

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
SOUTHWARK

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

September 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London Borough of Southwark.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Southwark is inserted inside the back cover of the report.



Local Government Commission for England

7 September 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 22 September 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Southwark under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in March 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 139) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Southwark.

We recommend that Southwark Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors representing 21 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

We note that you have now set out in the *White Paper Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the Borough Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Southwark on 22 September 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 23 March 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Southwark:

- **in nine of the 25 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and four wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2003 electoral equality is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 13 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in four wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 139-140) are that:

- **Southwark Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors, one less than at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, four fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all the existing wards.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each borough councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In all 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**

- **The electoral equality is forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to continue to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003, with no ward varying by more than 5 per cent from the average.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 18 October 1999:

**The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

*Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)
1	Brunswick Park	3	Brunswick ward (part); St Giles ward (part)
2	Camberwell Green	3	Brunswick ward (part); Faraday ward (part); St Giles ward (part)
3	Cathedrals	3	Browning ward (part); Cathedral ward; Chaucer ward (part)
4	Chaucer	3	Chaucer ward (part); Abbey ward (part)
5	College	3	College ward; Ruskin ward (part); Rye ward (part)
6	East Dulwich	3	Alleyn ward (part); Bellenden ward (part); Lyndhurst ward (part); Rye ward (part)
7	East Walworth	3	Browning ward (part); Burgess ward (part)
8	Faraday	3	Faraday ward (part); Brunswick ward (part); Burgess ward (part)
9	Grange	3	Abbey ward (part); Bricklayers ward (part)
10	Livesey	3	Consort ward (part); Friary ward (part); Rotherhithe ward (part)
11	Newington	3	Newington ward; Browning ward (part)
12	Nunhead	3	Barset ward; Consort ward (part); Waverley ward (part)
13	Peckham	3	Friary ward (part); Liddle ward
14	Peckham Rye	3	Bellenden ward (part); Rye ward (part); Waverley ward (part)
15	Riverside	3	Riverside ward (part)
16	Rotherhithe	3	Rotherhithe ward (part); Dockyard ward (part); Riverside ward (part)
17	South Camberwell	3	Bellenden ward (part); Lyndhurst ward (part)
18	South Bermondsey	3	Bricklayers ward (part); Burgess ward (part); Rotherhithe ward (part)
19	Surrey Docks	3	Dockyard ward (part)
20	The Lane	3	The Lane ward (part); Bellenden ward (part)
21	Village	3	Alleyn ward (part); Lyndhurst ward (part); Ruskin ward (part)

Note: Map 2 and the large map in the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Southwark

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brunswick Park	3	7,710	2,570	1	7,742	2,581	-1
2 Cathedrals	3	7,419	2,473	-3	7,833	2,611	0
3 Camberwell Green	3	7,697	2,566	1	7,660	2,553	-2
4 Chaucer	3	7,052	2,351	-8	7,998	2,666	3
5 College	3	7,662	2,554	0	7,608	2,536	-2
6 East Dulwich	3	7,996	2,665	5	7,783	2,594	0
7 East Walworth	3	7,887	2,629	3	7,640	2,547	-2
8 Faraday	3	7,628	2,543	0	7,670	2,557	-2
9 Grange	3	7,159	2,386	-6	7,620	2,540	-2
10 Livesey	3	7,985	2,662	5	8,063	2,688	3
11 Newington	3	8,183	2,728	7	8,012	2,671	3
12 Nunhead	3	7,484	2,495	-2	7,699	2,566	-1
13 Peckham	3	7,290	2,430	-5	8,178	2,726	5
14 Peckham Rye	3	7,717	2,572	1	7,543	2,514	-3
15 Riverside	3	6,920	2,307	-9	7,822	2,607	0
16 Rotherhithe	3	7,592	2,531	-1	7,876	2,625	1
17 South Bermondsey	3	7,805	2,602	2	7,816	2,605	0
18 South Camberwell	3	7,901	2,634	3	7,780	2,593	0
19 Surrey Docks	3	7,561	2,520	-1	7,795	2,598	0
20 The Lane	3	7,678	2,559	0	7,525	2,508	-3

continued overleaf

Figure 2 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Southwark

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
21 Village	3	8,138	2,713	7	8,084	2,695	4
Totals	63	160,464	—	—	163,747	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,547	—	—	2,599	—

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

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

2 The total electorate figures differ from those shown in Figure 3 by 29 and 20 electors respectively, which has a negligible impact on variances.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London borough of Southwark.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review (PER) of Southwark is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor on the Borough Council is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (second edition published in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews. We are not required to have regard to parliamentary constituency boundaries in developing our recommendations. Any new ward boundaries will be taken into account by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission in its reviews of parliamentary constituencies.

5 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as is practicable, equality of representation across the borough as a whole. Wherever possible we try to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while

allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

6 We are not prescriptive on council size but, as indicated in our *Guidance*, would expect the overall number of members on a London borough council to be usually between 40 and 80. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that borough but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a borough's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other boroughs.

The London Boroughs

7 Our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all 386 local authorities in England started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004. The 1992 Act requires us to review most local authorities every 10 to 15 years. However, the Act is silent on the timing of reviews by the Commission of the London boroughs. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

8 Most London boroughs have not been reviewed since 1977. Following discussions with local authority interests on the appropriate timing of London borough reviews, we decided to start as soon as possible after the May 1998 London local government elections so that all reviews could be completed, and the necessary orders implementing our recommendations made by the Secretary of State, in time for the next London elections scheduled for May 2002. Our reviews of the 32 London boroughs started on a phased basis between June 1998 and February 1999.

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we welcomed the opportunities to meet with chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the majority of individual authorities. This has enabled us to brief authorities about our policies and procedures, our objective of electoral equality having regard to local circumstances, and the approach taken by the Commission in previous reviews.

10 Before we started our work in London, the Government published for consultation a Green Paper, *Modernising Local Government – Local Democracy and Community Leadership* (February 1998) which, inter alia, promoted the possibility of London boroughs having annual elections with three-member wards so that one councillor in each ward would stand for election each year. In view of this, we decided that the order in which the London reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, Southwark was in the third phase of reviews.

11 The Government's subsequent White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, published in July 1998, set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. For all unitary councils, including London boroughs, it proposed elections by thirds. It also refers to local accountability being maximised where the whole electorate in a council's area is involved in elections each time they take place, thereby pointing to a pattern of three-member wards in London boroughs to reflect a system of elections by thirds.

12 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the London boroughs, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain the approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would no doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in

formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. Our general experience has been that proposals for three-member ward patterns emerged from most areas in London.

13 Finally, it should be noted that there are no parishes in London, and in fact there is no legislative provision for the establishment of parishes in London. This differentiates the reviews of London boroughs from the majority of the other electoral reviews we are carrying out elsewhere in the country, where parishes feature highly and provide the building blocks for district or borough wards.

The Review of Southwark

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Southwark. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in April 1977 (Report No. 205).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 22 September 1998, when we wrote to Southwark Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 14 December 1998. At Stage Two, we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 Stage Three began on 23 March 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Southwark*, and ended on 17 May 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

17 The inner London borough of Southwark stretches from the River Thames in the north to Dulwich Wood in the south and has a population of 218,500 (Municipal Year Book). The borough is predominantly urban in character although it contains a number of large open areas including Burgess and Dulwich parks and Peckham Rye. Southwark has a number of mainline railway links with central London and elsewhere, including part of the Thameslink network and lines running into and from London Bridge station, which is located within the borough. Southwark has good road links along major routes such as the Old and New Kent Roads and Tower Bridge Road, feeding a number of the bridges at the north of the borough (including Tower Bridge, London Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge). There are also a number of London Underground stations (Bakerloo, East London and Northern lines) at the northern end of the borough.

18 The borough has a number of historic settlements, including Bermondsey, Camberwell, Dulwich Village, Elephant & Castle and Rotherhithe. The borough has experienced significant change, particularly along the riverside area where the docklands have been transformed over the last two decades into new residential and commercial developments.

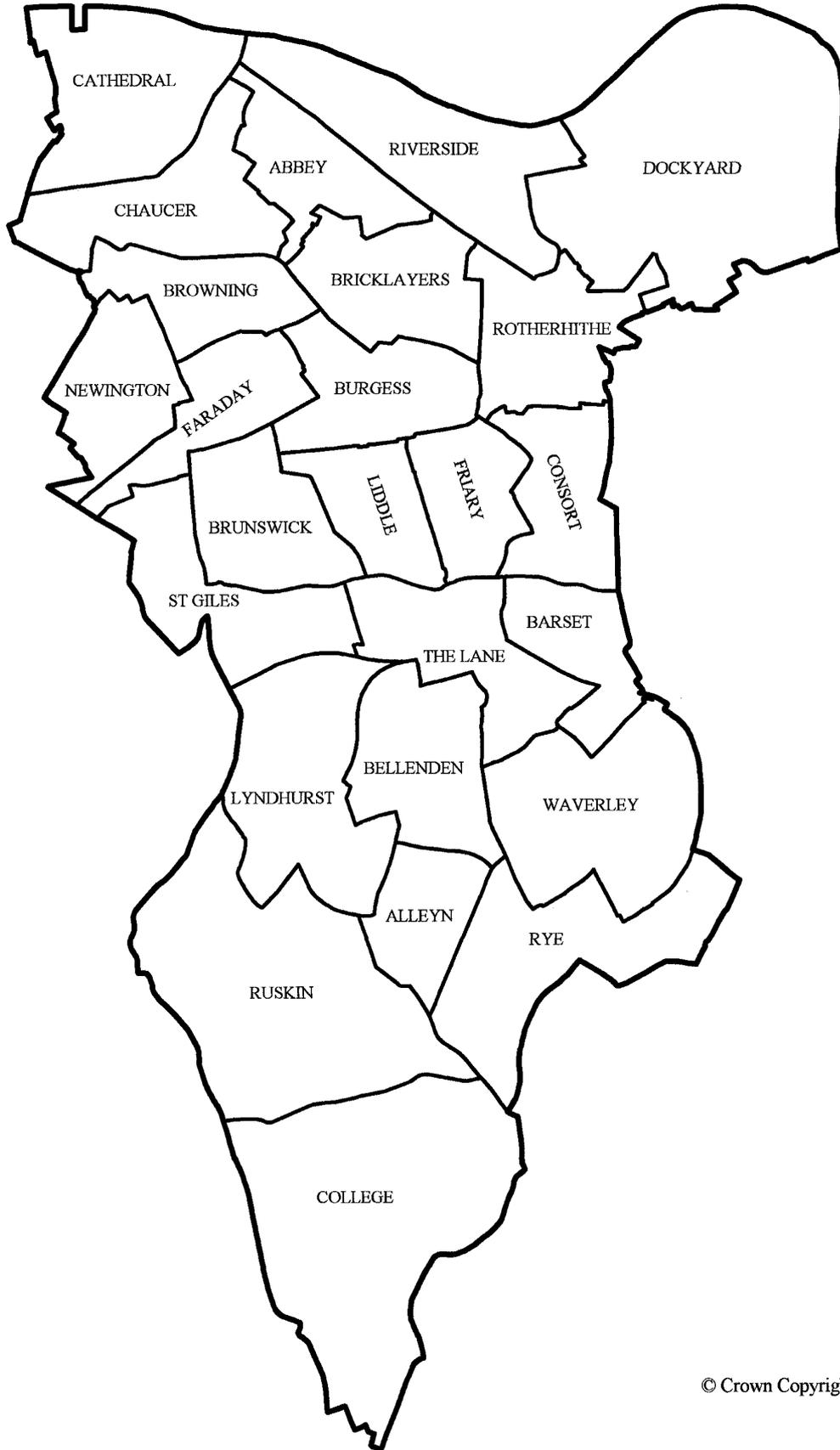
19 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using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

20 The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 160,493. The Council currently has 64 councillors who are elected from 25 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Fourteen wards are each represented by three councillors and 11 wards return two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

21 Since the last electoral review, there has been a decrease in electorate in the borough, with around 13 per cent fewer electors than two decades ago, although in recent years, the electorate has begun to stabilise and the electorate in the borough as a whole is forecast to increase by approximately 2 per cent by 2003. The largest areas of growth are anticipated to be in the existing wards of Abbey, Chaucer, Dockyard (which has already experienced substantial growth), Riverside in the north of the borough and Liddle and Friary wards in the Peckham area.

22 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,508 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,558 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in nine of the 25 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in four wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Dockyard ward where each of the three councillors represents on average 76 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Southwark



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Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	2	4,625	2,313	-8	5,026	2,513	-2
2 Alleyn	2	5,083	2,542	1	4,960	2,480	-3
3 Barset	2	4,315	2,158	-14	4,461	2,231	-13
4 Bellenden	3	7,574	2,525	1	7,302	2,434	-5
5 Bricklayers	2	6,647	3,324	33	6,788	3,394	33
6 Browning	3	6,795	2,265	-10	6,523	2,174	-15
7 Brunswick	3	6,846	2,282	-9	6,894	2,298	-10
8 Burgess	2	4,023	2,012	-20	4,098	2,049	-20
9 Cathedral	2	5,384	2,692	7	5,717	2,859	12
10 Chaucer	3	7,634	2,545	1	8,609	2,870	12
11 College	2	5,468	2,734	9	5,382	2,691	5
12 Consort	2	4,581	2,291	-9	4,689	2,345	-8
13 Dockyard	3	13,278	4,426	76	13,746	4,582	79
14 Faraday	3	8,548	2,849	14	8,588	2,863	12
15 Friary	3	5,345	1,782	-29	5,639	1,880	-27
16 Liddle	3	4,989	1,663	-34	5,717	1,906	-26
17 Lyndhurst	3	7,860	2,620	4	7,773	2,591	1
18 Newington	3	7,841	2,614	4	7,666	2,555	0
19 Riverside	3	7,284	2,428	-3	8,194	2,731	7
20 Rotherhithe	3	6,463	2,154	-14	6,340	2,113	-17
21 Ruskin	3	6,903	2,301	-8	6,855	2,285	-11
22 Rye	2	5,868	2,934	17	5,807	2,904	13

continued overleaf

Figure 3:(continued)
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23 St Giles	3	7,453	2,484	-1	7,396	2,465	-4
24 The Lane	2	5,029	2,515	0	4,961	2,481	-3
25 Waverley	2	4,657	2,329	-7	4,596	2,298	-10
Totals	64	160,493	—	—	163,727	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,508	—	—	2,558	—

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Liddle ward were relatively over-represented by 34 per cent, while electors in Dockyard ward were relatively under-represented by 76 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

²³ During Stage One, we received only four representations, including borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, and a submission from Unwin and Friary Tenants & Residents' Association. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Southwark*.

²⁴ We concluded that the warding pattern put forward by both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats should form the basis of our draft recommendations, as it would achieve a far higher level of electoral equality than the Borough Council's, which reflected the level we would expect to achieve in an urban area such as Southwark, while reflecting the statutory criteria. Our proposals were for a council size of 63, one less than at present, and a pattern of entirely three-member wards, as proposed by the Borough Council, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. However, in order to improve the scheme further, particularly in following identifiable boundaries and, where compatible with the statutory criteria, to avoid splitting housing estates, we proposed a number of modifications to the Conservatives' and the Liberal Democrats' proposals, some of which reflected the Borough Council's proposed ward boundaries in specific areas. Overall, we proposed that:

- (a) Southwark Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors;
- (b) there should be 21 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all existing wards, with each ward returning three councillors.

²⁵ Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all 21 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 5 per cent from the borough average in 2003.

Draft Recommendation

Southwark Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

26 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 19 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Southwark Borough Council and the Commission.

Southwark Borough Council

27 In its Stage Three submission, the Borough Council stated it “supports the majority of the proposals” contained in the draft recommendations report. However, it proposed an alternative warding pattern for the southern part of the borough. The Borough Council considered that these proposals “not only better recognise local community ties and well defined boundaries but also achieve a greater degree of equality in the size of electorates”. The Council also made a number of detailed comments on each of the wards contained in our draft recommendations.

Southwark Borough Council Labour Group

28 The London Borough of Southwark Labour Group, supported by the Constituency Labour Parties of Camberwell & Peckham, Dulwich & West Norwood and North Southwark & Bermondsey along with Southwark Labour Party (Local Government Committee), Harriet Harman MP and Tessa Jowell MP submitted a joint proposal which was almost identical to the Borough Council’s submission. Its submission differed from that of the Council in only one respect, proposing to rename Surrey Quays ward as Dockyard.

Southwark Borough Council Conservative Group

29 The Conservative Group on Southwark Council and the Constituency Conservative Associations of Dulwich & West Norwood, Camberwell & Peckham and North Southwark & Bermondsey stated that they “endorse the Commission’s draft proposals”. The Conservatives also supported the modifications we made to their Stage One scheme.

30 The Conservatives noted that the Stage Three submission from the Borough Council and Labour Party “has had no local publicity ...[nor]... local consultation”. They also raised a number of concerns about the Borough Council’s and Labour Party’s Stage Three proposals, which they considered “appear to have been devised with an excessive reliance on achieving absolute electoral equality, to the exclusion of all other factors”. The Conservatives raised specific concerns about the Borough Council’s and Labour Party’s Stage Three proposed The Lane and College wards.

Southwark Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group

31 The Liberal Democrat Group on Southwark Council, supported by Camberwell & Peckham, Dulwich & West Norwood and North Southwark & Bermondsey Liberal Democrat Constituency Parties, supported the majority of the draft recommendations. They proposed a number of changes to the proposed ward names and suggested a revision to the boundaries between Nunhead and The Lane wards.

Members of Parliament

32 Mr Simon Hughes, Member of Parliament for North Southwark & Bermondsey, supported the response to the draft recommendations from the Liberal Democrat constituency parties of Southwark, but proposed a number of alternative ward names to those contained in our draft recommendations. In a separate submission, the Right Honourable Tessa Jowell, Member of Parliament for Dulwich & West Norwood supported the Borough Council’s and Labour Party’s Stage Three proposals for an alternative warding pattern in the south of the borough.

Other Representations

33 A further 13 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations, from two local clergy representatives, three borough councillors, one local organisation and seven local residents.

34 The Most Reverend The Lord Archbishop of Southwark, Michael Bowen, suggested Cathedral ward should be renamed Cathedrals noting: “at a time when ecumenical endeavour is increasingly important, such recognition of the unique contribution made by the two Cathedrals in this ward would be most welcome”. Canon Cronin from St George’s Cathedral similarly supported the ward name Cathedrals, as did one local resident.

35 Councillor David Bradbury, member for Ruskin ward, supported the draft recommendations, in particular the proposed College ward, although he supported renaming it Sydenham Hill. Councillor Eckersley, member for Ruskin ward, supported our draft recommendations, as did Councillor Humphreys, member for College ward, who suggested the draft recommendations “closely match local communities in the south of the borough”.

36 The Camberwell Society supported the use of Camberwell as a ward name. We received a submission from a resident of Alleyn ward who proposed little or no change to the existing Bellenden ward, to respect existing community ties, and supported the Borough Council’s and Labour Party’s Stage Three proposals. One local resident proposed modifications to the boundaries of Surrey Quays and Rotherhithe wards, and another to the proposed boundary between Rotherhithe and Livesey wards. One resident argued against the inclusion of an area of properties north of East Dulwich Road in the proposed South Camberwell ward. A resident of the Lewisham borough, Mr Warby, proposed a new warding pattern for the whole borough, although without supplying 2003 electorate figures.

37 We received representations from one resident of the Borough who proposed renaming College ward Sydenham Hill, and another resident who proposed South Camberwell should retain the name Lyndhurst.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

38 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Southwark is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

41 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to a minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which

result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. In reviews of predominantly urban areas such as the London boroughs, our experience suggests that we would expect to achieve a high degree of electoral equality in all wards.

Electorate Forecasts

42 At Stage One, the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 2 per cent from 160,493 to 163,727 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. It expected much of the growth to occur in the north of the borough, notably in the wards along the River Thames but also with growth in the Peckham area, particularly in the existing Liddle and Friary wards. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period with assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

43 In our draft recommendations report we accepted that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the Council’s forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

44 We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

45 We indicated in our *Guidance* that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80. As already explained, the Commission’s starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government.

46 Southwark Borough Council currently has 64 members. At Stage One the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats all proposed minimal change to the existing council size, each submitting proposals based on a council size of 63, in order to facilitate a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough.

47 In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 63 members.

48 At Stage Three we did not receive any proposals for an alternative to a council size of 63 members and therefore are confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 63 as final.

Ward Names

49 At Stage Three, we received a number of representations which commented on the proposed ward names contained in our draft recommendations. In particular, we received a number of representations that our proposed Cathedral ward should be renamed Cathedrals (as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats at Stage One) reflecting the fact that the proposed ward would contain both Southwark Cathedral and St George's Cathedral. We also received representations commenting on the proposed ward names of Surrey Quays, South Camberwell, Grange and College. The Council's and Labour Party's Stage Three alternative warding pattern contained a number of new ward names.

Electoral Arrangements

50 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including two borough-wide schemes from the Council, and from the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. From these representations, a number of considerations emerged which informed us when preparing our draft recommendations.

51 First, there was acknowledgement locally that the present electoral arrangements are unsatisfactory and capable of significant improvement. Both the borough-wide schemes we

received during Stage One made positive proposals for change and would improve on the current levels of electoral inequality, although to different degrees.

52 Second, there was consensus on a council size of 63, one member less than at present. The Borough Council stated that, in reaching a decision on council size, it had adopted a three-member warding pattern across the whole borough, having regard to the Government's White Paper.

53 Third, there was a degree of consensus between the two borough-wide proposals on a number of features that provide good boundaries, such as the London Bridge to Kent railway line and Old Kent Road in the north, and Lordship Lane in the south. There was some affinity between proposed ward boundaries particularly in the north and west of the borough, although less so in the centre and south of the borough.

54 Fourth, in seeking to reflect local identities and in view of the large number of established housing estates in the borough, respondents generally sought to avoid splitting estates between wards where this was consistent with the need to achieve electoral equality. However, such estates do not always fit into equal ward sizes and, therefore, to achieve a fair level of representation across the whole borough, it is sometimes necessary to divide estates for the purpose of borough warding. We tried, as far as possible, to reflect community identity in our draft recommendations, where it would be consistent with our objective of electoral equality.

55 Our prime objective of securing electoral equality, while having regard to the statutory criteria, guided us in developing our draft recommendations. We recognised the significantly better electoral equality which would result in the great majority of wards proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats at Stage One, compared to the Borough Council's Stage One proposals. We also noted that electoral equality was expected to improve over time under the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' scheme, while under the Council's scheme it would generally worsen over the five-year period.

56 Finally, our draft recommendations sought to build on the proposals we received, to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve yet further improvements in electoral equality, while also seeking to reflect the statutory criteria. In

formulating our proposals, we tried to reflect any consensus among Stage One respondents for warding arrangements. We proposed modifications to ward boundaries in those areas where we considered further improvements in electoral equality could be achieved or more easily identifiable boundaries followed. Inevitably, we were unable to reflect the preferences of all the respondents in our draft recommendations.

57 Following discussions with Council officers, we identified a number of minor errors in the electorate figures used in the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' Stage One proposals. The majority of these errors had minimal impact on electoral variances and did not significantly affect the good level of electoral equality under their scheme. Having sought clarification from the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats on the precise location of ward boundaries and electorate data contained within their original submissions, we also noted that, in some areas where polling districts would be split, they had used the draft 1999 electoral register. In consultation with Council officers, we revised electorate figures to reflect accurately the proposed boundaries, and used the 1998 electoral register figures, calculating any revisions to 2003 electorate forecasts which would occur for those areas that formed the basis of our draft recommendations.

58 We therefore concluded that the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposals would better meet the objectives of the review, and used their proposals as a starting point, although we proposed a number of additional boundary modifications.

59 In response to our draft recommendations report, we received support for the proposed council size of 63 from the borough council and the two minority groups, and also a good deal of support for much of the proposed warding pattern in the north of the borough. We were pleased with the positive response to many of our draft recommendations for Southwark. However, at Stage Three, the Council and the Labour Party submitted a significantly different warding pattern for the south of the borough, which they considered would "better recognise local community ties and well defined boundaries [and] also achieve a greater degree of equality in the size of electorates."

60 It is relevant to reflect on the nature and status of draft recommendations. The Commission develops draft recommendations which, given the evidence available at the time, we would be content to present to the Secretary of State. We then undertake consultation on these draft recommendations in order to gauge local opinion on the recommendations and to seek further evidence to support or oppose them. We consider that the purpose of Stage Three is primarily to consult on our draft recommendations, and to make any amendments, in the light of the further evidence received, which we consider would result in a demonstrable improvement to the current arrangements and to our draft recommendations. If, however, the Commission decided to move to a totally new scheme, we would wish to undertake further consultation. We noted that while some of the proposed wards suggested by the Council and the Labour Party at Stage Three utilised the same ward boundaries suggested by the Council at Stage One, other wards were entirely new configurations. Furthermore, we note that, unlike our draft recommendations, the Borough Council's and Labour Party's Stage Three scheme has not been consulted upon locally. We are grateful to all respondents for their constructive assessment of our draft recommendations, but we have concluded that we have not been presented with evidence to suggest that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed on the basis of the statutory criteria.

61 We noted that when comparing the nine new wards proposed by the Council/Labour Party at Stage Three with our nine draft wards in the south of the borough, the difference in electoral equality between them was minimal. Furthermore, we were not persuaded that in those wards proposed by the Council and the Labour Party at Stage Three, which substantially reflected the Council's Stage One proposals, sufficiently persuasive new evidence had been presented to us that added substantially to the arguments put forward at Stage One.

62 During Stage Three, we received a number of representations both in support of and opposing our draft recommendations, particularly the south of the borough, but we have not been made aware of a groundswell of opposition to our draft recommendations. As mentioned in our draft recommendations report, we have tried to reflect community identities in the borough where this is consistent with our objective of electoral equality,

although we noted that there is often no consensus locally on the precise boundary of such communities. It is acknowledged that the definition of a community is a subjective issue. We have therefore reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence, and the representations received during Stage Three, and judge that modifications should be made to one of our proposed boundaries and two ward names. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Cathedral and Chaucer wards;
- (b) Abbey, Bricklayers and Riverside wards;
- (c) Dockyard ward;
- (d) Browning, Burgess, Faraday and Newington wards;
- (e) Consort, Friary, Liddle and Rotherhithe wards;
- (f) Brunswick and St Giles wards;
- (g) Barset and The Lane wards;
- (h) Allen, Bellenden and Lyndhurst wards;
- (i) Rye and Waverley wards;
- (j) College and Ruskin wards.

63 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Cathedral and Chaucer wards

64 The two wards of Cathedral and Chaucer lie in the north-west corner of the borough. Cathedral ward is currently represented by two councillors and the number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the borough average (12 per cent above in 2003). In Chaucer ward, with three councillors, the electoral variance is 1 per cent above the average. However, in view of the forecast growth for this area of nearly 1,000 electors over the five-year period, electors in the ward would be under-represented by 12 per cent in 2003.

65 In its Stage One submission, the Borough Council proposed extending Cathedral ward to the south, to include an area west of Newington Causeway and the Blackfriars to Kent railway line (currently in Chaucer ward), together with an area south of Elephant and Castle, north of Brixton Butts and west of the railway line (currently in Browning ward). Under the Council's proposals,

the number of electors in Cathedral ward would be 4 per cent below the borough average (equal to the average in 2003).

66 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a similarly modified ward for this area, except that the ward boundary would extend further along Newington Causeway as far as Elephant and Castle, rather than follow the railway line as proposed by the Council. In the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed Cathedrals ward, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the average (equal to the average in 2003), based upon corrected electorate data.

67 The Borough Council and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed similar ward boundaries for a modified Chaucer ward, at the initial stage of the review. In addition to their proposed western ward boundaries with a modified Cathedral ward, described above, both schemes extended the eastern ward boundary to include part of the existing Abbey ward, using Tower Bridge Road as part of the boundary. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also used Tower Bridge Road and Long Lane as a new boundary, but proposed following Long Lane between Tower Bridge Road and the existing boundary at Crosby Row. The number of electors per councillor in Chaucer ward under the Council's Stage One proposals would be equal to the borough average (10 per cent above in 2003), and under the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' Stage One proposals, using amended electorate figures, would be 8 per cent below the average (3 per cent above in 2003).

68 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that we would normally expect any electoral imbalances to improve over the five-year period, and therefore we were concerned at the degree of electoral inequality which would result by 2003, under the Council's Stage One proposals. We judged that the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposals would use clearly identifiable boundaries, particularly through greater use of Long Lane, and achieve better electoral equality. We therefore adopted the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed boundaries for Cathedral and Chaucer wards. Under our draft recommendations, using amended electorate figures, the electoral variances in the two wards would be 3 per cent and 8 per cent (zero and 3 per cent in 2003).

69 At Stage Three, the Borough Council and each of the three political groups supported our proposals for Cathedral and Chaucer wards. We received no further submissions on this area and we are confirming our draft ward boundaries for Cathedral and Chaucer wards in our final recommendations. However, the Council, Labour Party and Liberal Democrats, along with The Most Reverend The Lord Archbishop of Southwark, Mr Simon Hughes MP and two local residents, proposed renaming Cathedral ward as Cathedrals, in order to reflect the location of both Southwark Cathedral and St George's Cathedral within the reconfigured ward. We considered this a more representative ward name, and are therefore adopting the proposed name of Cathedrals in our final recommendations.

Abbey, Bricklayers and Riverside wards

70 These three wards lie in the north of the borough, with Abbey and Bricklayers wards each returning two councillors and Riverside ward returning three councillors. Abbey and Riverside wards are both over-represented, with 8 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (2 per cent fewer and 7 per cent more in 2003 as a result of growth in the area). Bricklayers ward is significantly under-represented with 33 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (unchanged in 2003).

71 At Stage One, borough-wide schemes from the Council, and from the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, attempted to address the notable imbalances in these three wards. The schemes had a number of similarities, although some alternative ward boundaries were proposed under each. The proposals from the Council, and from the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, would create a new three-member ward, incorporating much of the area covered by Abbey and Bricklayers wards. The proposals differed only slightly as to the ward's eastern and western boundaries. Both proposed using the London Bridge to Kent railway line as the northern boundary of the new ward. The western ward boundary with Chaucer ward was described earlier.

72 For the ward's eastern boundary, both schemes proposed utilising the existing ward boundary of Old Kent Road as far as the junction with Dunton Road, turning north along Dunton Road, east at Southwark Park Road and north along St James's Road to join the London Bridge to Kent railway

line. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed following Dunton Road further north until its junction with Southwark Park Road, along which the boundary would run east as far as the existing ward boundary.

73 The two Stage One schemes proposed different names for the new ward. The number of electors per councillor under the Council's proposed Grange ward would be 5 per cent above the average (8 per cent above in 2003); and the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed West Bermondsey ward, based on revised electorate data, would be 6 per cent below the average (2 per cent below in 2003). We adopted the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed warding pattern in this area as it would provide a high degree of electoral equality. We modified their proposed eastern boundary of West Bermondsey ward, following a line along Linsey Street to the London Bridge to Kent railway line, which would better reflect ground detail in the area. We also proposed naming the new ward as Grange, as suggested by the Council.

74 The two Stage One borough-wide schemes proposed minimal change to the boundaries of the existing Riverside ward, except to the eastern boundary, which currently follows Southwark Park Road and part of Jamaica Road. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that the existing boundary along Southwark Park Road should continue due north along West Lane. Both schemes proposed retaining the ward name of Riverside. The electoral variance would be 5 per cent under the Council's proposals (4 per cent in 2003) and 9 per cent under the Liberal Democrats' and Conservatives' proposals, using amended electorate data (zero in 2003). We considered that as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, West Lane would provide a coherent boundary and an improving level of electoral equality over the five-year period. We therefore endorsed it as our draft recommendation for Riverside ward.

75 At Stage Three, the Council and the Labour Party, and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats all supported our proposed warding pattern for Grange and Riverside wards. We received no further comments, and we are therefore confirming our draft warding pattern for Grange and Riverside wards as final. Additionally, the Council, the Labour Party, and the Conservatives supported the proposed ward name Grange which

“has historical ties with the area – Grange Road, Grange Walk and The Grange are all named after the farm of the old Bermondsey Abbey”. However, the Liberal Democrats suggested that residents were more likely to identify with their original proposed ward name of West Bermondsey. Mr Simon Hughes MP stated “West Bermondsey is an historic old constituency name and is increasingly in common use for community organisations in the area”.

76 It is clear from the submissions made during Stage Three, that both the ward names of Grange and West Bermondsey would reflect the ward pattern we are proposing in the area. However, we are retaining the draft ward name, Grange, as we note that there is not consensus among respondents for change, and also that an adjacent ward name, South Bermondsey, would retain a reference to Bermondsey.

Dockyard ward

77 Dockyard ward, in the north-east of the borough, is bounded to the north and east by the River Thames, and has experienced the most significant electorate growth in the borough, due to the residential development of the former docks. With 76 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (79 per cent in 2003), Dockyard suffers the greatest electoral inequality of any ward in the borough under the existing arrangements.

78 In order to address the significant under-representation in this area, at Stage One the Council and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed dividing the existing ward into two new three-member wards. Both proposals involved a north-south split of the area, but the boundary between the two new wards differed under the two schemes.

79 The Council proposed a new Dockyard ward covering the eastern area, and a new Rotherhithe ward to the west. Its proposed boundary between the two wards would lie west of Greenland Quay, going north along Surrey Quays Road before following Albion Channel to Surrey Water and the borough boundary. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a new Surrey Docks ward covering the eastern area, and a new Rotherhithe ward to the west. Under the Stage One schemes, the electoral variance in the Council's proposed Dockyard ward would be 3 per cent, and in the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed

Surrey Docks ward would be 1 per cent (5 per cent and zero respectively in 2003).

80 The two Stage One schemes also put forward similar amendments to the western boundary of the proposed Rotherhithe ward. The Council proposed broadly following the existing ward boundary south from the River Thames, extending it along Southwark Park Road to the London Bridge to Kent railway line, and turning east along the railway line to South Bermondsey station and the borough boundary. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a similar boundary along Southwark Park Road and part of the London Bridge to Kent railway line, but following the centre of Rotherhithe New Road east from the junction with the railway line and then utilising the existing boundary of Warndon Road. They also proposed an alternative boundary north of Southwark Park Road, following a line from the River Thames, Bermondsey Wall East and West Lane. The number of electors per councillor in Rotherhithe ward would be equal to the average under the Council's Stage One scheme (unchanged in 2003) and, following a minor recalculation of the electorate figures, 1 per cent below the average under the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' Stage One proposal (1 per cent above in 2003).

81 We note that the two sets of proposals for this area were similar, using boundaries such as Southwark Park Road and Surrey Quays Road. However, we adopted the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposals for these two wards as they would achieve good electoral equality, follow easily identifiable boundaries and facilitate good warding arrangements elsewhere in the borough. We proposed one minor boundary modification, to follow a line from Bacons College across Timber Pond Road and along Dock Hill Avenue, which would affect 20 electors who would fall within the proposed Surrey Docks ward. We consulted on the ward names of Rotherhithe, as proposed under both schemes, and Surrey Docks, as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. We considered that the latter name would better reflect the fact that this is a new ward. Under our proposals, the electoral variance would be 1 per cent in both Surrey Docks ward and Rotherhithe ward, with little or no change expected in 2003.

82 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats agreed with our draft recommendations for Surrey Docks

and Riverside wards. The Labour Party, while agreeing with the proposed warding pattern for the area, considered that Dockyard, rather than Surrey Docks, would be a more suitable ward name, stating “electors living in the east and north of the new ward do not relate to the name ‘Surrey Docks’ as this name is more closely linked to areas in the new Rotherhithe ward”. We received a representation from a local resident stating that Dockhill Avenue may not be the most suitable boundary between Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks wards as it runs through a residential area, and suggested that Albion Channel or Deal Porters Walk could be utilised instead. The resident also had similar concerns about the use of Lower Road as a ward boundary, proposing instead to move the boundary eastwards to better reflect community identities and also considered that the proposed Surrey Docks ward should be called Dockyard ward.

83 We are satisfied that our proposed warding pattern for Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks wards would utilise the best boundaries available, while recognising the need to achieve good electoral equality and have regard to the statutory criteria. We do not consider that using of Albion Channel or Deal Porter’s Walk as a boundary would provide a satisfactory level of electoral equality in this area. We also consider that the name Surrey Docks accurately reflects the ward, which contains Surrey Commercial Docks and is sufficiently distinct from Surrey Quays shopping centre and London Underground station to avoid confusion. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks wards as final.

Browning, Burgess, Faraday and Newington wards

84 Further south, the three wards of Browning, Faraday and Newington each return three councillors, and Burgess ward returns two councillors. Faraday and Newington wards are both under-represented, with 14 per cent and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the average respectively (15 per cent and zero in 2003). Browning and Burgess wards are both significantly over-represented, with 10 per cent and 20 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average respectively (15 per cent and 20 per cent in 2003).

85 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that a significant amount of change to ward boundaries in this area is necessary, due to large

electoral imbalances and the enlargement of Burgess ward to form a three-member ward. At Stage One, the Council and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed slightly modified Faraday and Newington wards, but on different boundaries. Burgess ward currently includes Burgess Park and straddles part of Old Kent Road; both schemes proposed following Old Kent Road as a boundary throughout this area.

86 Under the two schemes, an area of the current Browning ward around Elephant and Castle would be transferred into modified wards. Both proposed retaining a number of the existing ward boundaries in this area, along Walworth Road, New Kent Road, part of East Street and Thurlow Walk; and both proposed a broadly similar modified eastern boundary for Faraday ward in the area of Bagshot Street, to include the Aylesbury Estate in one ward.

87 Both these Stage One schemes proposed similar modifications to Newington ward, to include part of the existing Browning ward south of Newington Butts and Walworth Road. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats recommended utilising the boundary along Walworth Road, and maintaining the present ward boundaries along Fielding Street, the Blackfriars to Sevenoaks railway line and John Ruskin Street to the borough boundary.

88 Under the Council’s Stage One proposals the electoral variances in the modified Browning, Faraday and Newington wards would be 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 15 per cent (8 per cent, 8 per cent and 10 per cent in 2003 respectively). Under the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ Stage One scheme proposed wards of Faraday, Newington and Walworth would have electoral variances of zero, 7 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (2 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively in 2003).

89 We carefully considered the alternative proposals for this area. In our consultation report we recognised the use of a number of common boundaries by both schemes, notably Walworth Road, East Street and Old Kent Road, and that both schemes would unite the whole of Aylesbury estate in one ward. However, the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ proposals would achieve much better electoral equality than those of the Council. We were concerned at the level of relative under-representation in Newington ward and over-representation in Browning and Faraday wards that would result under the Council’s Stage One

proposals. We therefore concluded that the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' Stage One proposals would better meet the main objective of the review, that of electoral equality, and adopted their proposed wards for this area as part of our draft recommendations.

90 At Stage Three, the Council and Labour Party supported the proposed warding pattern in these three wards, subject to one minor boundary modification between Walworth and Faraday wards, which would transfer an area of Burgess Park (containing no electors) broadly west of Calmington Road, from the proposed Walworth ward to Faraday ward. The Council and the Labour Party considered this would make a better location for part of Burgess Park, near the proposed Faraday ward. In their Stage Three submission, the Liberal Democrats stated they would have no objection to this boundary change. We received no other submissions commenting on our draft recommendations for this area. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Newington, Faraday and Walworth wards as final, subject to transferring an area of Burgess Park from Walworth ward to Faraday ward as proposed by the Borough Council and Labour Party which we consider would utilise a clear ward boundary and reflect local links to the park.

91 Additionally, the Council and Labour Party proposed renaming Walworth ward as East Walworth, as they considered that Faraday and Newington wards also contained areas of Walworth which could confuse the electorate. The Liberal Democrats stated that "we are relaxed about the suggestion". We consider that the ward name East Walworth would more accurately locate the proposed Walworth ward, and are therefore adopting this revised ward name as part of our final recommendations.

Consort, Friary, Liddle and Rotherhithe wards

92 These four wards in the centre of the borough are all significantly over-represented under the current electoral arrangements. The two-member Consort ward has 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average (8 per cent in 2003) and the three three-member wards of Friary, Liddle and Rotherhithe have more than 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average (unchanged in 2003).

93 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that Rotherhithe ward would be subject to considerable modification under the two schemes, each of which proposed different ward patterns for the area. The Council proposed a new South Bermondsey ward to cover the majority of the existing Rotherhithe ward. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that their new South Bermondsey ward should comprise that part of Rotherhithe ward generally west of Rotherhithe New Road, together with that part of Bricklayers ward south of Southwark Park Road and east of Dunton Road, and part of Burgess ward north of Old Kent Road. The southern boundary would follow the Old Kent Road. The remainder of Rotherhithe ward would form part of a new Consort ward to the south.

94 For the area south of its proposed South Bermondsey ward, south of Old Kent Road, the Council proposed a new Livesey ward comprising parts of Consort and Friary wards, with the boundary following part of Peckham Street, Peckham Park Road, Bullar Close and the borough boundary. For the area south of their proposed South Bermondsey ward, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also recommended a new Livesey ward. Their proposed ward would straddle Old Kent Road in this part of the borough with its eastern boundary following the borough boundary; its southern boundary going west on Clifton Way and part of Meeting House Lane; and its western boundary going north along Naylor Road, west on Commercial Way, north to the rear of properties on Peckham Park Road and west on Bird in Bush Road to the existing boundary with Liddle ward. Under the Council's Stage One proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the average in Livesey ward and 12 per cent above in South Bermondsey ward (3 per cent above and 9 per cent above in 2003 respectively). Under the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' Stage One proposals, Livesey and South Bermondsey wards would be 3 per cent above and 1 per cent above the average respectively (2 per cent above and 1 per cent below in 2003).

95 To the west of that area, the Council proposed a new Liddle ward to cover the entire ward together with that part of Friary ward north-west of Peckham Park Road, that part of Burgess ward south of Albany Road and Old Kent Road, including Burgess Park, and part of Brunswick ward. The electoral variance in the Council's proposed Liddle ward would be 3 per cent (5 per

cent in 2003). The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also proposed a new ward to the west, again including the whole of Liddle ward, together with parts of the existing Friary ward west of Naylor Road, north of Goldsmith Road and Peckham High Street, and broadly south of Commercial Way. They proposed that the ward should be called Peckham and the electoral variance would be 8 per cent (1 per cent above in 2003). Under their proposals, most of Burgess Park would form part of a new Walworth ward.

96 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that each of the proposals would use some of the same clear boundaries, including Old Kent Road, as well as a number of other clearly identifiable, but different, boundaries. However, in using the length of Old Kent Road as a boundary, the Council's proposals would result in a degree of electoral imbalance across the borough. While it is a major road, we noted that the existing wards of Burgess and Consort both straddle the road and we were not therefore persuaded that this imbalance was justified. We therefore proposed using most of the Old Kent Road as a ward boundary in order to achieve electoral equality in this and the surrounding area, except in the most easterly part where we noted that Consort ward straddles the road. This is necessary if the objective of electoral equality is to be achieved across the whole borough.

97 We proposed modifying the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposed Livesey ward in order to allow for an improved warding pattern in the wider area, while maintaining good electoral equality and clear boundaries. We proposed that the southern boundary of Livesey ward should lie north of properties on Clifton Crescent, turning south along Asylum Road, then west along the present boundary of Queen's Road. Furthermore, we suggested that the present boundary along Meeting House Lane and Naylor Road should continue as a ward boundary between the proposed Livesey and Peckham wards, with the whole of Acorn estate remaining within one ward. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the average in Livesey ward and 5 per cent below in Peckham ward (3 per cent and 5 per cent above in 2003). South Bermondsey would be 2 per cent above the average (equal to the average in 2003).

98 At Stage Three, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for these wards. Simon Hughes MP supported the proposed ward name of South Bermondsey. The Council and Labour Party supported the proposed South Bermondsey ward, although they suggested an alternative ward name, The Blue, as they considered some electors who would identify with the name South Bermondsey would be located in the proposed Livesey ward. One local resident stated "the Idlerton Road territory would be better served if linked to South Bermondsey."

99 The Council and Labour Party objected to the proposed Livesey ward, arguing that it "has little common identity". They favoured substantially modifying our proposed warding pattern in this area, through retaining the Queen's Road as the entire southern boundary while transferring an area broadly west of Green Hundred Road into a modified Peckham ward, to be renamed Peckham Square. The Council and Labour Party stated that it "does not have serious objections to [the draft Peckham ward] proposal when considered in isolation", but that their alternative arrangements for adjacent wards and the fact that "so much of Liddle [ward] is recently built that there is little reason to keep it together for reasons of community ties" were the rationale for their proposed Peckham Square ward.

100 We have carefully considered the representations we received on our draft recommendations for these three wards. We do not judge that our proposed Livesey ward is fundamentally flawed. As noted in our draft recommendations report, Consort is a two-member ward and therefore, in order to reflect the locally expressed view for a three-member warding pattern throughout the borough, a substantially revised warding pattern for the area is inevitable. We do not consider we have received any significant new evidence that our proposed warding pattern for this area would not reflect the statutory criteria. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Livesey ward as final. We are not proposing to change the ward name Livesey to The Blue, as proposed by the Council and Labour Party since we judge our proposed name accurately reflects the area covered. We are also confirming our draft recommendations for South Bermondsey and Peckham wards as final, which we judge satisfactorily meet the statutory criteria.

Brunswick and St Giles wards

101 Brunswick and St Giles wards lie in the west of the borough and each currently returns three councillors. The area covered by both wards is relatively over-represented, with the councillors for Brunswick ward each representing 9 per cent fewer electors than the average (10 per cent in 2003) and those for St Giles ward each representing 1 per cent fewer (4 per cent in 2003).

102 As part of its Stage One scheme, the Borough Council proposed modifying Brunswick ward by transferring the eastern area, north of Southampton Way and west of Wells Way, into a modified Liddle ward, and incorporating an area bounded by Wyndham Road, Camberwell Road and John Ruskin Road, currently within St Giles and Faraday wards, while retaining their northern and southern ward boundaries. The Council also proposed retaining the majority of the present St Giles ward south of Wyndham Road, subject to extending the eastern boundary to follow a line east of properties along Talfourd Road.

103 At Stage One, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a new ward called Camberwell Green, which would comprise parts of St Giles, Brunswick and Faraday wards. It would include part of the existing Faraday ward, bounded by Bethwin Road and Laxley Close, and John Ruskin Street to the north; part of St Giles ward north of Daneville Road; and part of the existing Brunswick ward broadly bounded by Addington Square, Southampton Way, Elmington Road, Don Phelan Close and Camberwell Church Road. Their proposed Brunswick Park ward would cover much of Brunswick ward as far north as Bowyer Place and Parkhouse Street. Under the Council's Stage One proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 10 per cent above the average in Brunswick ward and 8 per cent below in St Giles ward (9 per cent above and 11 per cent below respectively in 2003). Under the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposals, Brunswick Park ward would be equal to the average, and Camberwell Green ward would be 2 per cent above (2 per cent below and 1 per cent below respectively in 2003).

104 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that under the Council's proposals, Brunswick ward would be relatively under-represented, while St Giles ward would be over-represented to a similar degree. The Conservatives' and Liberal

Democrats' proposals would achieve a better level of electoral equality and we therefore consulted on their proposed Brunswick Park and Camberwell Green wards. However, we proposed modifying their eastern ward boundary of Brunswick Park ward to follow the centre of Bushey Hill Road rather than Crofton Road, to improve electoral equality further in the area. Under our proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Brunswick Park ward would be 1 per cent above the average, and in Camberwell Green ward 1 per cent above the average (equal to the average and 2 per cent below in 2003).

105 At Stage Three, the Council and Labour Party supported the proposal for Camberwell Green, stating "the local community in the area will be able to identify easily with this new ward". The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also supported the proposed Camberwell Green ward. The Camberwell Society noted that the proposals would not maintain the D'Eynsford estate within one ward, and that properties along Kitson Road and Addington Square would be included in Faraday ward, whereas the Society considered these properties more closely identified with Camberwell.

106 Having noted the comments on our draft recommendations for Camberwell Green ward, we have concluded that further changes to the boundaries in this area would worsen the levels of electoral equality in this and surrounding wards, and are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for this ward as final.

107 The Council and Labour Party did not support the proposed Brunswick Park ward, stating "we believe ... the A202 (Camberwell Church Street/Peckham Road/Peckham High Street/Queen's Road) is a sufficiently major thoroughfare that it should serve as a boundary unless it is impossible to do so". They proposed an alternative warding pattern in the area, utilising the A202 as the southern ward boundary, as in the Borough Council's original Stage One submission. While we acknowledge that the A202, when viewed in isolation, would provide a suitable ward boundary and indeed acts as the southern ward boundary in our proposed Peckham and Livesey wards, we are unable to utilise it in this instance, due to the adverse impact this would have on electoral equality in the area. We consider our proposed boundary along the railway to the south to be equally suitable, and would achieve a high degree

of electoral equality in the ward. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Brunswick Park ward as final.

Barset and The Lane wards

108 These two wards, each returning two councillors, lie in the east of the borough. Under the current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor in Barset ward is 14 per cent below the borough average (13 per cent below in 2003), and in The Lane ward is equal to the average (3 per cent below in 2003).

109 In describing its Stage One proposals for Barset and The Lane wards, the Council stated that “in essence both existing wards are to be merged” and they proposed calling this new ward Cossall. A number of boundary modifications were proposed: an area bounded by Evelina Road and Nunhead Grove, currently in Barset ward, would form part of a modified Waverley ward; an area west of Denman Road, currently in The Lane ward, would form part of a modified St Giles ward; and part of The Lane ward around Blenheim Grove and Choumert Grove would form part of a modified Bellenden ward.

110 At Stage One, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed a new ward called Nunhead, comprising the whole of the existing Barset ward along with parts of adjacent wards which, it was stated, focused on the “established and recognised community of Nunhead”. The proposed northern boundary would lie north of Queen’s Road (the boundary with their proposed Livesey and Peckham wards); and a modified western boundary would follow Rye Lane, Heaton Road and Ellery Street, before turning north to the Peckham Rye to Nunhead railway line and following this to the junction with Evelina Road, then along much of the existing ward boundary to Linden Grove, along Brockley Footpath and Inverton Road to the borough boundary. For The Lane ward, they proposed transferring to it an area in the west of Bellenden ward, bounded in the north by the present ward boundary, in the south by East Dulwich Road and in the west by Adys Road, Maxted Road, Avondale Rise and the Peckham Rye to East Dulwich railway line.

111 We noted a discrepancy between the figures supplied by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats for part of polling district UB between their proposed Nunhead and Peckham Rye wards.

After seeking clarification from officers at the Borough Council and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, we calculated that this discrepancy would reduce the degree of electoral equality anticipated in their proposed Peckham Rye ward. To address this, we recommended modifying the southern boundary between Peckham Rye and their proposed Sydenham Hill ward (detailed later). We also proposed modifying the northern boundary between Nunhead and Livesey wards, to further improve electoral equality in the area, so that it would follow the centre of Peckham High Street and Queen’s Road before going north along Asylum Road and west to the Old Kent Road, to the north of properties along Clifton Crescent.

112 With this recalculation of the electorate data and our proposed boundary modifications, in our draft recommendations report we considered that the two wards proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats would provide a fairer level of representation for the wider area than would the Council’s. We therefore endorsed their proposals as part of our draft recommendations. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Nunhead ward would be 2 per cent below the average and in The Lane ward equal to the average (1 per cent below and 3 per cent below respectively in 2003).

113 At Stage Three, the Council and Labour Party opposed our draft recommendations for The Lane ward, arguing that the western boundary of the ward runs through a densely populated area of housing which “has a clear common identity” and that “the divide along a series of narrow streets is not sufficiently clearly defined to serve as a ward boundary”. They suggested an alternative warding pattern in the area, broadly uniting the northern part of our proposed Nunhead ward (north of Evelina Road, but south of the A202) and the northern part of our proposed The Lane ward. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported our proposed The Lane ward and, additionally, the Conservatives argued that the Council and Labour Party’s proposed Stage Three warding pattern in the area “stretches, east-west, over two thirds of the width of the borough.”

114 The Council and Labour Party considered that the proposed Nunhead ward would be an “exceptionally elongated ward with no common identity”. They also argued that the area north of Queen’s Road had greater links with the Peckham area than with Nunhead, and that much of the

existing Waverley ward, which they considered would “identify with Nunhead”, was not included in the proposed Nunhead ward. They did not consider that the boundary along Linden Grove, Brockley Footpath and Inverton Road respected local ties, and proposed an alternative warding pattern. A resident of Consort ward proposed that Queens Road should form the northern boundary for Nunhead ward. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for Nunhead ward.

115 We have carefully considered all the evidence available to us, along with all the representations we received. While we considered the Council and Labour Party’s concerns over the proposed Nunhead ward, we were not persuaded that their proposals for Nunhead and The Lane wards would achieve better electoral equality or more adequately reflect the statutory criteria in this area and adjacent wards. In particular, we judge that while the A202 Queens Road would, when viewed in isolation, form a natural ward boundary, adopting it in this area would have a consequentially adverse affect on electoral equality in this and surrounding wards.

116 In the light of the representations received during Stage Three, we noted that our draft mapping for The Lane and Nunhead wards incorrectly showed the boundary between the two wards along Rye Lane, Heaton Road, Ellery Street and Gordon Road. After re-examining our draft recommendations, we concluded that this boundary should correctly have followed the existing ward boundary along Clayton Road and the railway line, as reflected in the electorate data for the two wards contained in our draft recommendations. We are therefore correcting this in our final recommendations as shown on the large map in the back of this report.

Alleyn, Bellenden and Lyndhurst wards

117 Alleyn, Bellenden and Lyndhurst lie in the south-east of the borough. The average number of electors per councillor in the present Alleyn, Bellenden and Lyndhurst wards varies by 5 per cent or less from the borough average both initially and in 2003. Alleyn ward returns two councillors, while Bellenden and Lyndhurst wards each return three.

118 Under the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ Stage One proposals, Alleyn ward would be subject to significant change, with the majority of the existing Alleyn ward (apart from an

area south of Lordship Lane) forming a new East Dulwich ward together with an area of the existing Rye ward to the south (broadly west of Dunstan’s Road and south of Underhill Road) and areas of the existing Bellenden ward (south of Grove Vale and East Dulwich Road and west of Crystal Palace Road) and Lyndhurst ward (Dulwich Hospital and an area east of Welbourne Grove). The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also proposed retaining the majority of Lyndhurst ward unchanged. They proposed retaining the existing northern, southern and western boundaries. The eastern boundary – from a point where the railway line crosses Avondale Rise to a point just north of East Dulwich railway station – would be modified, transferring an area of properties currently in Bellenden ward into a modified Lyndhurst ward, which they proposed renaming South Camberwell.

119 The Council’s Stage One proposals retained the majority of Bellenden ward’s present boundaries, only proposing new ward boundaries in the south-eastern corner of the ward (to follow a line north-west of properties along Barry Road); in the south-west (to include an area around Fellbrigg Road, currently in Alleyn ward and transferring an area south of Grove Vale Road into a modified Lyndhurst ward); and the north-east (to include an area south of the Queens Road to Denmark Hill railway line, via Peckham Rye station, currently in The Lane ward). Under the Council’s Stage One proposed Lyndhurst and Bellenden wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the average and equal to the average (9 per cent and 5 per cent below in 2003). Under the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ proposed South Camberwell and East Dulwich wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent and 5 per cent above the average respectively (both equal to the average in 2003).

120 We adopted the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ South Camberwell and East Dulwich wards as part of our draft recommendations, which we considered would achieve better electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria, and utilise easily identifiable ward boundaries. They would also facilitate a good electoral scheme across the borough.

121 At Stage Three, the Council and Labour Party did not support the proposed South Camberwell or East Dulwich wards. They commented that the area of Lyndhurst ward east of the railway line had “no common identity within the proposed [South

Camberwell] ward”, and that part of the proposed ward “is completely cut off from the Lyndhurst section”. They also considered that the proposed East Dulwich ward “cuts across a clear boundary, Lordship Lane (A2216), unnecessarily” and that it is not “appropriate to use Melbourne Grove as a boundary”. Additionally they did not consider that the ward name, South Camberwell, would accurately reflect the inclusion of parts of Dulwich within the ward. The Right Honourable Tessa Jowell MP supported the Council and Labour Party’s alternative warding arrangements in this area, as did one resident of Bellenden ward. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for these two wards. The Liberal Democrats proposed renaming South Camberwell ward as Grove, and a local resident proposed renaming it as Champion Hill.

122 We have carefully re-examined our draft recommendations for this area, but do not consider that the part of Bellenden ward which would form part of our proposed South Camberwell ward would be detached from the rest of the ward, as the area has connections across the railway along Avondale Rise and Grove Vale. We also noted that the railway line does not form a boundary along the entire eastern edge of Lyndhurst ward, and we conclude that our draft proposals, which would achieve good electoral equality, would satisfactorily reflect the statutory criteria. Moreover, we are unable to adopt the Council and Labour Party’s alternative proposals for this area as it would be incompatible with our proposals for adjoining wards.

123 While we consider that Lordship Lane would form an excellent boundary when viewed in isolation, we are unable to utilise the whole road and achieve satisfactory electoral equality in our proposed East Dulwich and surrounding wards. In our draft proposals, we have as far as possible used Lordship Lane as a ward boundary, where this is compatible with our primary aim of achieving electoral equality. We recognise that Welbourne Grove may not be as readily identifiable a ward boundary as Lordship Lane, but we do not judge a more suitable alternative boundary is available in the vicinity that would achieve acceptable electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. Furthermore, we are not persuaded that including Goose Green along East Dulwich ward’s northern boundary would provide a better ward boundary than our proposed boundary along East Dulwich Road. We are therefore confirming our

draft proposals for South Camberwell and East Dulwich wards as part of our final recommendations.

124 We do not consider a consensus exists on the ward name South Camberwell or that evidence is available to us to move away from our draft ward names in this area, which we are confirming as final.

Rye and Waverley wards

125 The two-member Rye and Waverley wards lie in the south-east of the borough. Rye ward is under-represented with 17 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (13 per cent more in 2003) and Waverley ward is over-represented, with 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor (10 per cent fewer in 2003).

126 The Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ Stage One proposals included combining an area of the existing Rye ward, broadly north of Underhill Road, with an area of the existing Waverley ward, south-west of Inverton Road, Brockley footpath and Linden Grove and south of East Dulwich Road (including Peckham Rye Park). A further area bounded by East Dulwich Road, Crystal Palace Road and Upland Road (currently in Bellenden ward) would also be transferred into the enlarged Rye ward, which they proposed renaming Peckham Rye ward. Under their proposals, the area around Nunhead Cemetery would form part of a new Nunhead ward, and the remainder of Rye ward would form part of their proposed Sydenham Hill and East Dulwich wards.

127 As mentioned above, we noted a discrepancy in the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ electorate data for polling district UB, which would reduce the anticipated electoral equality in Peckham Rye and Nunhead wards under their proposals. To address this imbalance, and in the light of our draft proposals for neighbouring wards, we proposed modifying their boundary between Peckham Rye and Sydenham Hill wards, transferring an area around Hillcourt Road from their proposed Sydenham Hill to Peckham Rye ward. Under our proposed Peckham Rye ward, with our recalculated electorate data and boundary modification, the average number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the average (5 per cent below in 2003). We further concluded that, in looking at the borough as a whole, the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ proposals

would contribute to a better overall electoral scheme. We therefore included their proposed Peckham Rye ward, with an amended southern boundary, as described above, as part of our draft recommendations.

128 At Stage Three the Council and Labour Party opposed our proposed Peckham Rye ward, arguing that “the ward has no common identity, stretching across Peckham Rye park” and that electors to the west of Forest Hill Road do not share common links with those electors east of Peckham Rye. They also considered that the western ward boundary along Hillcourt Road was “poorly defined”. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for Peckham Rye ward.

129 We noted the concerns of the Council and Labour Party, but given the need to put forward a substantial reconfiguration in this area in order to provide a pattern of three-member wards and achieve electoral equality, we remain unable to utilise Peckham Rye as a boundary. Furthermore, we are content that these proposals offer the best balance achievable between the statutory criteria and we are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Peckham Rye ward as final.

College and Ruskin wards

130 The two-member College ward and the three-member Ruskin ward are located in the far south of the borough. College ward is under-represented under the current arrangements with 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (5 per cent in 2003) and Ruskin ward is over-represented by 8 per cent (11 per cent in 2003).

131 The borough’s most southerly existing ward, College, is both under-represented and served by two councillors. In order to address this situation, both Stage One schemes proposed extending the current ward northwards to form a three-member ward. The Council proposed extending the ward northwards to incorporate part of Dulwich Village (currently in Ruskin ward). The Council considered that its proposed boundaries would “create an easily identifiable and distinct ward”, combining much of Dulwich Village with the area covered by the existing College ward south of Dulwich Park. Under this proposal, the number of electors per councillor in College ward would be 7 per cent above the borough average (4 per cent in 2003).

132 At Stage One, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats submitted an alternative proposal that would expand College ward to the north-east, and they proposed renaming it Sydenham Hill ward. Their proposed boundary would follow Dunstan’s Road, Underhill Road and Langton Rise, thereby including the Dawson Heights and Lordship Lane estates in the new ward. Under their proposals the average number of electors per councillor in Sydenham Hill ward would be 6 per cent above the average (3 per cent in 2003).

133 While both proposals would achieve similar levels of electoral equality, we considered that the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ proposals would better reflect local identities in the area, noting that the Council’s proposals would split Dulwich Village and miss the opportunity to retain the A205 South Circular Road as a distinct boundary. However, in order to address the electoral imbalance in the Peckham Rye ward which would result from the apparent calculation error noted above, and improve electoral equality even further in this and neighbouring wards, we proposed a slight modification to the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ proposed ward boundary, transferring an area around Hillcourt Road from their proposed Sydenham Hill to Peckham Rye ward. We also proposed retaining the ward name of College, rather than adopting Sydenham Hill as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, as the new ward, with our modifications, would cover broadly the same area as the existing ward. Under our draft recommendations, using revised electorate figures, the number of electors per councillor in College ward would be equal to the borough average (2 per cent below in 2003).

134 Ruskin ward lies immediately north of College ward. Under the Council’s proposals for a modified ward, the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the borough average (9 per cent below in 2003). The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed minimal changes to Ruskin ward, only moving away from the existing ward boundaries in the east, to follow the centre of Lordship Lane from a point north of the junction with Overhill Road, then following an alternative line along Welbourne Grove and East Dulwich Grove, before turning south along the East Dulwich to North Dulwich railway line. They proposed renaming this ward Village ward.

135 We considered that the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposed Village ward would achieve a good degree of electoral equality and utilise easily identifiable ward boundaries, and we therefore adopted this ward as part of our draft recommendations. The number of electors per councillor in Village ward, using revised electorate figures, would be 7 per cent above the borough average (4 per cent in 2003).

136 At Stage Three, the Council and Labour Party opposed our proposals for Village and College wards arguing that College ward is "very disjointed" and that "whilst we understand the argument put forward by the Conservatives and the Commission ... to keep the Dulwich Village area united [we are] concerned that the knock-on effect on other wards, such as Peckham Rye, South Camberwell and Nunhead, make wards with few community ties". The Council and Labour Party also proposed an alternative College ward (broadly the same as the Council's Stage One College ward) and a new Dulwich Hamlet ward to the north west of College ward.

137 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for College and Village wards and argued against the Council's and Labour Party's alternative proposals for the area, which they considered would split Dulwich Village between two wards, adding "we do not believe that the statutory criterion of effective and convenient local government could possibly be achieved by drawing a boundary through such a strong local community". Both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats suggested the proposed College ward, should be called Sydenham Hill, as did Councillor Humphreys, member for College ward and Councillor Bradbury, member for Ruskin ward. Councillor Bradbury also added that the draft proposals for the area he currently represents "closely match ties of community". The Right Honourable Tessa Jowell MP supported the Council's and Labour Party's proposals in this area, adding that our proposed wards of Nunhead, South Camberwell, Peckham Rye and College did not reflect local communities nor utilise clear ward boundaries.

138 Having considered all the evidence available to us in respect of College and Village wards, and having revisited the area to re-examine our draft boundaries together with the Council and Labour Party's alternative proposals, we remain of the view

that the A205 provides a natural ward boundary, and that the Council's and Labour Party's proposals for College ward would split the clearly identifiable Dulwich Village area between two wards. We also remain of the view that, on balance, our proposals to extend College ward to the north-east, crossing Lordship Lane, would achieve a good warding pattern in the area while having regard to the statutory criteria. We therefore do not consider that sufficiently persuasive new evidence has been put forward at Stage Three, to support a view that a demonstrably better electoral pattern is available for the area, while also considering the ward pattern for the borough as a whole. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for College and Village wards as final. We are retaining our proposed ward name of College, as we remain of the view that it would accurately reflect the majority of the area covered by the ward.

Conclusions

139 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) the boundary between Walworth and Faraday wards should be amended, transferring an area of Burgess Park broadly west of Calmington Road into Faraday ward;
- (b) Walworth ward should be renamed East Walworth;
- (c) Cathedral ward should be renamed Cathedrals.

140 We conclude that, in Southwark:

- (a) there should be 63 members, one less than at present;
- (b) there should be 21 wards, four fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all the existing wards, with each ward returning three councillors.

141 Figure 4 (overleaf) shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures.

¹⁴² As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Southwark Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from nine to zero. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue in 2003, with all wards expected to vary by less than 10 per cent. Our final recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

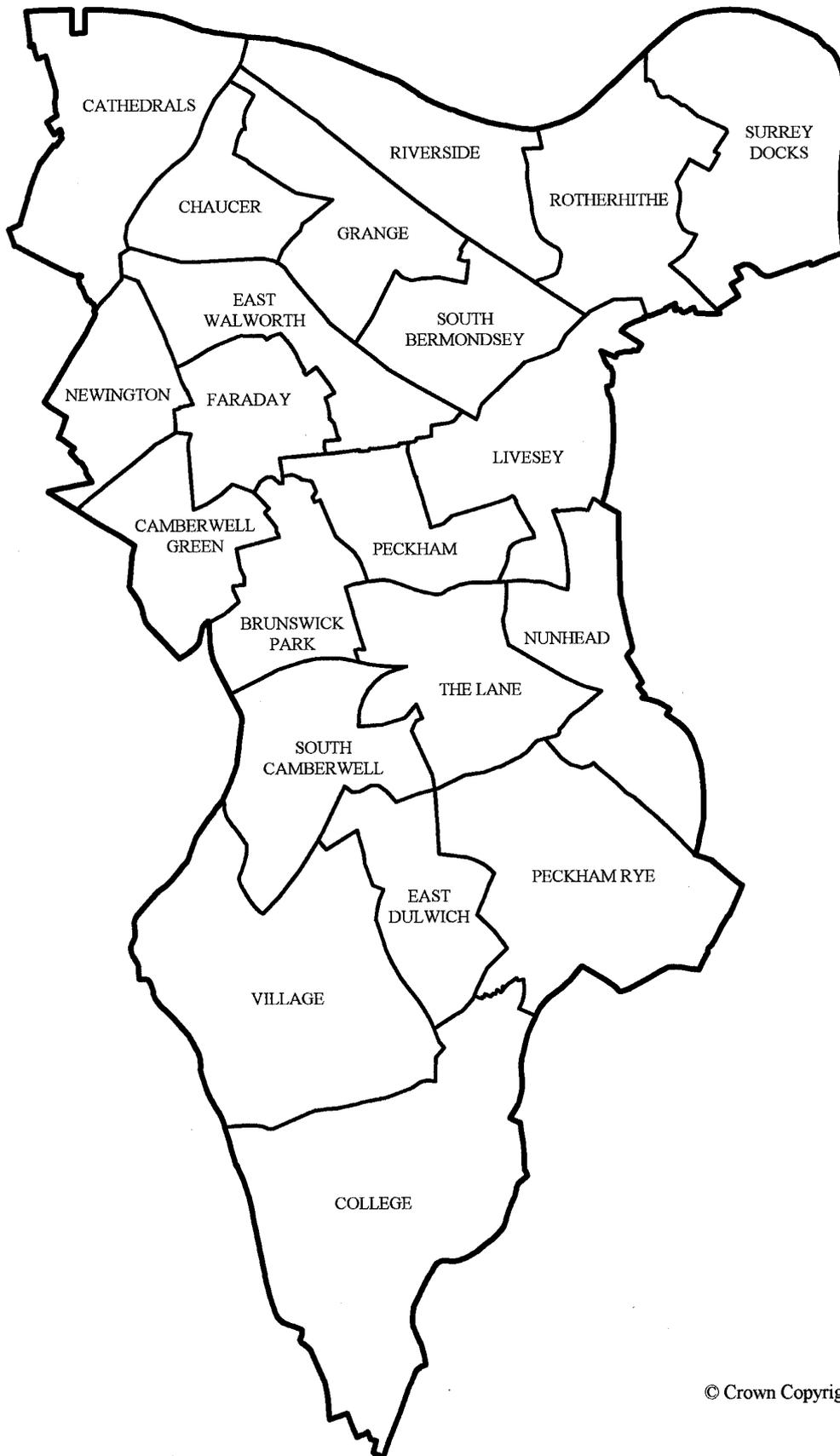
Final Recommendation

Southwark Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map in the back of the report.

*Figure 4 :
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	64	63	64	63
Number of wards	25	21	25	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,508	2,547	2,558	2,599
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	9	0	13	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	4	0	4	0

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Southwark



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6. NEXT STEPS

¹⁴³ Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Southwark and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

¹⁴⁴ It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

¹⁴⁵ All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

