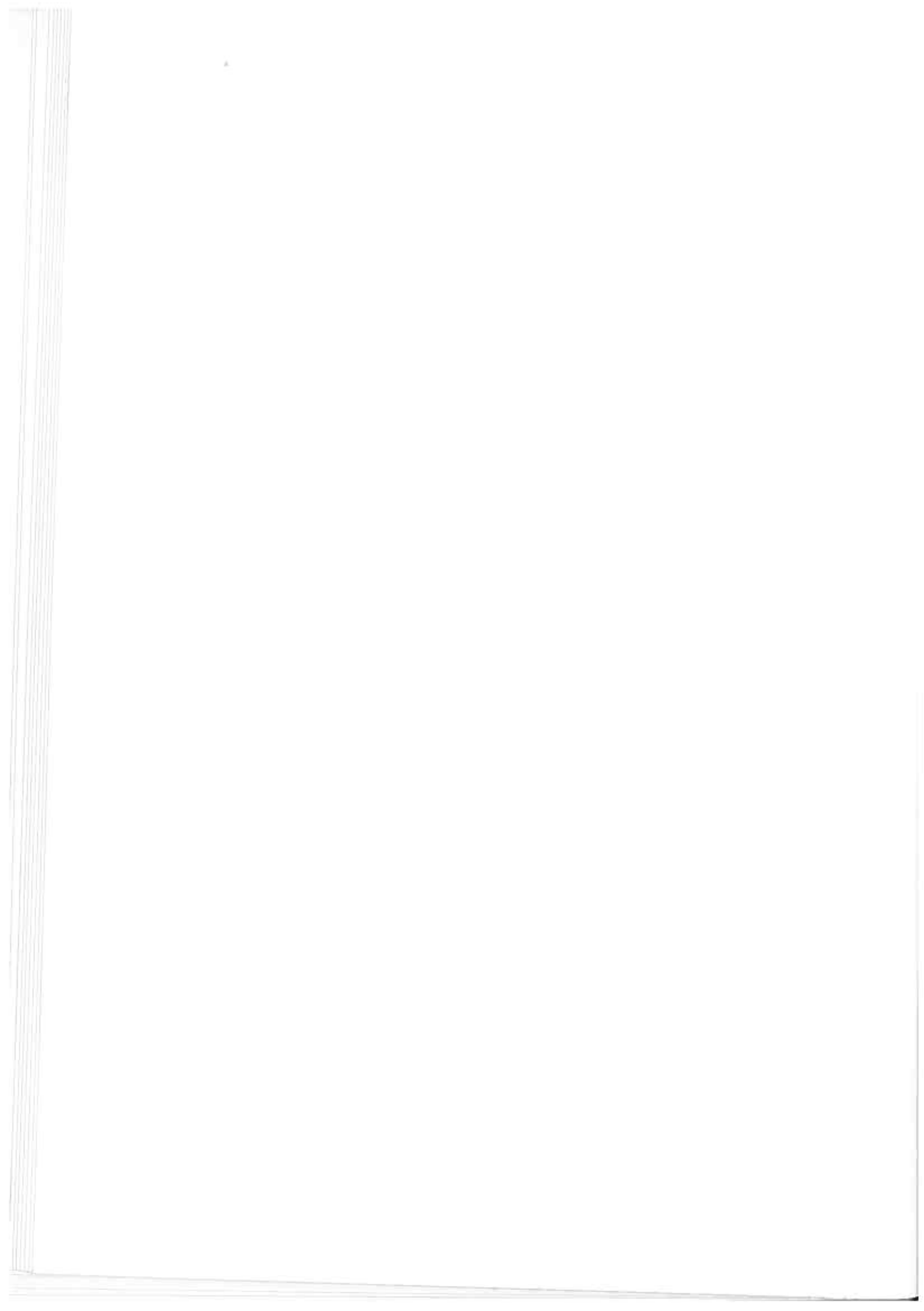
DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

A town council should be created for the unparished area of Kidderminster.

If there is clear local support for the parishing of areas in Hereford & Worcester which are not currently parished, the Secretary of State should be invited to direct the Commission to undertake a review in which the scope for further parishing can be considered.

In addition, there should be an enhanced consultative role for town and parish councils.

Elections for parish and town councils should, whenever possible, be held at the same time as elections for the principal authorities.



3 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

- 44 In response to its draft recommendation report, the Commission received over 54,000 written representations from residents, local authorities, Members of Parliament and public and private sector organisations. These included individual letters, proforma letters, petitions and returns of questionnaires. The Commission is most grateful to all who took the trouble to give their views on the future structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester.
- 45 All these representations, irrespective of their source or nature, have been carefully considered by the Commission and have been taken into account in its final recommendations. As required by the Secretary of State, a list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission and all representations may be inspected at the Commission's offices.

LOCAL RESIDENTS

- 46 Residents of Hereford & Worcester expressed their views on the Commission's draft recommendations either directly to the Commission or through local authorities, Members of Parliament or others. They also made their views known through a survey of public opinion conducted on the Commission's behalf by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI).
- 47 The Commission's public consultation was unprecedented in local government terms. To ensure that the Commission received as wide a variety of views as possible, it sought the views of residents by means of a leaflet with a detachable questionnaire delivered by the Royal Mail to households throughout the county. This was an ambitious task and some difficulties were experienced in ensuring that each household received a copy of the leaflet. These were remedied by using a variety of methods to ensure that the residents of Hereford & Worcester were aware of the Commission's draft recommendations and how to comment on them. The Commission is satisfied that all the residents of Hereford & Worcester have had the opportunity to make their views known.
- 48 Nevertheless, the Commission recognises that the response to the leaflets can give only a broad indication of the views of the public, some of whom may have been influenced, in some cases, by the publicity of the existing authorities and other bodies.

RESIDENTS' RESPONSES DIRECT TO THE COMMISSION

- 49 The Commission heard directly from over 51,000 members of the public resident in Hereford & Worcester. This represents 7.4 per cent of the population of Hereford & Worcester, although some residents may have written to the Commission and also signed a petition. The response rate was highest in Bromsgrove with 10,700 responses, representing

12 per cent of the population, and lowest in Wychavon with 5,272 responses representing 5 per cent of the population.

- 50 Approximately 300,000 household leaflets questionnaires outlining the Commission's draft recommendations were distributed to residents of the county. Some 30,000 questionnaires were returned to the Commission giving the views of some 49,500 individual residents. Over 1,900 individually written letters were also received.
- 51 NOP was commissioned to tabulate responses on behalf of the Commission, and these tabulations were published shortly after the conclusion of the consultation period. Copies may be obtained from NOP, Tower House, Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HN, price £5.00.
- 52 Figures 1 and 2 below summarise the views of members of the public as expressed direct to the Commission either in individual letters or through the household questionnaires. They do not include the views of those who submitted proforma letters or who signed or submitted petitions; these are summarised in paragraph 57.

Figure 1

VIEWS ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE: AN OVERVIEW

Structure	Number of responses	% of responses
Option 3 – unitary Herefordshire, two-tier Worcestershire	30,096	58
Option 1 – three unitary authorities	9,054	18
Option 2 – two unitary authorities	8,115	16
No change	935	2
Multiple choice	1,936	4
Other	730	1
No preference	588	1
Total	51,454	100

Source: NOP analysis, October 1994

Note:

1. In a number of responses, particularly to the questionnaire, residents did not express a preference for a single option: these the Commission classified as multiple choice returns.
2. This table includes all leaflets and letters analysed by NOP – whether from individuals or other consultees, including out of county responses.

Figure 2

VIEWS ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE: DISTRICT LEVEL ANALYSIS

Number and percentage of responses

Authority	Option 1 three unitary authorities	Option 2 two unitary authorities	Option 3 unitary Herefordshire, two-tier Worcestershire	Others	No Preference	Total
Bromsgrove	370 3%	1,548 14%	8,282 77%	464 4%	36 *	10,700
Hereford	1,274 42%	599 20%	1,017 33%	142 5%	15 *	3,047
Leominster	645 24%	542 20%	1,140 43%	316 12%	31 1%	2,674
Malvern Hills	1,841 27%	1,344 20%	2,694 39%	647 9%	337 5%	6,863
Redditch	316 5%	426 6%	5,452 80%	566 8%	22 *	6,782
South Herefordshire	1,395 38%	857 23%	1,215 33%	179 5%	31 1%	3,677
Worcester	828 12%	645 9%	5,294 74%	367 5%	19 *	7,153
Wychavon	1,758 33%	1,083 21%	2,174 41%	237 5%	20 *	5,272
Wyre Forest	537 11%	969 20%	2,728 55%	646 13%	46 1%	4,926
County Total	8,964 18%	8,013 16%	29,996 59%	3,564 7%	557 1%	51,094
Out of county	90 25%	102 28%	100 28%	37 10%	31 9%	360

Source: NOP analysis, October 1994

Notes:

* indicates a total of less than 1% support;

'others' includes multiple choice returns

53 The Commission's alternative structure of a unitary Herefordshire and a two-tier Worcestershire (option 3) was supported by the majority of respondents, with 59 per cent in favour overall. This structure also commanded the most support in every district except Hereford City, where 33 per cent supported it compared with 42 per cent in favour of option 1, and South Herefordshire (33 per cent support with 38 per cent for option 1).

54 However, option 1, the Commission's preferred structure of three unitary authorities, was supported by fewer than one in five respondents throughout the county as a whole, and the Commission's other alternative structure, option 2, commanded even less support with 16 per cent overall.

- 55 The analysis of views on structure by historic county (figure 3) shows that in Worcestershire there is a high level of support (65 per cent of respondents) for option 3, which would lead to the retention of a two-tier structure in Worcestershire. Support for options 1 and 2 amount to only 12 and 14 per cent respectively. In Herefordshire, where the three options all provide for a unitary Herefordshire, support for each option is fairly evenly divided, with 39 per cent for option 1, 23 per cent for option 2 and 31 per cent for option 3. Taken together 93 per cent of respondents support options which involve a unitary Herefordshire with only 6 per cent expressing an alternative view.

Figure 3

IEWS ON STRUCTURE: HISTORIC COUNTY ANALYSIS

Authority	Option 1 three unitary authorities	Option 2 two unitary authorities	Option 3 unitary Herefordshire, two-tier Worcestershire	Others	No Preference	Total
Herefordshire	3,912 39%	2,280 23%	3,137 31%	640 6%	90 1%	10,059 100%
Worcestershire	5,036 12%	5,723 14%	26,846 65%	2,924 7%	464 1%	40,993 100%

Source: NOP analysis, October 1994

- 56 The Commission paid close attention to all the views expressed during the consultation period. However, it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions about the attitudes of local residents from this part of the consultation programme alone as respondents may not be representative of residents as a whole. The same issue of representativeness applies to local authorities' consultation programmes. Several local authorities prepared leaflets setting out their views and providing information on local government structure. In some cases the leaflets included questionnaires which were returned to the local authorities. The county council provided the Commission with the results of its consultation exercise which showed 85 per cent of 20,000 responses in support of option 3. Redditch Borough Council also supplied the results of its leaflet survey which showed that 2,010 out of 2,022 people wished Redditch to continue to have its own borough council.
- 57 In addition, the Commission received 1,946 proforma letters, of which 1,624 (83 per cent) supported a unitary Herefordshire and a two-tier Worcestershire (option 3). The Commission also received four petitions totalling 977 signatures. The largest petition contained 929 signatures and supported the City of Worcester either having unitary status or remaining as an authority in a two-tier Worcestershire.

MORI SURVEY

- 58 In order to obtain a representative view of residents' attitudes towards change, the Commission engaged MORI to undertake an independent survey. MORI interviewed 2,880 residents aged 18 and over throughout Hereford & Worcester. All interviews were conducted between 5 August and 19 September 1994. A summary of the MORI survey findings is given in appendix B. A copy of the full tabulations may be obtained direct from MORI, 32 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 2HP, price £10.00.
- 59 Those interviewed were shown a copy of the Commission's household leaflet (with text indicating the Commission's recommendations being deleted) and were asked about each of the options for structural change. They were also given an opportunity to suggest other options. All respondents were therefore asked two questions about their preferences: first, they were asked to select one of the Commission's options; second, they were asked if there were any other options they would have preferred. By taking account of people's responses to both questions, a succinct summary can be prepared which best reflects people's views and preferences.
- 60 The methodology is as follows. Those who selected one of the Commission's options as their first preference, and then went on to say they did not have any other preference when offered an open choice, were described as 'firm' supporters of that option. Those who, having given their preference for one of the Commission's options, then went on to say there was actually another structure that they would prefer were reallocated to take account of this information. There were also those who expressed no view or preference to either question – these remained categorised as 'don't know'. Figure 4 below sets out the results of this analysis across the county and within individual districts.

Figure 4

SUMMARY OF RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES ON STRUCTURAL OPTIONS - 'FIRM SUPPORT'

Authority	Option 1 three unitary authorities	Option 2 two unitary authorities	Option 3 unitary Herefordshire, two-tier Worcestershire	No need to change	Other	Don't know
Bromsgrove	9	11	28	30	9	12
Hereford	11	27	21	4	17	20
Leominster	10	28	14	13	16	19
Malvern Hills	7	24	22	17	13	17
Redditch	8	10	27	35	9	11
South Herefordshire	9	17	13	9	31	21
Worcester	7	19	33	15	8	18
Wychavon	10	17	15	23	13	22
Wyre Forest	10	22	20	25	11	12
Hereford & Worcester	9	19	22	21	13	16

Source: MORI, September 1994

- 61 Figure 5 below shows the results of this analysis for the historic counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire separately.

Figure 5

SUMMARY OF RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES ON STRUCTURAL OPTIONS - 'FIRM SUPPORT'
HISTORIC COUNTY ANALYSIS

Authority	Option 1 three unitary authorities	Option 2 two unitary authorities	Option 3 unitary Herefordshire, two-tier Worcestershire	No need to change	Other	Don't know
Herefordshire	10	23	15	10	23	19
Worcestershire	9	17	24	24	10	16

Source: MORI, September 1994

- 62 In Worcestershire support for a two-tier structure, either in the form of option 3 or no change, was much greater than that for the options leading to a unitary structure in the 'traditional' county, particularly in the Worcestershire districts of Bromsgrove and Redditch. Overall the results indicate that option 3 and 'no need to change' each receive the support of 24 per cent of Worcestershire residents. By contrast, in Herefordshire MORI shows that only 10 per cent of residents desire no change, while 49 per cent support a structure involving a unitary Herefordshire.
- 63 Option 1, was the least popular of the Commission's options in every district. Option 2 received its strongest support in Hereford City and Leominster. These districts, however, lie wholly within the former county of Herefordshire. In the area of former Worcestershire support for this option totalled only 17 per cent overall.
- 64 There are some differences between the results of the MORI survey of a representative sample of local people and the views expressed by those who wrote to the Commission, either by completing questionnaires in the Commission's household leaflets or by letter. The main reason for this is that those who wrote to the Commission were a self-selecting group. In other words, those who submitted representations to the Commission were not representative of the population of the county area as a whole. In contrast, the research undertaken by MORI was designed to ensure that views were obtained from a representative cross-section of the population of Hereford & Worcester.
- 65 While both sources of information have been taken into account by the Commission in reaching its final conclusions, the Commission places more weight on the findings from the MORI survey given its representative nature. Nevertheless, the results of the representative sample survey of local people and the views of those who wrote to the Commission both indicate that Worcestershire residents have a preference for a two-tier system and that Herefordshire residents strongly support options that provide for a unitary Herefordshire.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 66 Figure 6 summarises the views of the Hereford & Worcester local authorities at the end of the consultation, as the Commission understands them.

Figure 6

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' PREFERENCES

Authority	Preference
Hereford & Worcester County Council	Option 3 (Unitary Herefordshire two-tier Worcestershire)
Bromsgrove District	Option 3
Redditch Borough	Option 3
Worcester City	Option 3
Wychavon District	Option 1 (Three unitary authorities)
Wyre Forest Borough	Option 3
Malvern Hills District	Option 3
Hereford City	Unitary Herefordshire
Leominster District	Option 3
South Herefordshire District	Option 1

Source: Local authority stage 3 submissions

- 67 Following the launch of the review the Hereford & Worcester branch of the Association of District Councils submitted a proposal for six unitary authorities: one for Herefordshire, and five in Worcestershire, with four of these based on existing district areas. In response to the consultation report the ADC branch now supports a unitary Herefordshire and considers that the view of Worcestershire people should prevail on a structure for Worcestershire. A number of local authorities have expressed their preference for one of the Commission's options, while retaining their initial support for a unitary authority on their existing district boundary.

LOCAL COUNCILS

- 68 Of the 72 parish and town councils that responded to the consultation report, 25 support option 3. Four councils supported option 2, 19 supported option 1, and 24 indicated some other structure or commented on non-structural matters. The County Association of Local Councils supported the formation of a unitary Herefordshire but did not comment on a structure for Worcestershire. The South Herefordshire Association of Local Councils supported option 1, and welcomed an enhanced consultative role for parish councils.

OTHER CONSULTEES

- 69 Three of Hereford & Worcester's seven Members of Parliament formally submitted their views in response to the Commission's draft recommendations. One indicated a preference for option 1 but would also reluctantly support option 3, though regarding it as 'a missed opportunity'. Another supported option 1. The third supported a unitary Herefordshire and, with reservations, a two-tier Worcestershire.

- 70 There were 29 submissions in total from the business community of which 5 favoured the draft recommendation of three unitary authorities, 4 expressed support for the retention of the two-tier structure, two supported option 2 and 1 supported option 3, seventeen supported other options or did not express a clear view on structural options. Eight indicated support for the emparishment of Malvern. Representations from the local chambers of commerce indicated support for all the Commission's options; with Ross-on-Wye Chamber of Trade and Industry supporting option 1 and requesting the Commission to reconsider the draft electoral arrangements for Herefordshire, the Redditch Chamber of Commerce and Industry requesting the Commission not to propose a forced merger between Redditch and Bromsgrove, but to reconsider unitary authority for those areas, and the Kidderminster Chamber of Commerce and Industry reluctantly supporting option 3, but asking the Commission to reconsider a unitary Wyre Forest. Hereford & Worcester Training and Enterprise Council favoured the Commission's draft recommendation of three unitary authorities (with Herefordshire to include Tenbury).
- 71 There were submissions from individual businesses which made particular reference to the work of the county council's trading standards department. They expressed reservations at the prospect of this service being fragmented as a result of the creation of unitary authorities smaller than the present county.
- 72 Respondents from the health services sector were generally in favour of one of the Commission's unitary structures. Herefordshire Health Authority and North Worcestershire Health Authority expressed support for option 1, with the Hereford & Worcester Family Health Services Authority indicating that any of the Commission's options could be made to work in Hereford & Worcester. The Chief Inspector of Social Services indicated that option 1 should be viable for providing personal social services.
- 73 A total of 35 national and regional bodies, including both voluntary and public sector organisations wrote to the Commission. There was little support for the Commission's options: only 5 favoured option 3, with just 1 in support of option 1. The largest number, 29, supported other options or did not express support for a particular structural option. The Hereford & Worcester Community Council supported the creation of a unitary authority for Herefordshire based on pre-1974 boundaries, with the future of the area of Tenbury to be determined by local opinion. The Community Council also expressed support for the parishing of all unparished areas of the county. The Redditch Council for Voluntary Service preferred a unitary Redditch but would be prepared to accept option 3 as a next-best solution.
- 74 The Herefordshire Diocesan Boards of Education and Social Responsibility requested that the Commission consider carefully its preferred recommendation for the creation of a unitary Herefordshire because of concerns over the provision of education, youth and community services in a sparsely populated rural authority.

4 THE COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS

- 75 The Commission has reassessed its draft recommendations in the light of its consultations and the results of the MORI opinion survey undertaken during the consultation period.
- 76 Any recommendations for change the Commission makes must satisfy the statutory criteria given in section 13(5)(a) and (b) of the 1992 Act. This stipulates that its recommendations must have regard to the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government. On occasion, this means striking a balance between the two criteria to ensure that one is not satisfied at the expense of the other.
- 77 Accordingly, in reaching its final conclusions on the future structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester, the Commission has had to exercise a degree of judgement in order to conform to the statutory criteria and to the Secretary of State's Policy Guidance (in particular the issues of identity, accessibility, responsiveness and democracy). In doing so, it has considered and weighed both the evidence which has been submitted, much of it conflicting, and that it has itself collected.
- 78 In order to determine whether there was still a case for structural change in Hereford & Worcester, the Commission reviewed the responses received during the consultation period in the light of these criteria.

THE IDENTITIES AND INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- 79 The MORI survey, summarised in appendix A, was carried out on behalf of the Commission during the initial stage of the review. It helped the Commission to assess patterns of community identity and interests, and indicated the strength of personal affiliation with various divisions of local government.
- 80 Throughout Hereford & Worcester, community identity is generally strongest in respect of the local neighbourhood or village, followed by the home town or nearest town. Attachment to local government areas, whether county or district, was less pronounced. The key points which emerged were that:
- (i) Hereford and Wyre Forest are the districts attracting strongest community affiliation. Residents of Redditch, Wychavon and Leominster are less likely to express allegiance to their district area;
 - (ii) allegiance to the county area is highest in Wyre Forest. Residents of Leominster are least likely to express strong identification with the county area; and
 - (iii) across Hereford & Worcester, respondents tend to be less likely to identify with the county than with the district area.

- 81 While the Commission has clear evidence of community identity and interests in the review area, it is not possible to create a local government structure which reflects all the indicators of such identity and interests. They have had to be balanced against a number of other factors.

EFFECTIVE AND CONVENIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 82 The Commission has assessed how particular local government services and functions are presently being delivered or exercised through the two-tier structure in Hereford & Worcester, and what might be the implications for each of them of moving to unitary local government structure. The concern most commonly expressed to the Commission has been the risk of fragmentation of services presently provided on a county-wide basis, and the loss of a county-wide strategic vision and capability. Against that, the Commission has needed to weigh the advantages that could flow from a unitary structure in bringing together related functions which are presently divided between county and district councils.
- 83 **Social services, housing and related functions.** The Commission believes that one test of effectiveness of a local government structure is the extent to which it will facilitate effective working relationships between social services departments, housing departments and health authorities. This is essential to the achievement of such important current initiatives as Care in the Community and Health of the Nation. It is also vital in order to coordinate measures for crime prevention and to overcome social alienation, which require active co-operation between district services (housing, environmental health, leisure, recreation, local planning, etc) and county services (social services, education, strategic planning, police, highways and transportation, etc). The structure also needs to provide a convenient and effective basis for involvement with other public bodies (such as the health trusts and health authorities, the training and enterprise councils, etc), and with the churches, voluntary organisations and the business community. The integration of such a wide range of interests within a single organisation would be impracticable, nor is it likely that each interest could be organised on common boundaries. Nevertheless, the integration of local county and district services into a single authority serving areas of reasonable cohesion and community would make it easier for non-local government interests to co-operate. In the Commission's view, this offers the prospect of major benefits.
- 84 **Land-use planning, highways and transportation.** Statutory land-use planning is an important issue which the Commission considered in detail in *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*. In Hereford & Worcester, the Commission recommended that with three new unitary authorities, the three should assume joint responsibility for structure planning for the county as a whole, and each authority should be responsible for the preparation of its own local plans. In the case of Herefordshire, however, the Commission sought views on whether a unitary authority there should be given the responsibility of preparing a separate strategic planning framework for its area. The Commission has received a number of representations on this matter. The development of public transport also demands increasing co-operation between public, commercial and voluntary organisations to meet

the interests of the environment, the general economy and the need to overcome individual community isolation.

- 85 **Heritage services.** In relation to other services, for example, libraries, archives, museums, and other heritage facilities, representations have generally agreed that a unitary Herefordshire and a unitary or a two-tier Worcestershire would provide an acceptable structure for these services. Respondents have also stressed the need for effective joint arrangements for specialist or strategic services, at present run on a county-wide basis, if they are to be split, and for adequate funding by Herefordshire. The Commission recognises the merit of these representations. The Commission is satisfied from the information before it that the existing authorities are aware of the need to make appropriate provision for the effective management of such services, and that they will co-operate in establishing the necessary mechanisms without the need for a formal recommendation by the Commission.
- 86 **Environmental issues.** The urgency now attending environmental issues reinforces the potential advantages to be gained by increasing co-operation among the planning, environmental health, education, recreation, and highways and transportation services of local government. In Hereford & Worcester there is a need for local government to be able to command adequate resources to accomplish effective liaison with other organisations such as the National Rivers Authority and the new Environmental Protection and Highways Agencies.
- 87 **Education** remains a key concern of the public and of local government. The successful local development of the economy will require close working relationships between local government, the major education institutions, the business community and, most notably, the training and enterprise councils. Again, the more these organisations are able to co-operate with one another, the greater is the prospect of success for the community's young people, including those with special educational needs.
- 88 The Commission believes that any structure of local government should allow voluntary organisations to continue to play a full part in providing local services. Voluntary organisations are not only important service providers, but also help develop strong, active and involved communities.
- 89 Many respondents expressed the view that structural change would lead to larger and more remote unitary authorities. However, the Commission is firmly of the opinion that convenient services do not necessarily depend on small-scale local government structures. Of more importance is the organisation of services and means of access to them. With the effective devolution of management responsibilities to the community level, and an enhanced representational and consultative role for parish and town councils, the Commission considers that a unitary authority for Herefordshire will be in a position to ensure improved access to, and efficiency of, services to the public.
- 90 Concerns have also been expressed that a restructuring would reduce the number of councillors, thereby increasing the workload on individuals and reducing their capacity to fulfil their roles effectively. However, it is worth noting that, where unitary authorities

replace a two-tier structure, there will be more, not fewer, councillors available to the public for the present county services, which represent 65 per cent of gross local government spending in the county and includes major services such as education. The Commission believes that more streamlined management and better support services can contribute to easing councillors' workload. A ratio of 1 councillor to around 4,000 residents, equivalent to rather less than 3,000 electors, is now in operation in metropolitan areas. However, in its recommendations, the Commission has recognised the rural nature of Herefordshire in determining appropriate electoral arrangements for that area.

- 91 Finally, the Commission has been assured by many in Hereford & Worcester's local government that improvements could be made to the existing two-tier structure. Many suggestions have been offered to achieve improvements: for example, avoiding duplication, co-ordinating resources, securing effective partnerships, improving consultation and establishing 'one-stop shops'. It is undoubtedly true that, in many instances the existing structure could be improved by such initiatives, many of which are already underway. However, they could equally be applied in a unitary structure to improve the effectiveness of local government and the convenience of its services.

COSTS AND SAVINGS

- 92 The Commission is required to consider the change in overhead costs which may result from changes in the structure of local government. This is not a straightforward matter and the issues concerned are discussed more fully in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*. Figure 7 below shows existing local government indirect expenditure (administrative overheads) based upon financial material provided by the local authorities in Hereford & Worcester. The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance only requires the Commission to look at indirect expenditure, since the level of direct service provision is largely independent of local government structure. Indirect expenditure usually represents only some 10 per cent of total local government spending. Figure 8 below shows the Commission's estimates of annual savings and transitional costs of each of the structural options detailed in its draft recommendations.

Figure 7
ESTIMATE OF EXISTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT INDIRECT EXPENDITURE

	£million
Staff costs (including associated overheads)	50
Accommodation	4
Information technology	14
Costs of democracy (members allowances etc)	1
Total of existing indirect expenditure	69

- 93 The county and district councils in Hereford & Worcester provided the Commission with their own estimates of the financial consequences of a range of structural alternatives. However, in order to secure a consistent approach, the Commission has applied the financial methodology developed by Ernst & Young and the Commission, as published in December 1993, to produce the estimates in figure 8. The figures are expressed as a range in order to reflect the broad nature of the estimates and assumptions involved.
- 94 The estimates for three unitary authorities (option 1) and the modified two-tier structure (option 3) shown in figure 8 differ from those given in appendix A to the Commission's draft recommendations report. These changes reflect views expressed to the Commission during the consultation period that the cost of replicating county services or diseconomies in the remaining county council area will be greater than the Commission originally anticipated.

Figure 8

COMPARISON OF THE INDIRECT COSTS OF EACH STRUCTURAL OPTION AGAINST EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS

Option	Annual Savings/ costs £million	Transitional costs £million	Payback period Years
Three unitary authorities	4 to 7 saving	22 to 25	4 to 7 years
Two unitary authorities	10 to 13 saving	28 to 31	3 to 4 years
Herefordshire unitary authority and two-tier for remainder of county	1 cost to 2 saving	6 to 9	at least 3 years*

* in the worst case transitional costs would never be paid back

- 95 The detailed figures on which the Commission's estimates are based have been published separately. Copies have been sent to the Secretary of State and to the principal authorities in the review area. Additional copies are available from the Commission on request.

CONCLUSIONS

- 96 In the light of all the further evidence it received during extensive consultation on its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester*, the Commission has reconsidered its draft recommendation and alternative structures.

UNITARY HEREFORDSHIRE

- 97 The proposal to create a unitary Herefordshire by returning to the pre-1974 boundaries was included in all the Commission's draft recommendations. The level of support expressed

during stage 3 has confirmed the desire in Hereford & Worcester county to return to separate counties for Herefordshire and for Worcestershire, and for the creation of a unitary authority for Herefordshire. In Herefordshire 49 per cent of MORI respondents support a Commission option, and only 10 per cent see no need to change. The NOP analysis shows that 93 per cent of respondents support the Commission's unitary options, with only 2 per cent 'writing in' no change.

- 98 During the initial stage of the review, support for the restoration of Herefordshire as a unitary authority on its traditional boundary was expressed by the county council, all the district councils with the exception of Malvern Hills district, and other organisations including the Herefordshire Health Authority. This level of support has been maintained during consultation on the Commission's draft recommendations, and Malvern Hills district have now 'concluded that there is strong local support for the creation of a unitary Herefordshire...'. A unitary Herefordshire would therefore be supported by the public and a number of key local authority and public sector champions, without which no change can realise the potential benefits of unitary local government.
- 99 In its consultation report, the Commission reflected the doubt expressed by some over the long-term viability of a unitary Herefordshire with responsibility for rural schools, highways and community care. While some reservations have been expressed during the consultation, particularly in respect of education, the Commission remains satisfied that the authority would be capable of providing the broad range of services.
- 100 The Commission has taken into account the widespread and high level of support for the creation of Herefordshire as a unitary authority and intends to recommend it to the Secretary of State. A unitary Herefordshire is therefore assumed in the consideration of the other structures for local government in the county which follows. Most of the stated opposition to the Commission's draft recommendations has related to how particular options address the structure for local government in Worcestershire.

THREE UNITARY AUTHORITIES

- 101 In its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford and Worcester* the Commission concluded that a structure of three unitary authorities (option 1) offered the best balance between community identity and effective and convenient local government in the county, performing well against all criteria and providing for authorities with a high degree of self sufficiency and co-terminosity with other bodies. This option creates two unitary authorities in Worcestershire: one for North Worcestershire comprising the existing districts of Wyre Forest (plus the Tenbury area from Leominster district), Bromsgrove and Redditch, and one for South Worcestershire comprising the existing districts of Worcester City, Wychavon and the eastern part of Malvern Hills.
- 102 The three unitary option has support from a wide range of sources, including, two district councils, Wychavon (who proposed this solution at stage 1) and South Herefordshire; two Members of Parliament, Herefordshire Health Authority, North Worcestershire Health Authority, Hereford & Worcester Training and Enterprise Council and Ross-on-Wye Chamber of Trade and Industry. Conversely, the representations received during stage 3

indicate that there is opposition from: Hereford & Worcester County Council and six district councils – Bromsgrove, Leominster, Redditch, Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wyre Forest. From among the business community concern at this option was also expressed by Kidderminster Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Redditch Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

103 Direct responses from the people of Hereford & Worcester as analysed by NOP are shown in figure 2. Overall these indicate that there is a low level of support for this option, at 18 per cent. While the residents in the Herefordshire district areas demonstrate a relatively high level of support for this option, support from residents in the Worcestershire district areas is very low except for Wychavon where the district council have promoted this option throughout the review. The Commission has given particular weight to the views of Worcestershire residents on this matter. The MORI results shown in figure 5 also indicate that, overall, there is a low level of support for this option. This is reflected in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire with 10 per cent and 9 per cent support respectively.

104 The Commission has concluded that while this structure could meet the requirement for convenient and effective local government, with annual savings of the order of £4 million to £7 million and transitional costs of between £22 million and £25 million being met within seven years, it does not command the support of local people.

TWO UNITARY AUTHORITIES

105 In its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford and Worcester* the Commission identified potential cost and service delivery benefits for this structure of two unitary authorities (option 2). This involved the creation of one unitary authority for the whole of Worcestershire. The Commission estimates that transitional costs, of between £28 million and £31 million could be met within four years with annual savings of the order of £10 million to £13 million. The Commission considered that the authority would have the potential to be a strong, robust and self sufficient authority, but that it would be likely to require special justification in order to meet the Commission's criteria. The Commission also expressed reservations over the perceived remoteness of one unitary authority for over 528,000 residents in Worcestershire. Nevertheless, the Commission decided to test the structure of two unitary authorities to see whether it would command support from the people in the area.

106 Early in the review MORI identified that more than half (58 per cent) of the residents of Hereford & Worcester supported the proposal for one council to provide services in the area rather than two (details are provided in appendix A). However this level of support for the unitary principle was not reflected in the response to the Commission's draft recommendations.

107 The NOP analysis shows that public support for two unitary authorities is low. Support is 16 per cent compared with 59 per cent support for a modified two-tier structure (option 3). However it performs as well as option 1, the Commission's preferred option for three unitary authorities, particularly in Worcestershire where 14 per cent of respondents support it.

Support for this option is at a similar level in the MORI survey at 19 per cent overall. As figure 5 shows, there is 17 per cent support in Worcestershire and 23 per cent in Herefordshire. However, in Worcestershire, this level of support is well below that for the two-tier alternative structure.

- 108 Option 2 has some support amongst the statutory consultees and other organisations that have made representations to the Commission, particularly those concerning heritage services. However, no principal council supports it as a first preference.
- 109 There would therefore appear to be little support for this option despite the potential advantages identified in cost and service delivery terms.

A MODIFIED TWO-TIER STRUCTURE

- 110 Option 3 retains the two-tier structure in Worcestershire comprising: Worcestershire County Council and districts based on existing district boundaries with the exception of Malvern Hills, the eastern part of which would become a new district council along with the Tenbury area. In its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester* the Commission determined to test this structure for Worcestershire as it would avoid the cost and disruption of a more extensive reorganisation, provide for the management of both strategic and local services, preserve the existing pattern of community identities and interests in Worcestershire, and recognise the identity of Herefordshire. It considered that the Worcestershire element of the present county, with a population of 528,000 could form a viable two-tier structure.
- 111 Residents' and stakeholders' views on the structure for Worcestershire have become clear during the stage 3 consultation process. Taking the support for option 3 and 'no change' together in the MORI results for Worcestershire, it is clear that the retention of a two-tier structure is substantially preferred to the unitary options, as figure 9 shows.

Figure 9
SUPPORT FOR TWO-TIER STRUCTURES IN THE WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICTS
percentage of respondents

	Bromsgrove	Redditch	Worcester	Wychavon	Wyre Forest	Malvern Hills
Option 3	28	27	33	15	20	22
No need to change	30	35	15	23	25	17

Source: MORI, September 1994

Note: The figures for option 3 and 'no change' may be considered together and demonstrate the high level of support for retaining the two-tier structure in Worcestershire.

- 112 The Commission has received representations in support of this structure from Hereford & Worcester County Council, six of the nine district councils and 25 parish councils (17 in Worcestershire).
- 113 The Commission undertook a MORI booster survey in the Tenbury area of Leominster district in order to establish public opinion concerning the final local government structure for this area, which was originally in Worcestershire, but in the 1974 reorganisation joined with the northern part of Herefordshire to form Leominster district. The results are shown in figure 10.

Figure 10

MORI BOOSTER SURVEY FOR TENBURY – FIRM SUPPORT

Options	percentage of respondents	
	Tenbury (Leominster)	Booster
3 unitary authorities		5
2 unitary authorities		10
Herefordshire unitary authority and two-tier for the rest of the county		24
No need to change		27
Other		4
None/don't know		30

Source: MORI September 1994

- 114 An additional question was asked in this booster survey: 'As part of the options for Hereford & Worcester, this area would be close to the boundary of two new authorities. Would you prefer this area to be part of a new Herefordshire authority, or a new authority covering part or all of Worcestershire?' The response to this question indicated 52 per cent support for Worcestershire and 22 per cent support for Herefordshire. On the basis of this evidence the Commission considers that there is an acceptable level of support for returning Tenbury to Worcestershire and that the clear preference of residents is for a two-tier rather than a unitary structure.
- 115 Notwithstanding the perceived potential benefits of unitary authorities it is clear that there is insufficient support from local authorities, other public bodies and the residents of Worcestershire for a change of local government structure at this time. Without effective 'champions' no new structure can realise the potential benefits of change. On the other hand the two-tier structure provides a framework in which both county and district affiliations can be expressed, and is likely to command the support of local authorities and residents in Malvern Hills and Tenbury who are affected by a change to the district tier of local government for their area.

- 116 In the Commission's view, the retention of a two-tier structure for Worcestershire, including the Tenbury area, would address the issues of identity, accessibility, responsiveness and democracy to which it has had regard in the conduct of the review. Having weighed the evidence, including the response to the consultation report, the Commission has concluded that convenient and effective local government and community identity and interests will be best served by a two-tier structure for Worcestershire.
- 117 However, having reviewed all the evidence before it and being guided by the statutory and other criteria, the Commission concludes that there is a case for change to the structure of local government in the county of Hereford & Worcester to provide a unitary authority for Herefordshire. Such a change would accord with the expressions of community identity and interest which have become apparent to the Commission through MORI opinion surveys and representations from local residents. The change would provide the potential to realise the benefit of a unitary local government structure for that county.

5 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 118 The final recommendations below reflect the views in the Commission's consideration of all the evidence it has received, including the responses to its consultation report, *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester*. The first section addresses the structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester; the second relates to the other matters on which the Commission consulted.

THE STRUCTURE

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 1

The existing county council for and county of Hereford & Worcester should be abolished and replaced by:

- (i) In the area of 'traditional' Herefordshire, that is the areas of the existing district councils of Leominster (less the Tenbury area), Hereford City, South Herefordshire and the western parts of Malvern Hills; the present two-tier structure should be replaced by a single unitary authority .
- (ii) In the rest of the county, that is in 'traditional' Worcestershire; there should be a two-tier structure of local government, comprising Worcestershire County Council; the district councils of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Worcester City, and Wychavon; and a new district council should be established for the eastern part of Malvern Hills district together with the Tenbury area of Leominster district.

- 119 In its progress report, *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*, the Commission expressed the view that all unitary authorities must be perceived to be new authorities so as to emphasise the fresh start which reorganisation offers to local government. This remains the Commission's view, but it is for the Secretary of State finally to determine whether a unitary Herefordshire or any of the authorities effected by this structural change should be new or continuing authorities.

- 120 The Commission made a draft recommendation in its consultation report for the existing county of Hereford & Worcester to be abolished and for the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire to be re-established for historic, ceremonial and other purposes, as well as for local government administration. It attracted little specific public comment, but was explicitly supported by the district councils of Malvern Hills, Redditch, South Herefordshire, Wychavon and Wyre Forest. The issue has no doubt been overshadowed by the question of structural change but the considerable support for the separation of the two parts of the existing county for administrative purposes, taken alongside the clear affiliation which Herefordshire people retain for their pre-1974 county, would indicate that there is strong support for the Commission's recommendation.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 2

The counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire should be re-established separately for ceremonial and related purposes, with the boundary between them being that which prevailed immediately prior to the 1974 reorganisation.

OTHER MATTERS

PUBLIC PROTECTION

- 121 In its consultation report, *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester*, the Commission indicated that the Government's guidance on police and fire services is explicit in requiring them to be carried out over an area no smaller than at present. Also mentioned was a separate exercise, in which the Government is developing new proposals for police authorities, the probation service and magistrates' courts. The Commission recommends that fire services should continue to cover the county area of Hereford & Worcester as at present, and a combined authority should be established on which representatives of the new unitary council for Herefordshire would serve together with representatives from Worcestershire County Council. For police services, the existing West Mercia police authority will require representatives from both Worcestershire County Council and from the new unitary authority for Herefordshire.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 3

There should be a combined authority established in the present county area for the fire service, on which representatives of the new council for Herefordshire together with representatives of Worcestershire County Council should serve. Representatives of the new unitary authority for Herefordshire should also serve on the present West Mercia police authority. No changes are proposed to the probation and magistrates' courts services.

PLANNING

- 122 The Commission is concerned that strategic land-use planning for the county of Hereford & Worcester should not be undermined by changes in the structure of local authorities. This is fully discussed in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*. The Commission is invited by legislation to consider whether unitary authorities should be empowered to prepare unitary development plans, rather than the present structure plans and local plans. In its report *The Future Local Government of Hereford & Worcester* the Commission believed that under the recommended structure there was a need for the existing structure planning and local planning systems to be maintained across the area of Hereford & Worcester, although the Commission invited further evidence on this matter.

- 123 During the consultation period the Commission received a number of submissions from those with an interest in the planning framework for Hereford & Worcester including the Hereford & Worcester County and District Planning Officer's Group, the county council, a number of district councils and national organisations with an interest in countryside planning. On the basis of these submissions, and having regard to the factors described in its progress report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires* the Commission is satisfied that a unitary Herefordshire would be sufficiently self contained to justify a separate strategic planning framework. This would obviate the need for joint arrangements. The Herefordshire authority and Worcestershire County Council would nevertheless be able to cooperate as necessary, for example in the maintenance of particular specialist expertise, and the Commission would not wish to see such expertise unnecessarily broken up.
- 124 The Commission is invited by the Act to recommend whether new unitary authorities should be empowered to prepare unitary development plans, or whether the present two-tier planning structure should remain. The majority of submissions have argued for a structure plan and local plan system, although the county council expresses some doubt that local plan coverage will be necessary for the whole of Herefordshire, particularly in the more sparsely populated rural areas. In its progress report, the Commission recognises the potential benefits of a two-tier planning structure particularly across the areas of more than one unitary authority where planning issues are interdependent even though joint arrangements would be necessary to maintain the structure plan. In the case of Herefordshire however, the county is relatively self contained and much of the county is sparsely populated with limited development pressure. Part of the area of Herefordshire is a rural development area and is designated for European funding. The Commission believes that there is no demonstrable need for insisting that the new authority should prepare and maintain a separate structure plan and local plans. A unitary development plan would make for greater speed and efficiency in plan making, allowing strategic policies to be developed in part I, and would be capable of dealing satisfactorily with detailed policies and proposals under part II. The Commission has therefore concluded, on balance, that the planning needs of Herefordshire would be best met by the preparation of a unitary development plan.
- 125 For Worcestershire, where the Commission recommends the retention of the two-tier local government structure, there would be no change to the present arrangements for structure planning and local planning, except for consequential changes to the area of local plan coverage in the new district comprising East Malvern Hills and Tenbury.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 4

In the unitary authority area of Herefordshire, the new council should have responsibility for all planning matters. It should be empowered to prepare a unitary development plan under Part II (Chapter I) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in place of a structure plan and local plans under Part II (Chapter II).

No change to current planning functions are proposed for the two-tier structure retained in Worcestershire.

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 126 The Commission consulted on its draft proposals for councillor representation for each of the three options. The electoral arrangements for a unitary Herefordshire comprising multi-member wards based on the present county divisions, attracted a significant amount of criticism. Submissions opposing the proposal included those from the district councils of South Herefordshire, Hereford City and Leominster. Opposition to the proposed electoral arrangements in Herefordshire was also expressed by several parish councils and individuals. Most submissions on this subject expressed a preference for single-member wards and many expressed concern at the geographical size of county divisions in a sparsely populated rural area.
- 127 The Commission has therefore reconsidered its initial proposals, and considered further an electoral scheme that was produced jointly by the Herefordshire districts. Further information on this scheme has been submitted by the districts during the consultation period. In view of this, and the evidence of opposition to wards based on the existing county divisions, the Commission will base its final recommendation on this jointly produced scheme.
- 128 The joint scheme provides for the wards of the unitary Herefordshire authority to be based on existing district wards or combinations of them. There will be 28 single-member wards and 16 two member wards, giving a total of 60 members. Full details of the proposed Herefordshire electoral arrangements are given in appendix C.
- 129 The Commission also included in its consultation report a proposal for electoral arrangements in a two-tier Worcestershire. The total number of county councillors would be reduced from 76 to 57 as a result of the creation of a separate unitary Herefordshire. Three county divisions would be amended to take account of the historic boundary with Herefordshire. The county council electoral arrangements would otherwise remain unchanged. The electoral arrangements for the Worcestershire districts would also remain unchanged except that a new district covering east Malvern Hills and Tenbury would be created. It is proposed that the warding for this authority should be based on existing district wards amended to take account of the boundary with Herefordshire.
- 130 The electoral arrangements for a two-tier Worcestershire attracted little comment. Leominster District Council, however, alerted the Commission to the erroneous inclusion of the Herefordshire parts of Hatfield ward in the new Malvern Hills and Tenbury district. A corrected version of the electoral arrangements for the new district is shown in appendix C, alongside those for the county divisions effected by the boundary change.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 5

- a) The council for the unitary authority of Herefordshire should initially comprise 60 councillors serving 44 wards with all councillors being elected every four years.
- b) Electoral arrangements in the Worcestershire districts should remain unchanged, except for the new district for eastern Malvern Hills and Tenbury.
- c) The new district for eastern Malvern Hills and Tenbury should have a council comprising 43 members representing 27 wards based on existing district wards amended to account for the boundary with Herefordshire. Elections should be to the whole council every four years.
- d) Worcestershire County Council should comprise 57 members serving the 57 electoral divisions in the area, amended to take account of the new boundary with Herefordshire. Elections should continue to be for the whole county every four years.

These recommendations are shown in detail in Appendix C.

LOCAL COUNCILS

- 131 The Commission recognises that the enhanced role it proposes for local councils would require the creation of either parish or town councils for areas of the county that are unparished, only 4 per cent of the land area but just over 47 per cent of the electorate. The MORI survey undertaken on behalf of the Commission found that 72 per cent of respondents agreed that town and parish councils should be set up, where they do not exist, if local people want them.
- 132 The Commission's consultation report proposed the creation of a town council for the unparished area of Kidderminster. The Commission had previously received a petition of 2,777 signatures and some 50 individual letters in support of such a town council. Support at the initial stage of the review also came from Wyre Forest District Council, and the Hereford & Worcester ADC branch submission indicated that there should be a town council for Kidderminster as part of the proposed six unitary council structure.
- 133 Following the publication of the Commission's consultation report Wyre Forest District Council reiterated their support for a Kidderminster town council in the event of either a unitary or a two-tier structure of local government being recommended. Some 100 individual letters in support were received along with 162 proforma letters requesting a town council and a unitary Wyre Forest authority. This proposal was supported by the Hereford & Worcester County Association of Local Councils. There were 4 representations in opposition to parishing the area.
- 134 The Commission has carefully considered the submissions made to it. The population of the unparished area of the town, at 55,000, substantially exceeds the indicative limits outlined in Department of the Environment circular 121/77, and comprises approximately 57 per

cent of the population of the district council area. The number of representations in support of this proposal, particularly in response to the Commission's draft recommendation, is not large bearing in mind the population of the potential parish area. Further, the Commission is now recommending the retention of the two-tier structure for this area rather than the unitary structure originally proposed. Taking account of all the relevant factors the Commission does not feel able to confirm its draft recommendation.

- 135 Nevertheless, on the basis of the evidence to date, it considers that the possible parishing of Kidderminster merits further detailed consideration. The Commission invites the Secretary of State to consider directing it to undertake a subsequent review to address the parishing issues raised in this report in relation to Kidderminster.
- 136 The Commission's consultation report also invited views on whether parishes should also be created for any other unparished areas of the county, and undertook to reflect the response in its final report. The report mentioned that the Commission had received representations for the parishing of Hereford City, the unparished area of Malvern and for the creation of a separate parish for the eastern part of the parish of Clehonger to be known as the parish of Belmont. The latter formed one of a number of outstanding parishing issues in South Herefordshire to which the Secretary of State asked the Commission to give further consideration following an earlier review by the Local Government Boundary Commission.
- 137 Following publication of the consultation report the Commission received some 592 individual representations in favour of a town council for Malvern. Malvern Hills District Council had supported the proposal in its earlier submission to the Commission. Its second submission included the results of a telephone survey of 505 residents which showed that 72 per cent supported a town council for Malvern, with just 10 per cent in opposition. The submission also enclosed a 700 signature petition in favour of a parish. Support was also expressed by the Hereford & Worcester County Association of Local Councils.
- 138 The Commission recognises that this parish would exceed the indicative limits in circular 121/77, although it would be of a similar size to some existing parishes. The Commission is satisfied that there is substantial support for creating a parish council for the unparished area of Malvern and therefore recommends the creation of a parish for this area.
- 139 The creation of a parish for Hereford City attracted only one submission from the public, but was supported in the stage 1 joint submission from the Herefordshire districts and in the stage 3 submissions of Hereford City and South Herefordshire. The Hereford & Worcester County Association of Local Councils also supported this proposal. The submission from Hereford City argues that emparishment of the City is necessary if there is to be a unitary Herefordshire because the city's residents would 'be left with no more local unit of government than a council responsible for the whole county of Herefordshire'. The Commission is sympathetic to the parishing of Hereford within a unitary authority for the whole of Herefordshire, and it is understandable that given the nature of the Commission's consultation processes, the issue of parishing may have been given a low priority by residents. Nevertheless it does not seem appropriate to recommend the parishing of Hereford on the basis of the representations received in the current review. Taking all the

relevant factors into account the Commission does not feel able to recommend a parish for Hereford at the present time.

- 140 The Commission does, however, consider that the possible parishing of Hereford merits further consideration in the event of a change to a unitary structure of local government. In such circumstances, the Commission invites the Secretary of State to consider directing it to undertake a subsequent review to address the parishing issues raised in this report in relation to Hereford. It is open to any interested party to make representations to the Secretary of State asking him to direct the Commission to undertake this or any other review.
- 141 An earlier parish review of South Herefordshire was originally put forward for public consultation between 14 June 1993 and 9 August 1993. Owing to the acceleration of the structural review of the English shires the draft recommendations to the Secretary of State were not published in December 1993 as originally envisaged. In its consultation report published in July 1994, the Commission invited comments from residents on the subject of parishing, and in particular outlined the proposal for the creation of a new parish of Belmont.
- 142 The proposed Belmont parish attracted the support of the Member of Parliament for the area, South Herefordshire District Council and Clehonger Parish. Public support amounted to only a few submissions, but there was no opposition. It should also be noted that a 30 signature petition was submitted by Belmont residents during the earlier consultation. However, the Commission concludes that it would not be appropriate to recommend the creation of a new parish on the basis of the representations received in the current review, which have not shown substantial local public support.
- 143 The Commission does not intend to make any recommendation on any of the possible parish boundary changes received during the 14 June 1993 to 9 August 1993 consultation period. The consultation process during this review of English shire counties concentrated on structural issues and the Commission does not believe that with such a dominant theme justice could have been done to the very local and detailed matters which a secondary parish review entails. The Commission therefore considers that the Secretary of State may wish to direct the Commission to undertake a review of parishing in this area at some future date.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 6

A parish should be created for the unparished area of Malvern.

- 144 As indicated in paragraph 42, the Commission has no power to make recommendations in relation to the electoral arrangements for any new parish councils which may be established as a consequence of its final recommendation for the parishing of this area. Nevertheless, the Commission's consultation report provided details of the electoral arrangements suggested to it by respondents. Given their powers in respect of electoral arrangements in parish areas, the Commission's conclusions may be of assistance to the Secretary of State and to the new district council for eastern Malvern Hills and Tenbury.

- 145 The Commission is satisfied that the electoral arrangements set out in appendix D would provide an equitable level of electoral representation in the proposed parish and commends them to the Secretary of State. The Commission is also strongly of the view that any parish council elections for this area should be held on the same cycle as elections to the new district council.
- 146 Since parish and town councils can be important vehicles for the expression of local community identity, the Commission believes that their role should be enhanced, whether or not there is a change to unitary structures. This should include regular meetings with the principal authorities, improved consultation on planning and highways issues and, where appropriate, devolved management of local facilities. Members of parish and town councils would be well placed to help residents secure assistance or redress when faced with problems about local services. These proposals enlarge on existing practice, and reflect suggestions in many of the submissions to the Commission, both nationally and locally.
- 147 No increase in the statutory powers of parish and town councils is envisaged, nor the establishment of another tier of local government. However, the Commission agreed with many of its respondents that a clear consultative framework should be established between principal local authorities and parish and town councils. This framework is set out in paragraph 38 of this report.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 7

There should be an enhanced consultative role for all town and parish councils.

* * *

NEXT STEPS

- 148 Having completed its review of Hereford & Worcester and submitted its final recommendations to the Secretary of State, the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1992.
- 149 It now falls to the Secretary of State, if he thinks fit, to give effect to the Commission's recommendations with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order which will be subject to debate in both Houses of Parliament. Such an Order will not be made earlier than a period of six weeks from the date the Commission's recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 150 All further representations and correspondence concerning the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State, who will take them into account before reaching a conclusion on the Commission's recommendations. Representations should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State for the Environment
Local Government 1 Division
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street,
London SW1P 3EB

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF MORI FINDINGS ON COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Extract from the Commission's draft recommendations report

RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TO CHANGE

Local attitudes to change are important. It has generally been the Commission's experience that, in principle, residents favour a single-tier system of local government, although there are some review areas where support for such a system has proved to be weak. When residents are given choices for unitary structures, it can be difficult to translate support for the unitary principle into support for specific unitary structures.

As part of market research on community identity in Hereford & Worcester, MORI sought the views of local residents on the principle of unitary authorities. More than half the residents (58 per cent) supported the proposal for one council to provide services in the area rather than two. Only one in five (22 per cent) expressed opposition. One in five (20 per cent) did not have an opinion either way. In all districts, support for unitary authorities outweighed opposition though to varying degrees. The level of net support was highest in Hereford and lowest in Wyre Forest. Overall residents of the area are enthusiastic supporters of the unitary principle.

THE IDENTITIES AND INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The Commission considered it helpful to establish baseline information on the priorities people attach to the various factors that will influence local government structure. MORI was commissioned to survey public opinion throughout the areas of England subject to review.

This survey enabled the Commission to gauge the relative importance the public gives to major factors that will influence government structure. Responses to the question 'which three of these factors, if any, do you think should be most important in deciding the local government structure in your area?' are presented in figure A1. The survey reveals that quality of services and responsiveness to local people's wishes score most highly in people's concerns; conversely, historic or traditional boundaries are of less concern.

When asked what was the single most important factor, 28 per cent of the respondents identified quality of services; 27 per cent, responding to local people's wishes; 14 per cent, accountability and 12 per cent, the cost of services. No other factor was identified by more than 3 per cent of respondents.

Figure A1

FACTORS DETERMINING LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Percentage of respondents mentioning each factor

Quality of services	64
Responding to local people's wishes	58
Cost of services	44
Accountability	36
Ease of contacting the council	20
Sense of local community	18
Access to local communities	18
Level of information about the council and its services	16
Size of population covered	10
Historic or traditional boundaries	6
Don't know/other	4

Source: MORI, December 1993

Figures and summarise the key findings of the MORI survey in Hereford & Worcester. Figure A2 shows that throughout Hereford & Worcester, community affiliation is generally strongest in respect of the local neighbourhood or village, followed by the home town or nearest town. Attachments to the local government areas of the districts are less pronounced and to the county much less pronounced. A similar pattern of community identity was found in the other English counties.

Figure A2

COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN HEREFORD & WORCESTER: AN OVERVIEW

Question: 'How strongly do you feel that you belong to each of the following areas?'

Percentage of respondents

	Very strongly	Very/fairly strongly
This neighbourhood/village	35	77
Town/nearest town	29	72
District/borough area	19	62
County council area	12	48

Source: MORI, February 1994

Figure A3 illustrates the variation, by district, of community affiliations. Key points to emerge are:

- (i) Hereford and Wyre Forest are the districts attracting strongest community affiliation. Residents of Redditch, Wychavon and Leominster are less likely to express allegiance with their district area.
- (ii) Allegiance to the county area is highest in Wyre Forest. Residents of Leominster are least likely to express strong identification with the county area.
- (iii) Across Hereford & Worcester, respondents tend to be less likely to identify with the county than with the district area.

Figure A3

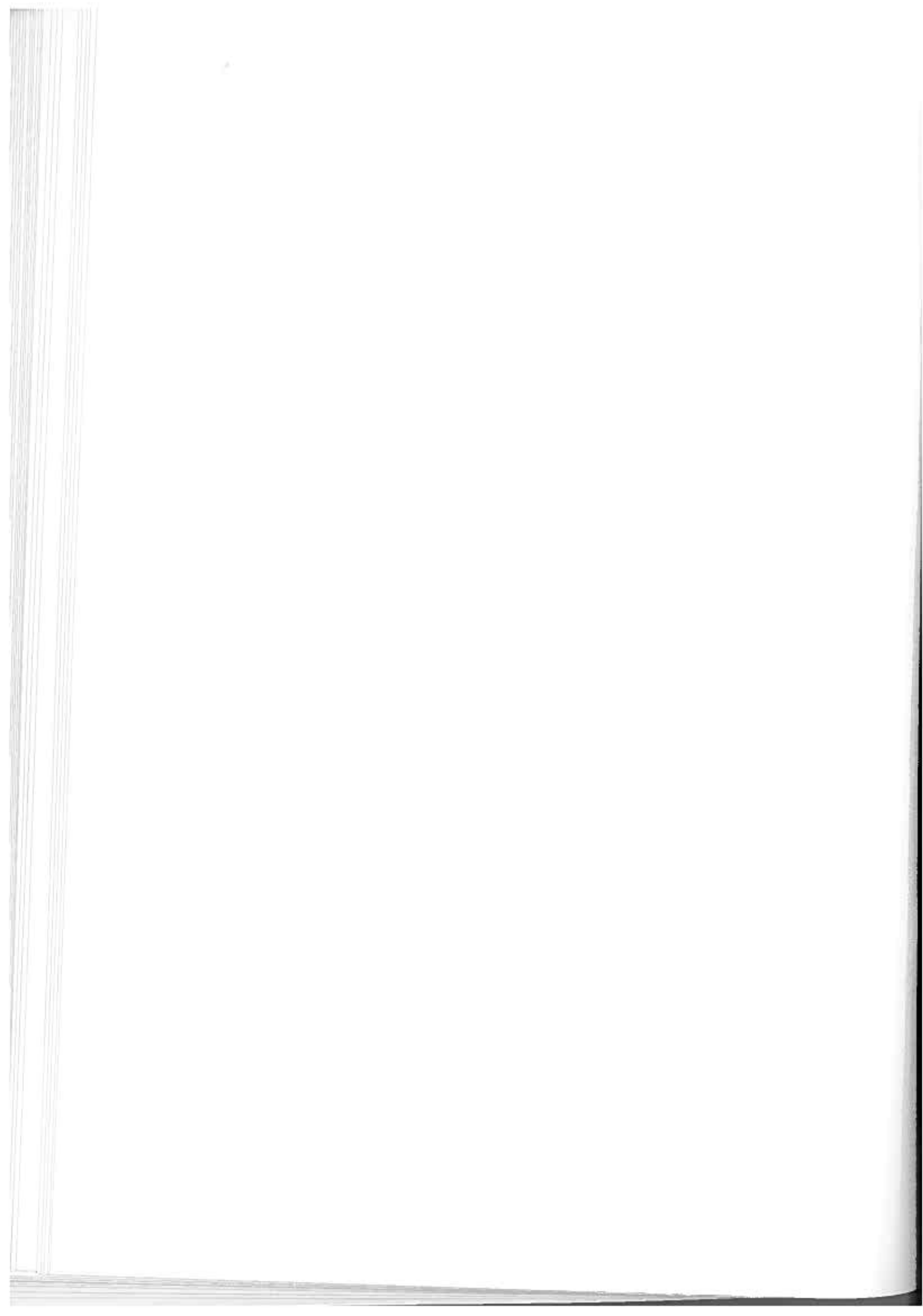
COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN HEREFORD & WORCESTER

Question: 'How strongly do you feel that you belong to each of the following areas?'

Percentage of respondents belonging 'very or fairly strongly'

Authority	Neighbourhood/ village	Town/nearest town	District council area	County council area
Bromsgrove	79	64	63	53
Hereford	73	88	73	40
Leominster	79	62	50	35
Malvern Hills	79	69	62	48
Redditch	82	75	53	40
South Herefordshire	80	78	66	36
Worcester	72	82	67	45
Wychavon	78	70	54	49
Wyre Forest	72	68	69	64

Source: MORI, February 1994



APPENDIX B

Local Government Structure in Hereford & Worcester

**RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED FOR
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR
ENGLAND
OCTOBER 1994**

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Local Government Commission for England

FROM: MORI Local Government Research Unit

DATE: 7 October 1994

RE: Public attitudes to Local Government structure in Leicestershire

TECHNICAL NOTE

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 2,880 adults aged 18+ across Hereford and Worcester. All Census enumeration districts (EDs) in the county were sorted into districts and, within district, ranked by percentage professional/managerial households. At this stage, 24 EDs were selected in each district, with a probability of selection proportional to the size of the population of each. Quota controls were set for each sampling point, by gender, age and work status using 1991 Census data. Around 300 interviews were achieved in each district, and at the analysis stage the data were weighted to account for the population profiles of each district and the relative population sizes.

In addition, booster samples were included in the Tenbury area of Leominster and the Herefordshire side of Malvern Hills in order to bring the total interviews conducted in each of these areas to about 100.

MAIN FINDINGS

- No majority preference for any of the three Commission Options - either across the county or within any district.
- Between one in five and one in ten express firm support for each of the three Options as the one they prefer. One in five express unprompted support for the status quo.
- No majority agreement on which option would be worst - either across the county or within any district.

DETAILS

- Around six in ten (59%) name Hereford and Worcester as their County Council.
- Between seven and eight in ten correctly name their District Council, except in South Herefordshire, where this figure is lower.

Q. What is the name of the Borough/District Council for this area?

	%
Bromsgrove District	80
Hereford City	70
Leominster District	80
Malvern Hills District	74
Redditch Borough	79
South Herefordshire District	56
Worcester City	75
Wychavon District	69
Wyre Forest District	68

- Just one in six (17%) say they have never heard of the Review, although depth of knowledge remains low - just two per cent of residents say they know "a great deal" about the Review, and 14% know "a fair amount".
- The options for change were presented as on the Commission leaflet, modified to remove the text indicating the Commission's recommendation.

In summary:

One: Three new unitary councils (Herefordshire, North Worcestershire and South Worcestershire).

Two: Two new unitary councils (Herefordshire and Worcestershire).

Three: One unitary council in Herefordshire, with the two-tier structure retained in Worcestershire.

- There is no majority support for any of these options.

Q Please tell me which of these options, if any, you would most prefer?

		Option One	Option Two	Option Three	None of These	Don't Know
HEREFORD & WORCESTER	%	11	23	30	14	21
Bromsgrove	%	12	13	42	14	19
Hereford	%	15	32	25	6	21
Leominster	%	11	32	19	18	20
Malvern Hills	%	10	31	28	14	17
Redditch	%	11	13	46	15	15
South Herefordshire	%	13	21	18	16	32
Worcester	%	8	24	40	10	19
Wychavon	%	11	24	21	14	30
Wyre Forest	%	13	26	27	18	16

- Offered the opportunity to name "other" options that they preferred (but with no particular options prompted), around two-thirds say either that there are none (47%) or that they do not know (20%). The proportions preferring another option are as follows:

Q What other options, if any, would you prefer to those I have shown you?

		No need to change	Some other preference
HEREFORD & WORCESTER	%	21	13
Bromsgrove	%	30	9
Hereford	%	4	17
Leominster	%	13	16
Malvern Hills	%	17	13
Redditch	%	35	9
South Herefordshire	%	9	31
Worcester	%	15	7
Wychavon	%	23	13
Wyre Forest	%	25	11

- All respondents are, therefore, asked two questions about their preferences: first, they are asked to select one of the Commission's options; second, they are asked if there are any other options that they would prefer.

By taking account of people's responses to both questions we can prepare a succinct summary which best reflects people's views and preferences.

The methodology is as follows: those who select one of the Commission's options as their first preference with the prompted list, and then went on to say that they do not have any other preference when offered an open choice, are described as "firm" supporters of that option.

Those who, having given their preference for one of the Commission's options, then went on to say there was actually another structure that they would prefer (which might have been the status quo, for example) are re-allocated to take account of this information.

There are also those who express no view or preference at both the Commission's options question and the unprompted open choice question. These people remain categorised as "Don't know". The table below sets out the results of this analysis across the County and within individual districts.

Firm Support

		Option One	Option Two	Option Three	No need to change	Other	Don't know
HEREFORD AND WORCESTER	%	9	19	22	21	13	17
Bromsgrove	%	9	11	28	30	9	13
Hereford	%	11	27	21	4	17	19
Leominster	%	10	28	14	13	16	19
Malvern Hills	%	7	24	22	17	13	17
Redditch	%	8	10	27	35	9	12
South Herefordshire	%	9	17	13	9	31	20
Worcester	%	7	19	33	15	8	19
Wychavon	%	10	17	15	23	13	23
Wyre Forest	%	10	22	20	25	11	12

- Within each district, it is feasible to add figures horizontally where the outcome of more than one option is the same for the district concerned. For example, all three Options entail a unitary Herefordshire; therefore, the figures for firm preference of these options can be added together for residents in Hereford and South Herefordshire. However, such combinations should always be treated with caution, as it may be that respondents' preferences are at least partly based on what would happen **outside** of the district in which they live.
- Although there is no majority opinion, Option One is most commonly selected as the least preferred option.

Q Which, if any, of the options shown here would you least prefer?

		Option One	Option Two	Option Three	None of These	Don't Know
HEREFORD AND WORCESTER	%	22	10	16	21	31
Bromsgrove	%	30	15	7	19	28
Hereford	%	14	5	29	12	40
Leominster	%	13	6	27	25	30
Malvern Hills	%	24	10	16	23	26
Redditch	%	33	17	13	9	27
South Herefordshire	%	8	10	16	22	44
Worcester	%	26	8	12	24	30
Wychavon	%	16	6	14	20	44
Wyre Forest	%	20	9	17	34	19

- Seven in ten (72%) support the principle of setting up town or parish councils where people want them. This is broadly consistent throughout the county.

STATISTICAL RELIABILITY

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population", so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the "true" values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval":

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
100 interviews	± 6	± 9	± 10
300 interviews	3	5	6
1,000 interviews	2	3	3
1,500 interviews	2	2	3
2,880 interviews	1	2	2

For example, with a sample size of 300 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of ± 5 percentage points from the sample result.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real," or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - ie if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the differences between the two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
300 and 300	± 5	± 7	± 8
1,500 and 1,500	3	4	4
1,500 and 300	4	6	7
2,800 and 300	4	5	6

MARKED-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

OPTIONS RESEARCH (Hereford & Worcester)

FIELDWORK: 5 AUGUST - 19 SEPTEMBER 1994

N = 2,880 RESPONDENTS AGED 18+ (Main sample only)

SAMPLE STRATIFIED BY DISTRICT

DATA WEIGHTED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF POPULATION PROFILE

Gender	%
Male .....	.48
Female .....	.52

Age	%
18-24 .....	.12
25-34 .....	.18
35-44 .....	.18
45-54 .....	.18
55-64 .....	.14
65-74 .....	.13
75+ .....	.7

WRITE IN AGE

--	--

Work Status	%
Full-time (30 hrs/wk+) .....	.48
Part-time (8-29 hrs/wk) .....	.10
Not working (under 8 hrs) .....	.3
Looking after home/children .....	.9
Retired .....	.22
Registered unemployed .....	.3
Unemployed but not registered .....	.1
Student .....	.3
Other .....	.1

Occupation of Chief Income Earner (CIE)
Position/rank/grade

.....

Industry/type of company

.....

Qualifications/degrees/apprenticeship

.....

No of Staff Responsible for

.....

PROBE FOR CIE/PENSION	%
AB .....	.19
C1 .....	.30
C2 .....	.25
D .....	.15
E .....	.12

Number in Household
Adults aged 18+ (inc. respondent)

16%	60%	17%	6%	1%
1	2	3	4	5+

Children (17 or under)

63%	14%	16%	4%	2%
0	1	2	3	4+

QA Are you or other members of your household employed by a council?
IF YES: Is this a Borough/District/City Council or a County Council?
CODE FOR BOTH RESPONDENT AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

	Respondent	Other
	%	%
Yes:		
Borough/District/City .....	.2	.2
County .....	.4	.4
Don't know which	*	*
No .....	.93	.84
Don't know .....	.1	.10

Tenure	%
Owned outright .....	.31
Buying on mortgage .....	.47
Rented from Council .....	.14
Rented from Housing Association .....	.2
Rented from private landlord .....	.4
Other .....	.2

QB Is this your main permanent home, or is it a second or holiday home?

	%
Main/permanent .....	.99
Second/holiday .....	.1

Car in Household
CIRCLE NUMBER

15%	45%	31%	9%
0	1	2	3+

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION: I confirm that I have conducted this interview face-to-face with the above named person and that I have asked all the relevant questions fully and recorded the answers in conformance with the survey specification and the MRS Code of Conduct.

Interviewer Name Signature

Interviewer Number /

Month Date
DATE OF INTERVIEW

NB INTERVIEWER: ALL SHOWCARDS HAVE BEEN REVERSED. PLEASE BE CAREFUL TO CODE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I'm from MORI, the market research and polling organisation. We are doing a survey about local issues, and I would like to ask you a few questions.

ASK ALL

Q1a Firstly, how long have you lived in this town/village?

Q1b And how long have you lived in this county?

	Q1a %	Q1b %
Less than 1 year .....	.4	.2
1-2 years .....	.6	.2
3-5 years .....	.8	.4
6-10 years .....	.16	.9
11-20 years .....	.20	.15
Over 20 years/all my life .....	.46	.66
Don't know/can't remember	*	*

Q2 What is the name of the County Council for this area? DO NOT PROMPT

Hereford & Worcester County Council	%
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "2") .....	.59
Don't know .....	.19
.....	.21

Q3 What is the name of the Borough/District Council for this area? DO NOT PROMPT

	Correct %
Bromsgrove District Council .....	.80
Hereford City Council .....	.70
Leominster District Council .....	.80
Malvern Hills District Council .....	.74
Redditch Borough Council .....	.79
South Herefordshire District Council .....	.56
Worcester City Council .....	.75
Wychavon District Council .....	.69
Wyre Forest District .....	.68
Other (WRITE IN & CODE 'O')	
Don't know	

IF INCORRECT ANSWER AT Q2 OR Q3, READ OUT: In fact, this is the Hereford & Worcester County Council area and the Borough/District Council area.

ASK ALL
Q4 SHOWCARD A (R) As you may know, there is currently a review being undertaken by the Local Government Commission on the future of local government structure in this area. How much, if anything, would you say you know about this?

A great deal	%
A fair amount	2
Just a little	14
Heard of but know nothing about	40
Never heard of	27
	17

HAND OVER COMMISSION LEAFLET

Three/four options have been put forward by the Local Government Commission for the future structure of local government in Hereford & Worcester. Could you please read through this leaflet, which outlines the options and includes maps which illustrate them.

ASK ALL
Q5 SHOWCARD (B) Please tell me which of these options, if any, you would most prefer?
SINGLE CODE ONLY

Option 1	%
Option 2	11
Option 3	23
None of these	30
Don't know	14
	21

ASK IF PREFER 1,2 OR 3. (OTHERS GO TO Q8)
Q6 Why do you say you would most prefer option ?
PROBE FULLY - DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK
Base: All expressing preference (1,876)

Cost/Efficiency	%
Will cost less/save money	16
More efficient/less duplication	8
Easier to manage	11

Size/Area	
Smaller areas better/others too big	20
Bigger areas better/others too small/too many councils	7
More sensitive to local area/people	15
Each area different/local identity	10
Want to join/be part of . . . (area/town)	3
Don't want to join/be part of . . . (area/town)	5
Takes account of different levels of community	4
Maintains strategic services	3

General	
No need to change/OK as it is	12
Like present Council/is good/satisfactory	11
Don't like present Council/is poor	2
Current services good/current councils provide good services	3
Would increase services/more services	2
Would improve services/services would be good quality	3
Need strong/influential council	1
Go back to how it was	9
Good idea generally	9
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "9")	26
Don't know	6

THERE IS NO Q7

SKIP COL 40

ASK ALL

- Q8 SHOWCARD B (R) AGAIN Which, if any, of the options shown here would you least prefer? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	Least %
Option 1	22
Option 2	10
Option 3	16
None of these	21
Don't know	31

ASK IF LEAST PREFER OPTION 1, 2 OR 3 (OTHERS GO TO Q10)

- Q9 And why do you say you would least prefer option . . . ?**

PROBE FULLY – DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

Base: All expressing least preference (1,360)

	%
Cost/Efficiency	
Cost of change	9
Would cost more to run/more expensive	14
Too much duplication	6
Too many joint arrangements	6
Too difficult to manage	11
Size/Area	
Area too big/smaller areas better	24
Area too small/bigger areas better/too many councils	12
Would ignore us/our views/would be isolated	5
Too impersonal/less local	9
Don't want to join/be part of...(area/town)	7
No local identity	7
Authorities too small to cope	3
Too narrow/no strategic view	2
General	
No need to change/OK as it is	3
Like/Don't like present Council/is good/poor	2
Poor services	2
Current services would be reduced/in danger	2
Bad idea generally	7
I prefer the others/like other options more	3
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "7")	23
.....	
.....	
Don't know	10

ASK ALL

- Q10 What other options, if any, would you prefer to those I have shown you?**

	%
None	47
Don't know	20
Go back to how it used to be/back to pre-1974 structure	9
No need to change/keep things as they are	21
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "5")	4

Q11

General

Q12

If local people want them, town and parish Councils should be set up, where they do not exist

THANK RESPONDENT

ASK IN THE FOLLOWING SAMPLING POINTS ONLY:

170317, 170321, 170323, 170331, 170332, 170333, 170334, 170335

- Q13 As part of the options for Hereford and Worcester, this area would be close to the boundary of two new authorities. Would you prefer this area to be part of a new Herefordshire authority, or a new authority covering part or all of Worcestershire?**
Base: All in Leominster booster area (105)

%
 New Herefordshire authority22
 New Worcestershire authority52
 Neither of these8
 Other (WRITE IN & CODE "4")1

 Don't know17

THANK RESPONDENT
GO TO DEMOGRAPHICS, THEN COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

District Name:

COPY SAMPLE POINT FROM FRONT PAGE

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(56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61)

56/61

APPENDIX C

RECOMMENDED ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

HEREFORDSHIRE

Table C1 gives details of the wards and numbers of councillors for the new unitary authority for Herefordshire. There are a total of 44 wards: 28 single member and 16 with two members. With a total of 126,549 electors and 60 councillors the authority will have an average ratio of councillors to electors of 1:2,109.

These details were submitted jointly by the district councils of Leominster, Hereford City, South Herefordshire and Malvern Hills. Hereford & Worcester County Council also endorsed the scheme with the single reservation that the proposed ward MH4 should be split into two single member wards. These would be:

- (i) Cradley and Bosbury (Cradley ward and part of Leadon Vale), with an electorate of 1,850;
- (ii) Hope End, with 2,572 electors.

Table C1
HEREFORDSHIRE UNITARY AUTHORITY

Ward Code	Constituent Existing Wards	Electorate	Number of Councillors
H1	Aylestone		
H2	Belmont	4,363	2
H3	Central	4,153	2
H4	Hinton	3,993	2
H5	Holmer	3,659	2
H6	St Martins	5,579	2
H7	St Nicholas	3,598	2
H8	Three Elms	3,598	2
H9	Tupsley	4,505	2
L1	Border, Leintwardine, Mortimer	5,149	2
L2	Bircher, Kingsland	1,903	1
L3	Berrington, Upton	2,171	1
L4	Bateman, Lyonshall with Titley	2,116	1
L5	Golden Cross, Pembridge	1,731	1
L6	Hampton Court, Hatfield (less Bockleton CP)	1,782	1
L7	Hergest, Kington Town	1,988	1
L8	Castle, Eardisley, Wye	2,547	1
L9	Mansel, Pyons with Birley, Weobley	2,320	1
L10	Leominster East, Leominster South	2,367	1
L11	Leominster North	4,030	2
MH1	Bringsty, Butterley (less Lower Sapey CP)	3,905	2
MH2	Bromyard, Hegdon	2,117	1
MH3	Frome, Frome Vale	3,735	2
MH4	Cradley, Hope End, Leadon Vale	2,347	1
MH5	(part within Hope End County Division) Marcle Ridge, Leadon Vale (part within Ledbury County Division)	4,322	2
MH6	Ledbury	2,659	1
SH1	Merbach, Olchon	4,194	2
SH2	Golden Valley, Whitfield	1,958	1
SH3	Stoney Street, Clehonger West	2,218	1
SH4	Clehonger East	2,201	1
SH5	Credenhill, Swainshill	1,504	1
SH6	Burghill, Dinmore Hill	2,239	1
SH7	Burmarsh, Munstone	2,344	1
SH8	Hagley, Thinghill	2,631	1
SH9	Kingsthorpe, Tram Inn	2,087	1
SH10	Dinedor Hill, Hollington	2,040	1
SH11	Backbury, Fownhope	2,062	1
SH12	Broad Oak, Pontrilas	1,982	1
SH13	Harewood End, Wilton	2,257	1
SH14	Gorsley, Old Gore	1,892	1
SH15	Doward, Garron	2,000	1
SH16	Penyard, Walford	2,316	1
SH17	Ross-on-Wye East	2,274	1
SH18	Ross-on-Wye West	4,418	2
Total		3,295	2
		126,549	60

Source: Herefordshire districts' joint submission.

EASTERN MALVERN HILLS AND TENBURY AREA

Table C2 below gives details of the wards and numbers of councillors for the new district for eastern Malvern Hills and the Tenbury area. Although this is a new district authority its wards are based on the existing district wards and numbers of councillors for the area, with changes only being made in order to take account of the boundary with Herefordshire. There a total of 27 wards: 15 with a single member, eight with two members and four with three members. With a total of 55,127 electors and 43 councillors the authority will have an average ratio of district councillors to electors of 1:1,282. This ratio is in line with the existing ratio of district councillors to electors.

Table C2

EASTERN MALVERN HILLS AND TENBURY DISTRICT

District Ward (amendments)	Electorate	Number of Councillors
Baldwin	1,476	1
Broadheath	1,382	1
Chase	4,678	3
Hallow	1,417	1
Kempsey	3,029	2
Langland	4,437	3
Laugherne Hill	1,690	2
Leigh & Bransford	1,266	1
Link	4,253	3
Longdon	1,456	1
Martley (plus Lower Sapey CP)	1,522	1
Morton	1,573	1
Powyke	2,522	2
Priory	2,177	2
Ripple	1,457	1
Temeside	1,163	1
The Hanleys	1,205	1
Trinity	4,434	3
Upton-upon-Severn	2,087	2
Wells	2,539	2
West	2,706	2
Woodbury	1,493	1
Bayton & Mable	572	1
Kyre Vale (plus Bockleton CP)	846	1
Lindridge	807	1
Tenbury Town	2,245	2
Valley of the Teme	695	1
Total:	55,127	43

Source: Register of Electors, 1993

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The total number of county councillors would be reduced from 76 to 57 arising from the creation of a separate unitary Herefordshire. Three county divisions would be amended to take account of the historic boundary with Herefordshire. These are detailed in table C3 below. The county council electoral arrangements would otherwise remain unchanged.

Table C3

AMENDMENTS TO COUNTY COUNCIL DIVISIONS

Amended County Division	Details of Amendment	Division Electorate	Amending Electorate	Amended Division Electorate
Tenbury	a) inclusion of Bockleton CP b) exclusion of the parishes of Little Hereford, Brimfield, Middleton-on-the-Hill and Laysters	6,128	a) 129	5,165
Hallow	inclusion of Lower Sapey CP	7,164	126	7,290
Malvern Link	inclusion of the parishes of Suckley, Alfrick, Doddenham, Knightwick and Lalsley	7,209	1,163	8,372

APPENDIX D

RECOMMENDED PARISHING

ARRANGEMENTS

MALVERN

The Commission recommends that a parish be established for the unparished area of Malvern, based on the following existing district electoral wards. This would facilitate the formation of a town council for Malvern.

Table D1

PROPOSED ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A MALVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Electoral Ward	Electorate	Councillors
Chase	4,678	5
Langland	4,437	5
Link	4,253	5
Priory	2,177	2
Trinity	4,434	5
West (less West Malvern CP)	1,669	2
Total	21,648	24

Source: Register of Electors, 1993