LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

DRAFT
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
BROMLEY

June 1999
This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London borough of Bromley:

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Bromley is inserted inside the back cover of the report.
WHY YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY IS UNDER REVIEW

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations to the Government on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government, the boundaries of individual local authority areas, and to their electoral arrangements, such as the number of councillors representing residents in each area.

As a result of changes in the electorate, we are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England.

In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review of Bromley 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 can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names, and propose the creation or abolition of wards. We cannot recommend changes to the external administrative boundary of the borough as part of this review.

This report sets out our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Bromley. Our conclusions are summarised at the front of the report, and illustrated on the large map inside the back cover. Details of our draft recommendations, and how to comment on them, are set out in Chapters 4 and 5.

We have not yet decided on our final recommendations and wish to use this period to seek further evidence. We will be prepared to modify or change our draft recommendations in the light of views expressed if, in our judgement, the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would be better served. It is therefore important that all those interested in the review should give us their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.
SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Bromley on 5 January 1999.

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

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

- in four of the 26 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, but no wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;
- by 2004 electoral equality is expected to deteriorate, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in three wards, and by more than 20 per cent in one ward.

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 136-137) are that:

- Bromley Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors, as at present;
- there should be 22 wards, four fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.

These draft 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 none of the 22 wards would the number of electors per councillor vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, either currently or in 2004.

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

- We will consult on our draft recommendations for 11 weeks from 29 June 1999. We have not yet decided on our final recommendations and wish to use this period to seek further evidence. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses if, in our judgement, the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would be better served. It is important, therefore, that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.
- After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.
- It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will determine when any changes come into effect.

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 13 September 1999:

Review Manager
Bromley Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphins Court
10/11 Great Turnstiles
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 0171 404 6142
E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors</th>
<th>Constituent areas (existing wards)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bickley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bickley ward (part); Plaistow &amp; Sundridge ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Biggin Hill</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Biggin Hill ward (part); Darwin ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bromley Common &amp; Keston</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bickley ward (part); Bromley Common &amp; Keston ward (part); Farnborough ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bromley Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bickley ward (part); Bromley Common ward (part); Hayes ward (part); Martin's Hill &amp; Town ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Chelsfield &amp; Pearl's Bottom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chelsfield &amp; Goddington ward (part); Darwin ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Chislehurst</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chislehurst ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Clock House</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Anerley ward (part); Clock House ward (part); Lawrie Park &amp; Kent House ward (part); Penge ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Copers Cope</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Copers Cope ward; Kelsey Park ward (part); Shortlands ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Cray Valley East</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Orempington Central ward (part); St Mary Cray ward (part); St Paul's Cray ward (part)</td>
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<td>10 Cray Valley West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>St Mary Cray ward (part); St Paul's Cray ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Crystal Palace</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anerley ward (part); Lawrie Park &amp; Kent House ward (part); Penge ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Darwin</td>
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<td>Biggin Hill ward (part); Darwin ward (part); Farnborough ward (part)</td>
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<td>Crofton ward (part); Farnborough ward (part)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Hayes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hayes ward (part); Shortlands ward (part); West Wickham North ward (part)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Kelsey &amp; Eden Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Clock House ward (part); Eden Park ward; Kelsey Park ward (part); Shortlands ward (part); West Wickham North ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Mottingham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chislehurst ward (part); Mottingham ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Orpington</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chelsfield &amp; Goddington ward (part); Orpington Central ward (part); Penge Wood &amp; Knoll ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Penge &amp; Cator</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lawrie Park &amp; Kent House ward (part); Penge ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Petts Wood</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Crofton ward (part); Farnborough ward (part); Petts Wood &amp; Knoll ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Plaistow &amp; Sundridge</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Martin's Hill &amp; Town ward (part); Plaistow &amp; Sundridge ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Shortlands</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hayes ward (part); Shortlands ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 West Wickham</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>West Wickham North ward (part); West Wickham South ward (part)</td>
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Note: Map 2 and the large map in the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.
### Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Bromley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1999)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2004)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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<td>10,745</td>
<td>3,582</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>10,727</td>
<td>3,576</td>
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<td>10,799</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>10,690</td>
<td>3,563</td>
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<td>3,508</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>11,250</td>
<td>3,750</td>
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<td>11,390</td>
<td>3,797</td>
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<td>7  Copers Cope</td>
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<td>3,684</td>
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<td>3,626</td>
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<td>3,710</td>
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<td>11,307</td>
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<td>-5</td>
<td>7,143</td>
<td>3,572</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3,496</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>3,627</td>
<td>3,627</td>
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<td>12 Farnborough &amp; Crofton</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>11,980</td>
<td>3,993</td>
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<td>3,988</td>
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<td>11,074</td>
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<td>3,630</td>
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<td>3,924</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7,967</td>
<td>3,984</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

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

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London borough of Bromley.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review of Bromley 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 periodic electoral reviews (PERs), we must have regard to:
   - the statutory criteria in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, i.e. the need to:
     - reflect the identities and interests of local communities, and
     - secure effective and convenient local government;
   - the Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Appendix B).

4 We also have regard to our Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties (second edition published in March 1998). This 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 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 usually to be between 40 and 80. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already ensures 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.

7 The review is in four stages (Figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Stages of the Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Submission of proposals to the Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>The Commission's analysis and deliberation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The London Boroughs

8 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 first London borough reviews by the Commission. (The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.)

9 Most London boroughs have not been reviewed since 1977. Having discussed the appropriate timing of London borough reviews with local authority interests, we therefore 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 in June 1998 and the last group began in February 1999, with completion planned for June 1999 to February 2000.

10 We have sought to ensure that all concerned are aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our Guidance have been 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 have welcomed the opportunity to meet with chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the great 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.

11 Before starting 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, proposed 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 boroughs reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, Bromley is in the fourth phase of reviews.

12 The Government's subsequent White Paper, Modern Local Government — In Touch with the People, published in July 1998, sets 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.

13 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 so far is that proposals for three-member ward patterns are emerging from most areas in London.

14 As a separate exercise to PERs, the Commission was directed by the Secretary of State to review the electoral arrangements of the Greater London Authority. Our recommendations were put to the Secretary of State in November 1998.

15 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 Bromley

16 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Bromley. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1977 (Report No. 284).

17 Stage One began on 5 January 1999, when we wrote to Bromley 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. 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, the end of Stage One, was 29 March 1999.

18 At Stage Two, we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations. We also held a public meeting in Bromley in order to seek further evidence from interested parties regarding the appropriate number of councillors to serve on Bromley Borough Council. An independent assessor, Mr Grant, was appointed to chair the meeting, which was held in Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, on 29 April 1999. Mr Roger Grant reported his findings to the Commission, which took account of them during its deliberations over the Bromley review. A note of the public meeting's proceedings is available from the Commission on request.

19 Stage Three began on 29 June 1999 and will end on 13 September 1999. This stage involves publication of the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them. We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.

20 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to move away from them in any areas, and submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, he will make an order. The Secretary of State will then determine when any changes come into effect.
2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

21 The borough of Bromley, with an area of some 15,000 hectares, is the largest London borough. Situated in the south-east of the city, Bromley is bounded by the boroughs of Croydon to the west, Lambeth and Southwark to the north-west, and Lewisham, Greenwich and Bexley to the north. Sevenoaks district in Kent provides a border to the east and south, while Tandridge District in Surrey borders Bromley to the south-west. Despite its size, Bromley is one of the least densely populated boroughs in outer London, with 19 persons per hectare in 1998. The borough's main settlements are Beckenham, Bromley and Orpington but it also includes smaller settlements such as Penge and Chislehurst and parts of Mottingham and Crystal Palace.

22 Bromley is an area of significant diversity, with densely populated urban areas in the north and less populated areas in the south which are predominantly green belt countryside. The green belt has prevented the spread of development in the east and south of the borough and has helped to preserve the character of several villages and hamlets, such as Downe, Cudham and Chelsfield, and the larger self-contained community of Biggin Hill. Biggin Hill Airport occupies a former RAF airfield in the south of the borough. Bromley is served by several railway connections to central London. Two main lines cut through the borough from west to east and north-west to south-east, respectively, and provide significant boundaries in some areas of the borough. The A20, on the northern fringe, and the A21 trunk roads link the borough with central London.

23 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'.

24 The electorate of the borough (February 1999) is 223,920. The Council currently has 60 councillors who are elected from 26 wards (Map 1 and Figure 4). Nine wards are each represented by three councillors, 16 wards elect two councillors each, while one ward (Darwin) is represented by one councillor. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years. Since the last electoral review, there has been a moderate decrease in electorate in the borough, with around 2 per cent fewer electors than two decades ago.

25 At present, each councillor represents an average of 3,732 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 3,772 by the year 2004 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in four of the 26 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in no ward by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalances are in Mottingham and Copers Cope wards where each of the two councillors represent on average 17 and 16 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.
Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

<table>
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(continued overleaf)
### Existing Electoral Arrangements

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<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2004)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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</table>

Source: 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 1999, electors in Mottingham ward were relatively under-represented by 17 per cent, while electors in Biggins Hill ward were relatively under-represented by 14 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### 3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

24 At the start of the review, we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Bromley Borough Council.

25 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers from the Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their cooperation and assistance. We received 44 representations during Stage One. The Borough Council, the Conservative Group on the Council and a local resident, Mr Fairbairn, all submitted borough-wide schemes. These, with accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission by appointment, along with copies of all other representations received.

#### Bromley Borough Council

28 The Borough Council’s submission proposed the creation of 23 three-member wards for Bromley, putting forward a pattern of three-member wards in order to facilitate annual elections. It proposed an increase in the number of councillors from 60 to 69, and a significant change to the pattern of wards throughout the borough. The Borough Council asserted that residents are not adequately represented under the current electoral arrangements, since Bromley is the largest borough in geographical terms and has one of the highest numbers of electors per councillor “when compared with other London Boroughs, both outer and inner.” The Council argued that nine additional councillors would aid in reducing councillor workloads, ensure adequate member participation in committees, and enhance member involvement in their local communities.

29 In the north-west of the borough, the Council proposed relatively few modifications to the boundaries of Penge, Clock House and Eton Park wards. It proposed a new Crystal Palace ward, largely replacing the existing Ankerley ward. Under the Council’s proposals, part of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward would be amalgamated with Crofters Cope ward to form a new Cator ward, and the existing Kelvey Park and Shortlands wards would be replaced by a new Kelvey ward. The Borough Council proposed a new Bromley Town ward, which would largely comprise the existing Martin’s Hill & Town Ward. The existing Bickley and Plaistow & Sundridge wards would be subject to modifications. Further south, the Borough Council’s scheme provided for a revision of ward boundaries in the Bromley Common, Keston, Hayes and West Wickham South area. It proposed creating two three-member wards, Bromley Common and Hayes & Keston Commons, to replace the existing three wards.

30 To the east of the London Charing Cross to Sevenoaks railway line, the Borough Council proposed creating a three-member Mottingham ward, comprising the existing Mottingham ward and the northern part of the existing Chislehurst ward. The remaining section of Chislehurst ward and the west part of St Paul’s Cray ward would form a revised Chislehurst ward. The Council’s scheme for the Cray Valley area proposed replacing St Paul’s Cray and St Mary Cray wards, currently divided north-south along the railway line, with two wards, Cray Valley West and Cray Valley East, on either side of A224 (Sevenoaks Way/Cray Avenue) arterial road.

31 The Council’s scheme provided for minor changes to the existing Orpington Central, Petts Wood & Knoll and Crofton wards, and proposed creating a new Chelsfield ward in the southern part of the existing Chelsfield & Goddington ward. It put forward a new Farnborough & Downe ward, comprising the existing Farnborough ward together with the majority of the single-member Darwin ward. The boundaries of the current Biggin Hill ward would be changed to include the remaining section of Darwin ward, allowing for the creation of a three-member ward in this area.

32 Bromley Borough Council’s proposals would provide improved electoral equality for the borough as a whole, with the number of electors per councillor varying by no more than 10 per cent from the average in all 23 proposed wards, currently and in 2004. The Council’s proposals are summarised in Appendix A.
Mr Fawthrop

36 A local resident, Mr Fawthrop, submitted a borough-wide scheme for 60 single-member wards, largely based on existing polling district boundaries. Mr Fawthrop argued that the advantage of a scheme entirely based on single-member wards "is that identifiable communities are each represented by their own councillor, and strong links between the electorate and councillors are maintained. He also said that such a system would "result in the need to have an excessive number of councillors" and proposed maintaining the current council size of 60.

37 In several areas M. Fawthrop proposed creating new wards around locally recognised places – Birkbeck, Ravensbourne, Chislehurst & Platt’s Bottom, Coney Hall, Elmers End, Goddington, Keston and Chislehurst Common – which are not separately represented under existing warding arrangements. In the south of the borough, Mr Fawthrop proposed keeping rural areas separate from urban areas, "so that the needs of these rural communities would not be lost in a greater urban area." The scheme proposed largely maintaining the existing Darren ward, creating two wards in the existing Biggin Hill ward and creating a new Chislehurst & Platt’s Bottom ward. In so far as possible, Mr Fawthrop stated that his proposed warding arrangement "enables local, natural, and community boundaries to be retained in the constraints of electoral equality". Under Mr Fawthrop’s proposed 60 single-member ward scheme, no ward would have an electoral balance of more than 6 per cent above or below the borough average. Appendix A summarises Mr Fawthrop’s proposals, showing the electoral imbalances for each of the proposed wards on current and projected electorates.

Members of Parliament

38 Three submissions were received from local Members of Parliament. John Horam, MP for Ongar, expressed his support for the Conservative Group’s proposals and in particular supported two aspects of their proposals: “that the number of councillors remains at 60, and that the wards in the Ongar constituency be set out in their present shape.” Sir Terence, MP for Bromley & Chislehurst, expressed his support for the Conservative Group’s proposed warding arrangements in the Parliamentary division of Bromley and Chislehurst and the proposed council size of 60. He stated “as a member of the Common Services Committee on the Greater London Authority Bill, I am conscious of the additional representation this will afford – and believe that an increased number of Borough councillors would be excessive.” Jacqui Lait, MP for Beckenham, also expressed her support for maintaining the current council size of 60 members. She stated that since arriving as MP, it has become apparent that natural communities in Beckenham are not all represented and “that there had been a lack of cohesion, which the Crystal Palace and Langley Park communities come together and are recognised in local government.”

Other Representations

39 We received a further 38 representations, including nine submissions as part of the Borough Council’s own consultation procedure. Of these representations, 17 representations referred to the proposed changes in council size. A local resident opposed any change in council size, stating that “the present total of 60 seems ... to be eminently practical and to work very effectively.” He also expressed his support for the Conservative Group’s proposed warding arrangements which “reflect the natural communities of the borough extremely well ... [and] in many cases are a clear improvement on the present boundaries”. Two local residents stated that the number of councillors should be kept unchanged, and one resident felt that “an increasing number of councillors ... can only mean a greater burden on local taxation with few, if any, benefits.” In its submission, the Beckenham Liberal Democrats Central Branch stated that they “have been consulted on various proposals and have decided that the Borough Council’s proposed wards had been well arranged. During Stage One, we also received 10 submissions from Conservative councillors from Bickley, Copers Cope, Chislehurst, Darwin, Hayes, Petts Wood & Knoll and Plaistow & Sundridge wards, favouring no change in the number of councillors and supporting the Conservative Group’s scheme. Ongar Constituency Conservative Association, Beckenham Constituency Conservative Association and Bromley & Chislehurst Conservative Association also expressed their support for the Conservative Group’s proposals for 20 three-member wards.

40 Cudham Residents’ Association, Pratts Bottom Residents’ Association, Leaves Green & Kenton Vale Residents’ Association, Downe Residents’ Association, Oldbury Hill Residents’ Association, North Oxted Residents’ Association, Renton Park Residents’ Association and five local residents expressed their opposition to proposed changes in Darwin ward which would combine it with Farnborough ward, as proposed by the Borough Council. These submissions referred to the special rural qualities of the Cudham, Downe, Pratts Bottom and Leaves Green settlements and the distinct identities of the Green Belt communities in relation to the other urban areas in Bromley. Chislehurst Village Society suggested that Chislehurst & Goddington ward should be joined with Pratts Bottom. Copers Cope Area Residents’ Association expressed its opposition to the Borough Council’s proposals in the Beckenham area, stating that they “seem to run directly counter to principles ... of recognising natural communities and maintaining the integrity of town centres.” St Mary Cray Action Group accepted the Borough Council’s proposed modifications in the Cray Valley area and stated that they were pleased “that certain railway lines are no longer seen as ward boundaries.” However, they stated that a small number of properties in the Chislehurst area regretted that they would be transferred to a revised Mottingham ward under the Borough Council’s proposed warding arrangements.

41 We received five submissions regarding changes in the West Wickham, Hayes and Shortlands areas. West Wickham Residents’ Association asserted that the Borough Council’s proposed new boundaries “separate key areas from the focal point of the community as a whole” by transferring residential areas which are physically a logical part of West Wickham to other areas “where there is no natural affinity, either social or geographical”. A resident of West Wickham North ward argued that his area should remain connected with West Wickham or Hayes. Councillor Manning, who represents Hayes ward, opposed the Borough Council’s proposed re-warding of Hayes which “ignores the historic community in two and separate the historic village of Hayes from other parts of the Hayes community. She asserted that “this community cohesion needs to be maintained and nurtured ... [and] to divide the Hayes community as it is proposed by the Council is unsupported, whilst being at total variance with the guidelines issued by...
the Commission.

As part of the Borough Council's own consultation process, Shortlands Residents' Association expressed its opposition to ward changes, arguing that the current Shortlands ward should be retained and expanded to include the eastern part of Kelsey Park ward. Canon Redman, the vicar of Shortlands, referring to the Borough Council's proposals, stated that "the loss of part of the present Shortlands ward on the eastern side is disappointing from the constituency, parish and Beddington deanery point of view."

42 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Bromley is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being "as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough."

43 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, 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 ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

44 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.

45 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 the minimum, such an objective 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 absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an 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

46 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 1 per cent from 223,920 to 226,290 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expected most of the growth to be in six new housing developments: at Cosmos House (Bromley Common & Keston ward), Farnborough Hospital (Farnborough ward), Orpington Hospital (Chislehurst & Petts Wood ward), the redevelopment of Lewisham College (Coppetts Grove ward) and the redevelopment of the Glade Wellcom site at Langley Park (Shortlands ward). The Council has 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 and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorate of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

47 We accept that this is an inexact science, and having given consideration to the Council's forecast electorates, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

Council Size

48 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 60. The London Borough of Bromley is currently served by 60 councillors.

49 At Stage One, 45 representations were received, of which three - from the Borough Council, the Borough Council's Conservative Group and local resident, Mr. Fawthrop - put forward borough-wide schemes. Other representations were primarily concerned with particular ward boundaries.
or areas. All three borough-wide schemes would provide a much improved level of electoral equality than currently exists. However, while the Conservative Group and Mr. Fawthrop proposed that there should be 60 councillors, the Borough Council proposed that there should be 69, an increase of nine councillors.

So with all our reviews, we start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government, but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be true. At the end of Stage One, we considered that we required further information and evidence from the parties concerned before reaching conclusions on the most appropriate council size for three electoral schemes submitted to us. We therefore appointed an independent assessor, Mr. Roger Grant, to conduct a public meeting in the area and report to us with his findings. The meeting was held on 29 April 1977 at Bromley Civic Centre, Bromley, 180 people attended. A note of the meeting is available from the Commission’s offices on request.

In its submission, the Borough Council's Conservative Group noted that "there are currently 60 councillors and there has been the same number since the Borough was formed in 1965." It argued that the council has run efficiently for many years, and that it has developed committees to structure and business processes. For the common council size of 60. In addition, it noted that the borough's electorate had remained relatively unchanged over the last 20 years. In formulating its scheme, the Conservative Group stated that it had considered proposals for both increased and reduced council sizes for the borough. It concluded that while a smaller council size "might make for cheaper and more efficient local government...", and that a larger council size would be unwieldy and costly, and would have no counterbalancing advantage. On this basis, it put forward a scheme for 60 councillors representing 20 wards.

At the public meeting, Councillor Wilkinson, on behalf of the Conservative Group, did not accept the premise that there is a need for a smaller number of councillors. He noted that the present number of councillors cannot handle the current or future workload of the Council. He noted that the number of committee meetings had actually fallen, from 324 per year in 1986/7 to 201 in 1997/8, and that this compared with over 600 committee meetings a year in the neighbouring borough of Lewisham. He was proposing a reduction in council size (from 67 to 54 members). He considered that the increasing delegation of functions and decision-making to officers over such matters as planning applications had enabled councillors to concentrate more on policy and representational work. In conclusion, he stated that the current number of councillors had been able to cope with the changing and decreasing workload, and that on this basis the most appropriate number of councillors was 60.

Mr. Fawthrop, in his submission, also considered that "there seems to be no compelling argument for any increase in the number of councillors", and proposed a council size of 60 representing 60 wards. At the public meeting, he added that an effective council size would vary according to the particular council, and is dependent on issues such as the degree of delegation to officers and the standing orders of the council. He argued that the Council had failed to show why an extra nine were needed, and had provided no evidence that councillors are currently failing to meet their responsibilities and had provided no objective reasons for increasing council size.

The majority of other representations received at Stage One mentioning the issue of council size tended to prefer the current council size of 60. Old Hill & Cudham Lane North Residents’ Association commented that “increasing the size of the Council, together with elections in three years out of four, will increase greatly expenditure on administration without necessarily resulting in a better service to ratepayers.” Mr. John Horam MP argued that “the record of Bromley Council does not suggest that it has been inefficient or that more councillors would make it more effective, and I am not aware as an MP for the Borough for the last seven years that the residents feel inadequately represented by having too few councillors.”

The issue of council size has not generally proved contentious during our periodic electoral reviews. The indicative range bands set out in the Council - 40 to 60 wards, suggest a council size of 54 for London boroughs - appear to have met with general acceptance, and while we have indicated that we are prepared to consider changes to council size, most authorities have concentrated on maintaining broadly the existing number of councillors or proposing relatively modest change.

In Bromley, the three principal submissions proposed a council size within the indicative range. However, there was no consensus as to whether 60 or 69 councillors would be the most appropriate council size. The independent assessor, Mr. Roger Grant, considered the submissions received at Stage One and the other representations received which specifically related to the issue of council size, together with the evidence presented to the public meeting. He concluded that there is little objective evidence to support the proposed increase in council size for the borough and that our draft recommendations should be based on a council size of 60. We have considered the evidence presented to us at Stage One and Mr. Grant's report, and come to this conclusion.

The electorate of Bromley Borough has remained relatively unchanged since the time of the last review in 1977. Indeed, the electorate of the borough has actually declined by around 4,000 electors, some 2% of the total, since 1974. We have received no evidence to suggest that there is a general concern amongst members of the public or the Council's Auditor that the Council is failing to provide effective and convenient local government or to meet the needs of the people. While we accept that the role of members and pressure on their time is always an issue in local government, no evidence has been presented to persuade us that the present number of councillors in Bromley is particularly acute or in overall terms that their workload is more significant than that of councillors in other London boroughs. We also recognize that there is considerable debate locally as to whether councillors' workload has increased or decreased over the period since the last periodic electoral review. On the arguments and evidence we have seen, we have not been persuaded that the proposed increase in council size would lead to more convenient and effective local government or would better reflect the identities and interests of local communities.

Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 60 members.

Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations are therefore that Bromley's electoral system be represented by 60 councillors, the same as at present. Once we had established this, we considered the most appropriate electoral arrangements for the borough. We have carefully considered all the representations received, including the three borough-wide schemes - from the Borough Council, the Conservative Group and Mr. Fawthrop, a local resident - and the other representations which addressed themselves to parts of the borough. From these representations, some considerations have emerged which have informed us when preparing our draft recommendations.
and three-member wards. There is currently one single-member ward (Darwin), 16 two-member wards and nine three-member wards. In light of the Government's recent White Paper, Modern Local Government — In Touch with the People, which proposed the introduction of annual elections for London boroughs, the Borough Council and the Conservative Group submitted proposals for future electoral arrangements based on a pumped-up structure of single-member wards throughout the borough. Mr. Fawthrop proposed a structure consisting entirely of single-member wards, which he argued would be compatible with annual elections but would ensure that identifiable communities are separately represented.

We recognise that Bromley is not a typical London borough. With an area of some 15,000 hectares, the borough is the largest by area in London and is one of the least densely populated boroughs in outer London. While urban development spreads across the north of the borough from Penge in the west to Chislehurst in the east, the constituent communities have retained their distinctive characters. In the south of the borough, settlement patterns are more dispersed and there remain significant areas of open space and green belt which provide clear boundaries between communities.

In most London boroughs, we have put forward a pattern consisting entirely of three-member wards. In many of these boroughs, the predominant pattern is already that of three-member wards. Another feature of many of these authorities has been that they are more compact, are predominantly urban in nature and that community boundaries tend to be less marked. This is not the case in Bromley. Even neighbouring settlements, such as Mottingham and Chislehurst, are separated by unique communities in which the existing wards remain, while others, such as Bromley Common and Hayes, are separated by significant areas of green space.

We consider that in order to reflect the nature of Bromley Borough we should not put forward a structure consisting entirely of three-member wards in our draft recommendations. We consider that particularly in the borough, in areas such as Mottingham and Biggin Hill, such an approach may not provide the most appropriate structure. We are not, however, persuaded that a structure consisting entirely of single-member wards would better reflect the statutory criteria. We consider that such an approach is less flexible in meeting community identities and interests, by unnecessarily dividing communities. For example, we consider that Biggin Hill should continue to be represented by two councillors rather than being further divided into two single-member wards.

We have noted the arguments put to us about community identities in the borough. We have tried to reflect such considerations in our draft recommendations where it would be consistent with our objective of electoral equality, although we note that there is no consensus locally on the precise boundary of such communities.

Wherever possible, we have sought to build on the proposals put forward by the Borough Council, the Conservatives, Mr. Fawthrop and the other interested parties in formulating our draft recommendations. However, due to differing conditions in relation to council size and the number of councillors per ward, we have only been able to reflect those submissions to us to a limited extent. For instance, our conclusions in relation to Mottingham have significant implications on the proposed ward boundaries for the neighbouring wards to its east. However, the pattern of ward boundaries for our proposed Chislehurst, Cray Valley West and Cray Valley West wards is similar to those proposed by both the Conservatives and the Borough Council at Stage One.

The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- Mottingham and Chislehurst wards;
- St. Paul's Cray and St Mary Cray wards;
- Chislefield & Goddington, Crofton, Farningham, Orpington and Petswood & Knoll wards;
- Biggin Hill and Darwin wards;
- Bromley Common & Keston, Hayes, West Wickham North and West Wickham South wards;
- Martin's Hill & Town, Plaistow & Sundridge and Bickley wards;
- Copers Cope, Kelsey Park, Eden Park and Shortlands wards;
- Anerley, Penge, Lower Park & Kent House and Clock House wards.

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.

Mottingham and Chislehurst wards

Mottingham and Chislehurst wards are located in the north of Bromley, neighbour eighteen of the London boroughs of Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham. Borough boundary changes in 1994 resulted in the net loss of 735 electors from Mottingham ward to the adjoining boroughs to its north. These changes, together with a declining electorate, account for the fact that Mottingham ward has the lowest number of electors per councillors in Bromley — 17 per cent fewer than the borough average, decreasing to 19 per cent fewer by 2004. Chislehurst ward, on the other hand, has the largest electorate of all wards in the borough. Currently, the ward has 13 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, and 10 per cent more by 2004.

In its submission, the Borough Council noted that "the unique geographical configuration of Mottingham, having a boundary on three sides with adjoining boroughs, contributes to a strong community identity and constraints options available to create a three-member ward for the area. Recognising these limitations, the Borough Council put forward a revised structure for Mottingham ward which would incorporate the northern sections of Chislehurst ward to its east, including Elsmere Wood. In the light of these changes, the Borough Council proposed a three-member Chislehurst Common ward combining the remainder of Chislehurst ward with the part of St Paul's Cray ward to the west of Chipperfield Road. The southern boundary of the railway line through Chislehurst station in each council's ownership is unchanged. The Borough Council's proposed Mottingham and Chislehurst Common wards would have 5 per cent and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average currently (3 per cent and 4 per cent more by 2004) on the basis of a council size of 69."

The Conservative Group proposed alternative arrangements to the Borough Council in the Mottingham and Chislehurst areas. They proposed that the existing Mottingham ward be combined with part of Chislehurst and the Sundridge area to the west. They noted that "Mottingham is not easy to accommodate within any scheme being at present a small ward with some 80 per cent of its boundary being joined to other boroughs." In formulating their scheme, they opted to join the existing Mottingham ward with the part of Chislehurst ward abutting Elsmere Lane and the part of Plaistow and Sundridge ward on the north side of Sundridge Avenue and Widmore Road and east of the Bromley North to Grove Park railway line, to create a three-member Sundridge & Mottingham ward. The Conservative Group asserted that the other option of extending the ward further into Chislehurst would be "too problematical, as such a major extension would seriously cut into the community of Chislehurst." The proposed three-member Chislehurst ward would broadly maintain the existing ward boundaries, with minor changes to account for the enlarged Sundridge & Mottingham ward. In the east, the revised Chislehurst ward would incorporate an adjoining section of St Paul's Cray ward to the west of Breakspaws Drive. The Conservative Group's proposals would result in an electoral variance of 7 per cent in both Sundridge & Mottingham wards and the Chislehurst wards (5 per cent by 2004). Bromley & Chislehurst Conservative Association and Rt Hon Eric Forth MP supported the Conservative Group's proposal for this area.

Mr Fawthrop proposed dividing this area between five new single-member wards — Mottingham, Elsmere, West Chislehurst, Chislehurst and Chislehurst Common. The proposed Mottingham ward would comprise the northern part of the existing Mottingham ward, while Elsmere would comprise the southern part of Mottingham ward together with the area surrounding Elsmere Woods railway station, currently in Chislehurst ward. According to this scheme, new wards of West Chislehurst, Chislehurst and Chislehurst Common wards would replace the existing wards, with the small area to the west of Park Road would be combined with part of Bickley ward in a new Caves ward. Mr Fawthrop's proposals would provide for an electoral variance of not more than 6 per cent for each of the five proposed single-member wards.

During Stage One, only one other representation was received in relation to this area. In the Borough Council's own consultation exercise, the St Mary Cray Action Group stated that a small number of their members from Chislehurst regretted that they would be transferred to Mottingham ward under the Council's scheme.
Having considered the representations received, we note that the particular geography of the existing two-member Mortimingham ward, situated in the extreme northern section of the borough and bounded on three sides by the boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich, presents formidable obstacles to the revision of ward boundaries in the area. In addition, we consider that Mortimingham is a distinct community within the borough with relatively few links with Chislehurst to its south. The creation of a three-member ward would necessarily impinge on large portions of the equally distinct communities of Chislehurst, Elsmere and Sandigate in issue emphasised by both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group in their submissions. In the light of the submissions received, the geographical distinctiveness of the area and the statutory criteria guiding the periodic electoral review of Bromley, we consider that Mortimingham ward should retain separate representation and continue to be represented by two councillors, with only minor boundary changes in order to provide a reasonable level of electoral equality. We propose that the adjacent area of Chislehurst ward bounded by Oak Lane Avenue and Elsmere Lane to Old Manor Way, containing around 1,000 electors, be transferred into a revised Mortimingham ward. We consider that this is a largely self-contained area sharing access from the A208 trunk road and Elsmere Lane, and its transfer would minimise change and would provide reasonable electoral equality.

Our proposed Mortimingham and Chislehurst wards would have 3 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (5 per cent fewer and 1 per cent more by 2004). We consider that our proposed draft recommendations provide a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Details of our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

St Paul's Cray and St Mary Cray wards

St Paul's Cray and St Mary Cray wards are located in the Cray Valley community in the north east of the borough, adjoining the London Borough of Bexley and Sevenoaks District in Kent. Both wards are currently represented by five councillors and they are separated by the London Victoria to Chatham railway line. St Mary Cray ward currently has 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, while St Paul's Cray ward has 1 per cent more than the average.

The Borough Council's submission proposed that the electoral imbalance in these two wards could be addressed by reorienting these "to reflect the north-south alignment of the roads in the valley and unite communities on either side of the heavily trafficked A224, Seventoaks Way, Cray Avenue. Their proposed Cray Valley West ward would occupy the western slopes of the valley between the A20 (Sidcup bypass) and Poverest, while the proposed Cray Valley East ward would occupy the eastern side of the valley including large tracts of open countryside, together with part of Poverest Hall to the west of Cray Avenue. Under this proposed warding arrangement, the Borough Council deemed that "the railway line loses its boundary status and although it splits the new wards(s), it can be crossed at several places". The Borough Council's proposed Cray Valley West and Cray Valley East wards both would have electoral variances equal to the borough average, based on a council size of 69 members.

The Conservative Group proposed warding arrangements in three ways similar to those of the Borough Council. They put forward two three-member wards divided east-west along the Seventoaks Way to the north of the railway line and Austin Road in the south. The proposed Cray West ward would comprise the west part of the Cray Valley area, with the exception of the area transferred to Chislehurst Common ward as described above. Cray East ward would take in the residential area to the east of the A224, including the part of Orpington Central ward to the north of Ramden Road and Petten Grove, as well as a substantial amount of countryside up to the borough boundary. The Conservative Group's proposals would result in an electoral variance of 3 per cent in Cray West ward and 1 per cent in Cray East ward, currently and by 2004, based on a council size of 60 members. Orpington Constituency Conservative Association supported the Conservative Group's proposals.

Mr Fawthrop proposed the creation of six single-member wards in the Cray Valley area - St Paul's Wood, St Paul's Cray, Rusley, Poverest, St Mary Cray and Hockenden, Kevington & Derry Downs. St Paul's Wood, St Paul's Cray and Rusley wards would broadly cover the existing St Paul's Cray ward. Poverest and St Mary Cray ward would cover part of the existing St Mary Cray ward to the west of the A224. The single-member Hockenden, Kevington & Derry Downs ward would span the rural area of the Cray Valley in the east, on both sides of the London Victoria to Chatham railway line. Mr Fawthrop's proposed warding arrangements would result in electoral variances of no more than 5 per cent in each ward, based on a council size of 60 members.

In his submission, Mr John Horam, MP for Orpington, stated his support for Conservative proposals, which would retain two equal sized wards in the Cray Valley area." St Mary Cray Action Group, as part of the Borough Council's own consultation exercise, accepted the Council's proposed modifications in principle and was "pleased that certain railway lines are no longer seen as ward boundaries".

Having considered the representations received during Stage One, we note that there is considerable support for a re-orientation of wards in the Cray Valley area, to unite communities on either side of the A224 (Seventoaks Way/Cray Avenue) trunk road. We concur with the three-borough-wide scheme that the London Victoria to Chatham railway line does not constitute an insurmountable boundary and that, to an extent, the A224 trunk road does separate residential communities. Therefore, to put forward two-three member wards broadly divided along the A224 arterial road in the north, Austin Road to the south of the railway line and then along the rear of Cowet Wood to the existing ward boundary on Chislehurst Road. We also concur with the Borough Council's proposal that they be named Cray Valley West ward and Cray Valley East ward, and put these forward for consultation. As outlined above, there is no change to the existing eastern boundary of Chislehurst ward.

In order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality, we are persuaded by the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group and Mr Fawthrop to include part of Orpington Central ward with areas to its north. We propose that the area to the north of Grassmeade Recreation Ground should be transferred from the current Orpington Central ward to a new Cray Valley East ward. This part of Orpington Central ward shares access from Chislehurst Road and Chislehurst Common, as does part of our proposed Cray Gray ward, and, we consider, would provide a better boundary for the ward. The inclusion of this area would also provide for improved electoral equality, with our proposed Cray Valley West and Cray Valley East wards having 1 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (equal to, and 4 per cent more than average by 2004). Details of our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Chelsfield & Goddington, Crofton, Farndonborough, Orpington Central and Petts Wood & Knoll wards

The wards of Chelsfield & Goddington, Crofton, Farndonborough, Orpington Central and Petts Wood & Knoll are located in the east of the borough, and serve the Chelsfield, Farndonborough and Orpington areas. Currently, Farndonborough and Orpington Central wards are over-represented, with 2 per cent and 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (1 per cent and 9 per cent fewer by 2004). Chelsfield & Goddington, Crofton and Petts Wood & Knoll wards are currently under-represented with 4 per cent, 7 per cent, and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (9 per cent, 6 per cent and 6 per cent more by 2004).

The Borough Council put forward substantial revisions to the existing electoral arrangements in this area. It proposed a three-member Petts Wood ward covering the north of the existing Petts Wood & Knoll ward, and combining the southern part of this ward with Crofton ward to form a revised three-member Crofton ward. With respect to Orpington Central ward, the Borough Council proposed that the whole of the ward be joined with the area to the north of Park Avenue, currently in Chelsfield & Goddington ward, and the Orpington High Street area from Petts Wood & Knoll ward in a three-member Orpington Central ward. The remaining part of Chelsfield ward would form another three-member ward, excluding the part of Cudham Lane North abutting Green Street Green from Darwin ward. Farndonborough ward would be combined with the southern part of Orpington ward, as far as Cudham, Downe, Hazelwood and Pett's Bottom from Darwin ward to form a new Farndonborough & Downe ward. On the basis of 1 council size of 69, all five wards would have electoral variance of less than 3 per cent currently, and 4 per cent by 2004.

The Conservative Group's submission also proposed that the existing Orpington Central ward be extended southwards to include part of the current Chelsfield & Goddington ward to the east of the Charing Cross to Seventoaks railway line and north of Warren Road. They proposed that the...
remaining part of Chelsfield & Goddington ward – Chelsfield Village and the area to the west of the railway line be combined with the area to the east of Tubbenden Lane, currently in Crofton ward, to form a three-member Green Street Green & Chelsfield ward. The Conservative Group put forward only minor changes to the existing three-member Pets Wood & Knoll ward, whereby the streets to the south of, and leading from, Station Road (pumping district PWS) be included in the revised Orpington Central ward. They proposed that the whole of Farnborough ward be combined with the part of Crofton ward to the west of Tubbenden Lane in a new Farnborough & Crofton ward. Under the Conservative Group’s proposals, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 6 per cent in all four wards. Orpington Constituency Conservative Association supported the Conservative Group’s proposals, in particular for the new Green Street Green & Chelsfield ward. They stated that these areas “are distinctive communities with a higher rural content than most parts of Bromley, whereas Goddington … has more in common with the Orpington area and would not go into that ward.” Councillor Bowman also supported the Conservative Group’s proposals.

Mr Fawthrop’s scheme put forward 12 single-member wards for the area – Chelsfield & Pratt’s Bottom, Crofton, Farnborough, Goddington, Green Street Green, Locks Bottom, Orpington Central, Pets Wood, Sparrow Wood, St Olaves, The Knoll & Braes Hill and Tubbenden wards. Pets Wood Ward and the Knoll & Broom Hill wards would broadly cover the existing Pets Wood & Knoll ward. Orpington Central ward would cover the town centre area of Orpington, and Chelsfield & Pratt’s Bottom ward would largely cover the area of Pratts Wood and Chelsfield villages, near the borough boundary, together with the area to the west of Chelsfield station. Farnborough and Locks Bottom wards would largely cover the areas of the same name. Goddington ward would cover Goddington and the Ramden Estate, while St Olaves ward would cover the part of Chelsfield to the north of The Highway, west of Court Road and east of the railway line, together with a section of Pets Wood & Knoll ward to the south of Station Road. The proposed Crofton and Tubbenden wards would broadly be located in the current two-member Crofton ward. Mr Fawthrop’s proposed electoral arrangements for this area would result in an electoral variance of no more than 5 per cent in each of the 12 proposed wards.

In his submission, Mr John Horam MP expressed his support for the Conservative Group’s proposal for a three-member Farnborough & Crofton ward, arguing that it is “sensible on community and geographical grounds…[and] iron out a number of anomalies in the present situation”. He felt that the new ward would bring together two areas that are already in common. With respect to Orpington Central ward, he supported the Conservatives’ proposal to enlarge the current ward to include the whole of the High Street and “the heart of Orpington”, bordered by the railway line in the south, within one ward. Mr Horam also expressed his support for the creation of a three-member ward for the settlements of Green Street Green, Chelsfield and Pratt’s Bottom, saying that the inclusion of Pratts Bottom, currently in Darwin ward, “is logical since it too looks towards Green Street Green and Chelsfield and would have little in common with the new Biggin Hill and Darwin ward”. Chelsfield Village Society suggested that if changes had to be made to existing arrangements, the Chelsfield area should be joined with part of the Thame Bottom, which is also part of the green belt. Commenting on the Borough Council’s proposals, Pratt’s Bottom Residents’ Association expressed its support for maintaining the village as part of a single-member Darwin ward, together with the other rural villages of Bromley’s green belt area. Similarly, the Cudham Residents’ Association, Downe Residents’ Association and three local residents strongly opposed combining the villages of Darwin ward with urban Farnborough ward, as proposed by the Borough Council. Old Hill & Cudham Lane North Residents’ Association opposed a Council proposal for this area, arguing that “they will result in the dividing of natural communities and areas of similar character.” A local resident opposed the Borough Council’s proposed Farnborough & Downe ward arguing that this ward would be “a major division between the densely populated urban area in the north, which takes up only about one-seventh of the ward and the remaining, larger, widely spread rural area”. He argued that the A21 would form a better boundary.

We have considered the representations received during Stage One and we have decided to proceed with the consultation on comprehensive schemes for this area. In particular, we consider that there is a case for forming a three-member ward which covers most of the Orpington town centre, as proposed by the Borough Council and the Conservative Group. We concur with the Conservative Group’s assessment that the southern tip of the existing Pets Wood & Knoll ward “fits in well with this new [Orpington] ward” and includes a major transport interchange for the town at Orpington Station. In addition, we concur with the Borough Council that a new ward for this area should be extended to include part of Farnborough and Darwin and Goddington ward. We propose that the new boundary run to the rear of properties on Chelsfield Lane, Court Road and Park Avenue. As detailed above, the northern boundary of the new ward would be the Grassmead Recreation Ground. We propose including a larger section of the current Pets Wood & Knoll ward so that the area to the north of Crofton Lane, together with the area to the north of Park Lane in Chelsfield & Goddington ward, into a revised Orpington ward. We propose that the part of Pets Wood & Knoll ward to the north of Crofton Lane should be combined with similar residential areas to the north of Crofton Road, currently in Farnborough ward, to create a three-member Pets Wood ward. The southern boundary of this new ward would run along Crofton Lane, westwards along Crofton Road and the rear of Fairbank Avenue to Clay Wood.

With regard to Chelsfield & Goddington ward, we propose that the existing ward, minus the area to the north of Park Avenue and Court Road, be combined with the areas around Pratts Bottom in the east of Darwin ward to create a new three-member Chelsfield & Pratt’s Bottom ward. The western boundary of this new ward would be broadly based on the Conservative Group’s Green St Green and Chelsfield ward subject to a minor change to include 178 electors at the north end of Cudham Lane North within the proposed Chelsfield & Pratt’s Bottom ward. This would ensure that areas which share access to the A21 (Sevenoaks Road) trunk road are united within one ward.

Having considered the submissions received as part of the Borough Council’s own consultation process, we note that there was strong opposition from local residents, associations and residents of Darwin ward to a combined Farnborough & Downe ward. In the light of the evidence received and the statutory criteria, we are not persuaded that a new Farnborough & Downe ward would best reflect community ties. We consider that Farnborough ward, which is predominantly urban, has little in common with the villages and communities of the rural Darwin ward. Instead, we are putting forward for consultation a new three-member Farnborough & Crofton ward covering the areas to the south of Crofton Road, currently in Crofton ward, and Darwin ward, which is broadly based on the Conservative Group’s proposals. We put forward a small boundary change in the extreme south-west corner of the existing Farnborough ward, so that the electors located on Shire Lane opposite Holwood Farm, an area which is rural and distinct from the rest of Farnborough, are transferred into Darwin ward, as described below. In order to further improve the level of electoral equality and the opportunities for candidates in both Farnborough & Crofton ward, we propose transferring around 350 electors from the area to the west of the A21 at Farnborough Common from Farnborough ward to a revised Bromley Common & Kenton ward as described below.

Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor for Orpington, Pets Wood, Farnborough & Crofton and Chelsfield & Pratt’s Bottom wards would vary by 4 per cent, 1 per cent, 6 per cent and 6 per cent from the average respectively. We consider that our proposed wards for this area provide a reasonable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and are content to put them forward for consultation. Details of our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Darin & Biggin Hill wards

Darin ward covers the green belt area in the south of the borough. Currently, Darin ward is a wholly rural single-member ward with a small and scattered electorate of around 3,500. Biggin Hill ward covers the largely self-contained community of Biggin Hill and is represented by two councillors. Biggin Hill is surrounded by green belt and is linked by the A233 (Main Road/Leaves Green Road) arterial road to the rest of the borough. Under the current warding arrangements, Darin ward has 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, while Biggin Hill ward has 14 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average.

The Borough Council proposed creating a three-member Biggin Hill ward which would include the current ward together with the areas around Leaves Green. The proposed Biggin Hill ward currently in Darin ward. The Borough Council argued that Biggin Hill is the “nearest source of services and facilities for this green belt ward.”
communities [in Darwin ward], which have access to it along Main Road". It also stated that the additional would form an area of Biggin Hill would help redress the level of electoral inequality in the proposed three-member ward. The Council also proposed that an area around Laytham Road be included within a revised Haydon Heath and Common ward. As described above, the Borough Council proposed that in the eastern part of the existing Darwin ward the communities of Downe, Cudham, Hazelee Wood andPratt’s Bottom be combined with Farnborough ward to its north, to create a three-member Farnborough & Downe ward. The Borough Council’s proposed Biggin Hill ward would have 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (1 per cent fewer by 2004), while Farnborough & Downe ward would have 2 per cent more electors than average (3 per cent more by 2004), based on a council size of 69.

98 The Conservative Group proposed creating a three-member Darwin & Biggin Hill ward containing the existing Biggin Hill and Darwin wards with the exception of the Pratt’s Bottom area. They also proposed that properties on the east side of Old Hill be transferred to the new ward from Cusfield & Goddington ward. They proposed that the Pratt’s Bottom area be included within a new Green St Green & Cusfield ward, as described above. The Conservative Group stated that the proposed Darwin & Biggin Hill ward “would encompass the village of Biggin Hill, the adjoining civil airport and many smaller villages such as Downe... and therefore takes in many small rural community interests”. Their proposed three-member Darwin & Biggin Hill ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, increasing to 4 per cent more electors per councillor by 2004, based on a council size of 60 members. The Conservative Group’s proposals were supported by Otington Community Conservative Association.

97 Mr Fawthrop’s scheme proposed creating three single member wards for this area: Biggin Hill, Valley and Darwin. Valley ward would cover part of Biggin Hill ward to the west of Sunningdale Avenue, while Biggin Hill ward would cover the area to its east. The Aperfield area, to the east of Old Tye Avenue and Allerley Road, and the area to the south of Edward Road/Green Avenue would be transferred to a revised Darwin ward. The revised Darwin ward would include part of Biggin Hill ward and the whole of the existing Darwin ward, with the exception of Pratt’s Bottom, in the east of the Agerfield area. In the revised Darwin ward, residents’ groups requested the retention of the current Darwin ward. We recognise that Biggin Hill acts as a focus for shopping and leisure for an area of 15 miles radius. Nevertheless, we recognise that the rural communities that constitute the current Darwin ward are distinctive in their own right and consider that they are best represented by a single-member ward. However, we are not persuaded to propose to divide Biggin Hill ward, as proposed by Mr Fawthrop, between two wards as we consider that this would not better reflect community ties. We have not been persuaded by the Borough Council’s proposal to combine Farnborough with the rural area to its south, which we consider would combine distinct and separate communities both rural and urban in nature. In the light of the geographical distinctiveness of the area, the size of the current electorate and the statutory criteria, we consider that Biggin Hill ward should continue to be represented by two councillors and that Darwin ward should continue to be represented by a single councillor, in order to maintain separate representation for these areas.

99 We have considered the most appropriate boundary between the two wards, and consider that the present boundary between Darwin and Biggin Hill should be altered in order to address the current significant levels of electoral inequality in each ward. We also note that the boundary proposed by Mr Fawthrop (between Valley and Darwin wards) would provide for a reasonable level of electoral equality for a revised Biggin Hill ward. While we note that this would mean combining the more urban area of Aperfield with Darwin ward, such a change is necessary in order to address electoral inequalities. We are therefore putting forward for consultation Mr Fawthrop’s proposal for this boundary subject to minor alterations. We propose that the boundary run along the rear of Old Tye Avenue and Village Green Avenue, including Nooks Close and Malins Close, and southwards to the rear of properties on Main Road and then westwards along a path to the north of Beavestock Farm, to the borough boundary. The northern boundary of Biggin Hill ward would, under this proposal, remain unchanged.

100 We propose several modifications to the existing ward boundaries of Darwin ward. We propose transferring around 1,000 electors from the existing Biggin Hill ward to Darwin ward. In order to provide for an improved level of electoral equality, we propose that the eastern boundary of Darwin ward be shifted westwards and that Pratt’s Bottom and 170 residents on Cudham Lane North (near the A21 arterial road) be transferred to the three-member Cliffe Heath & Pratts Bottom ward, as described above. The resulting ward boundaries of the revised single-member Darwin ward would remain unchanged, with the exception of the inclusion of properties on Shore Lane from Farnborough ward. Our proposed warding arrangements for Biggin Hill and Darwin wards would result in 1 per cent and 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more by 2004). We recognise that these proposals are significantly different from those proposed locally and that there are a number of possible alternatives in this area. However, we consider that our recommendations provide a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and would preserve the integrity of the current rural Darwin ward and urban Biggin Hill ward. We would, however, particularly welcome further views from residents and interested parties at Stage Three in this area.

Bromley Common & Keston, Hayes, West Wickham North and West Wickham South wards

101 The wards of Bromley Common & Keston, Hayes, West Wickham North and West Wickham South are situated in the west of the borough, in an area distinguished by the large number of commons and green spaces separating the different communities. Bromley Common & Keston and Hayes wards are currently represented by three councillors each, while West Wickham North and West Wickham South are each represented by two councillors. Under the existing arrangements, while Bromley Common & Keston and West Wickham South wards have 9 per cent and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, West Wickham North ward has 6 per cent fewer than average. These levels of electoral equality are not expected to improve significantly by 2004. Hayes ward currently has equal to the borough average number of electors per councillor, and is expected to have 2 per cent fewer than average by 2004.

102 The Borough Council proposed significant changes to the existing wards for this area. It put forward a new three-member West Wickham North ward, a new three-member West Wickham South ward and a new three-member West Wickham North ward. In order to provide for an improved level of electoral equality, we propose that the eastern boundary of Darwin ward be shifted westwards and that Pratt’s Bottom and 170 residents on Cudham Lane North (near the A21 arterial road) be transferred to the three-member Cliffe Heath & Pratts Bottom ward, as described above. The resulting ward boundaries of the revised single-member Darwin ward would remain unchanged, with the exception of the inclusion of properties on Shore Lane from Farnborough ward. Our proposed warding arrangements for Biggin Hill and Darwin wards would result in 1 per cent and 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more by 2004). We recognise that these proposals are significantly different from those proposed locally and that there are a number of possible alternatives in this area. However, we consider that our recommendations provide a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and would preserve the integrity of the current rural Darwin ward and urban Biggin Hill ward. We would, however, particularly welcome further views from residents and interested parties at Stage Three in this area.
Wickham ward, comprising the existing West Wickham North ward, excluding the area to the west of the old Market Park Road and Lodge Road, and a part of the west Wickham South ward to the west of Addington Road. It stated that this area is covered by West Wickham Residents' Association. The Borough Council proposed that the remaining part of West Wickham South ward would be combined with the part of Hayes ward to the east of Bourne Vale, the Kenton and Kenton Mark area of Bromley Common & Kenton ward, and the western fringe of Downstream ward around Leyhams Road, in a new Hayes & Kenton Commons ward. The Borough Council stated that its proposed ward would unite Hayes and Kenton villages and their associated commons within one ward. They also put forward a three-member Bromley Common ward for the northern part of the existing Bromley Common & Kenton ward. Under this scheme, the area to the north of the main road of Bourne Vale in Hayes ward, together with the part of Shortlands ward to the east of St Mary's Avenue and Cumberland Road and south of Kingswood Road, containing around 2,000 electors, would form the basis for a three-member Bromley South & Hayes ward. The Borough Council's proposals would result in the proposed West Wickham, Hayes & Kenton Commons, Bromley Common and Bromley South wards having vacancies of no more than 4 per cent from the average based on a council size of 69.

The Conservative Group also proposed significant changes for this area. They proposed that all of the existing West Wickham South ward be combined with the part of West Wickham North ward to the south of the Elmers End to Haywards Heath railway line. The Conservative Group argued that their proposed ward was "created recognising the integrity of the West Wickham South ward ... which has an ideal coherence historically, geographically and in community terms ... and those parts of West Wickham North that are most obviously in the core of West Wickham". The area to the north of the Elmers End to Hayes railway line and north of Oak Lodge Park would form part of a new three-member Langley ward, together with sections of the existing Eden Park, Kelsey Park and Shortlands wards around Langley Park and Langley Court. The Conservative Group proposed to include a new Hayes & Kenton ward comprising the existing Hayes ward, excluding the area to the east of Hayes Road in the north of the ward, together with the Kenton Village area of Bromley Common & Kenton ward. The scheme proposed to create a new member Bromley Common ward for the part of Bromley Common & Kenton ward to the north of Croydon Road. The Conservative Group’s proposed warding arrangements would result in an electoral variance of no more than 4 per cent from the borough average based on a council size of 69. Bromley & Chislehurst and Beckenham Consistency Conservative Associations supported the Conservative Group's proposals for their areas.

Mr Fawthrop proposed creating 10 single-member wards in this area – Bromley Common, Core Hall, Hayes, Homestead, Kenton, Norman Park, Pickhurst, Westmoreland, West Wickham and West Wickham South. West Wickham South and Core Hall wards would be formed from the existing two-member West Wickham South ward. The proposed Pickhurst and West Wickham wards would cover the existing West Wickham North ward, together with Monk's Orchard area ton Eden Park ward. Mr Fawthrop’s proposed Hayes, Norman Park and Westmoreland wards would broadly cover existing three-member Hayes ward, while Bromley Common, Homestead and Kenton wards would largely cover the existing Bromley Common & Kenton ward. The wading arrangements put forward by Mr Fawthrop would result in an electoral variance of no more than 5 per cent from the borough average in each of the 10 proposed single-member wards.

West Wickham Residents’ Association asserted that the Borough Council’s proposed West Wickham ward "separate key areas of West Wickham from the focal point of the community" citing the example of areas of the existing West Wickham North ward that would transfer to new Elmers End Park ward were their proposals. Councillor Manning, who represents Hayes ward, opposed the Borough Council’s proposal to include the area around the village of Hayes within a new Bromley South & Hayes ward, arguing that it would divide the Hayes community. He asserted that Hayes is a village community, whose cohesiveness needs to be maintained and nurtured within one ward. A local resident argued that the part of West Wickham North ward to the north of the A222 from Wickham to Hayes railway line is geographically closer to West Wickham and Hayes and should remain linked with those areas for wading purposes.

Having considered the submissions received during Stage One, we note that both the Borough Council and Conservative Group proposed the creation of a three-member ward for West Wickham. However, there was no agreement as to the most appropriate boundaries for the ward. In view of our recommendations in the neighbouring areas to the south, and our proposed council size of 60, we have based our draft recommendations on the Conservative Group’s proposals for this ward. The new ward would comprise the existing West Wickham South ward and the part of West Wickham North ward to the north of the Elmers End to Hayes railway line. As proposed by West Wickham Residents’ Association we have included the area to the east of High Broom Wood in our proposed ward.

We have not been persuaded to combine the Kenton Village area with Hayes as we consider that such a change would lead to either dividing the Hayes community or combining the part of West Wickham North ward to the north of the Elmers End to Hayes railway line with the Park Langley area. We are therefore deciding to largely retain the existing Bromley Common & Kenton ward, and make only minor amendments in order to provide a reasonable level of electoral equality for the ward. We propose that the area to the north of Shortlands Road should be transferred from the current Bromley Common & Kenton ward and form part of a new three-member Bromley Town ward, as described below. Further, we propose transferring 27 electors on the north side of Southborough Lane near the Jubilee Country Park to Bromley Common Bromley South ward so that electors on both sides of Southborough Lane would be located within one ward.

Having considered the representation received with respect to the Hayes area, we recognise that several submissions expressed support for maintaining the Hayes community within one ward. We also note the suggestion by one resident that the new ward in the part of West Wickham North ward has more in common with West Wickham and Hayes, than with areas to its north. In the light of the submissions received, we propose modifying the current Hayes ward to include the part of West Wickham North ward to the area to the north of the Elmers End to Hayes railway line and for the area to the east of Hayes Road to be transferred to a new Bromley Town ward (as discussed below) and for the area accessed from Westromoreland Road to be transferred to a revised Shortlands ward. These proposals would ensure that areas around Hayes village centre remain linked together within one ward, while those areas which share greater ties with areas their north would be transferred from the ward.

Under our proposed warding arrangements, Bromley Common & Kenton, Hayes and West Wickham wards would have an electoral variance of 4 per cent, 6 per cent and 3 per cent from the borough average. The level of electoral equality is not expected to change significantly over the next five years. We recognise that these are different from those proposed locally, and would particularly welcome views from local residents and interested parties regarding this area at Stage Three. Details of our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inset in the back of the report.

Martin's Hill & Town, Plaistow & Sundridge and Bickley wards

The wards of Martin’s Hill & Town, Plaistow & Sundridge and Bickley are located in the north of the borough to the west of the A222 from Sevenoaks railway line. Martin’s Hill & Town ward covers the commercial centre of Bromley, is represented by two councillors and has 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average. Plaistow & Sundridge and Bickley wards each are represented by three councillors and have 2 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. The level of electoral equality is not expected to change significantly over the next five years.

The Borough Council proposed broadly maintaining the existing wards of Martin's Hill & Town, Plaistow & Sundridge and Bickley, but put forward several boundary changes to provide for improved electoral equality. In relation to Martin’s Hill & Town ward, the Borough Council proposed retaining the western boundary of the ward of the London Victoria to Chatham railway line, but proposed extending its eastern boundary to include the part of Plaistow & Sundridge ward to the west of Plaistow Lane and Hornfield Road, and the part of Bickley ward to the north. The Council also proposed renaming the ward Bromley Town, because the new ward would cover
the commercial centre of Bromley. Its proposed
Plainstow & Sundridge and Bickley wards would
remain unchanged, with the exception of those
areas transferred to Bromley Town, Plaistow &
Sundridge and Bickley wards respectively, based on a council size of 69 members.

113 The Conservative Group’s proposals differed
significantly from those put forward by the
Borough Council. They proposed combining the
western part of Martin’s Hill & Town ward with
the eastern part of Shortlands ward and the part of
Hayes ward to the north of Hayes Lane and
Homendale Road to create a three-member
Bromley Town & Shortlands ward. They stated
that this ward would represent “the principal town
centre of the Borough and its immediate environs”
and considered that the railway line linking
Shortlands and Bromley South, “sometimes viewed
in the past as a line of division”, did not constitute
a barrier between Shortlands and Bromley Town
communities. The Conservative Group proposed
including the existing Three-Mile Cross area and
the current Plaistow & Sundridge ward between a
new three-member Plaistow ward and a
three-member Sundridge & Mottingham ward.
Their proposed Plaistow ward would include the
area to the west of the Bromley North to Grove
Park railway line and New Street Hill, and the area
to the north of the town centre and west of the A21
(London Road), currently in Martin’s Hill & Town
ward. Their proposed Shortlands & Mottingham
ward would combine the part of Plaistow &
Sundridge ward to the north of Sundridge Avenue
east of the Bromley North to Grove Park
railway line, with the Mottingham area, and is
discussed in greater detail below. The Conservative
Group proposed broadly maintaining the current
Bickley ward, with the exception of 230 electors in
the south-west of the ward which it proposed
should form part of a new Bromley Common ward
and an area to the north of Sundridge Avenue
which it proposed should be transferred from
Plaistow & Sundridge ward. The Conservative
Group’s proposals would have an electoral variance
of 1 per cent from the average in Bickley ward.
Bromley Town & Shortlands and Plaistow wards
which would have equal to the borough average,
based on a council size of 60. Bromley &
Chislehurst Conservative Association supported
the Conservative Group’s proposals for this area.

114 Mr Fawthrop’s scheme put forward eight
single-member wards for this area – Bickley,
Blackbrook, Bickley, Caves, Plaistow, Ravenbourne,
Sundridge and Widmore wards. Ravenbourne
ward would comprise the area south of Broadway,
Park and Widmore ward would largely cover
Widmore and the Bromley town centre area.
Plaistow, Bickley, Caves, and Sundridge wards
would broadly cover the existing Plaistow &
Sundridge ward. According to this scheme, Bickley
ward would be replaced by three single member
wards – Blackbrook, Bickley and Caves – with the
latter also including part of the current Chislehurst
ward. Mr Fawthrop’s proposals for this area would
result in an electoral variance of not more than 5
per cent from the borough average in each of the
proposed single-member wards.

115 Shortlands Residents’ Association, as part of the
Borough Council’s own consultation exercise,
expressed opposition to the Borough Council’s
warding arrangements, noting that Shortlands
ward would largely continue to exist in the
proposed scheme. It considered that the current ward could be
expanded to include areas from Kelsey Park ward.

116 Having considered the representations received
during Stage One, we note that both the Borough
Council and the Conservative Group have built on the
existing arrangements for Bickley ward. We
consider with this view, and propose that the ward be
expanded northwards to Sundridge Park and to the
east of Homestead Road in order to utilise the
strong physical boundary of Sundridge Park and
Golf Course in the north. This area is similar in
to residential areas to the south of Park Farm Road
and would be used by the public proposals to us by
the Conservative Group. Based upon proposals put to
us by Mr Fawthrop and the Borough Council, we
propose that the area to be transferred from
Bickley ward and be combined with Bromley
town centre area in a ward.

117 We also note that the Borough Council and the
Conservative Group both proposed that the
Bromley town centre area be united within one
ward, although they proposed alternative ward
boundaries for their Bromley Town and Bromley
Town & Shortlands wards. In the light of the
opposition from local residents to combining
the Shortlands community with distinct areas in
Bromley or Hayes, we propose a three-member
Bromley Town ward which reflects elements of the
Borough Council’s and Conservative Group’s
schemes, but which does not contain part of
Shortlands ward. Our proposed Bromley Town
ward would combine existing Martin’s Hill & Town
ward, excluding the area to the east of the A21
and Tweedy Road, together with the part of
Bickley ward to the west of Tweedy Road,
 Pend Brockley Road and Bishop’s Avenue, the part of
Hayes ward to the east of Hayes Lane and
Homendale Road and the part of Bromley Common & Kenton ward to the
north of Southlands Road. We are content that the
proposed Bromley Town ward, which would contain
the Bromley town centre area, provides a
reasonable level of electoral equality and adequately
reflects community interests.

118 Given our proposed warding arrangements for
Mottingham, as discussed above, we are unable to put
forward the Conservative Group’s proposals for a
new Sundridge & Mottingham ward. Instead,
we propose broadly maintaining the existing three-
member Plaistow & Sundridge ward, as put
forward by the Borough Council, with minor
boundary changes. As described above, we propose
that the area to the south of Sundridge Park and
east of Homestead Road, containing around 1,700
electors, should form part of a revised Bickley
ward. In order to compensate for the consequent
decreased electorate in Plaistow & Sundridge ward,
we propose shifting the western boundary of the
ward to the A21 and Tweedy Road, containing
around 2,400 electors. Our proposed changes
would provide a reasonable level of electoral
equality for the revised three-member Plaistow &
Sundridge ward, and additionally would provide
more clearly identifiable ward boundaries between
wards. Under our proposed electoral arrangements,
Bickley, Bromley Town and Plaistow & Sundridge
ward would have electoral variances of 1 per cent,
4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. The level of
electoral equality in each ward is not expected to change significantly over the
next five years.

Copers Cope, Kelsey Park, Eden Park
and Shortlands wards

119 The four wards of Copers Cope, Kelsey Park,
Eden Park and Shortlands contain residential

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

27
of Wickham Road would form part of a three-member Kelsey ward, together with the area to the east of the New Beckenham to Elmers End road and to the west, currently in Lawrie Park & Khan. This would also contain the area to the west of Stanhope Grove and Atley Way, currently in Eden Park ward. The Conservative Group proposed a three-member Langley ward, combining the area to the east of Wickham Road, currently in Kelsey Park ward, with the areas around Langley Park and Eden Park, currently in Shortlands, West Wickham North and Eden Park wards. Their proposed Langley ward would be bounded by Stanhope Grove and Atley Way in the west, Eden Park Avenue, Stone Park Avenue and Bromley Road in the north, Hayes Lane and Pickhurst Lane in the east, the Elmers End to Hayes railway line in the south and the rear of St David's Close and Orchard Road to the borough boundary. The Conservative Group's proposed Cator, Kelsey and Langley ward would have electoral variances of 5 per cent, 5 per cent and 3 per cent from the borough average respectively (3 per cent, 2 per cent and 2 per cent by 2004) based on a council size of 60. Beckenham Constituency Conservative Association supported the Conservative Group's proposals.

122 Mr. Fawthrop proposed creating nine single-member wards in this area – Copers Cope, Eden Park, Elmers End, Foxgrove, Kelsey Park, Oakwood, Park Langley, Shortlands and West Wickham. According to this scheme, Copers Cope and Foxgrove wards would largely cover the existing Copers Cope ward, while the proposed Kelsey Park and Oakwood wards would broadly cover the existing Kelsey Park ward. Park Langley and Shortlands would be broadly located within the existing Shortlands ward. Elmers End and Eden Park wards would cover the northern part of the existing Eden Park ward. The Monks Orchard area in the south of the existing Eden Park ward, including Bethlem Royal Hospital, would form part of the new Wickham. Mr. Fawthrop's proposals would result in an electoral variance of not more than 6 per cent in each of the proposed single-member wards.

123 Copers Cope Area Residents' Association expressed its opposition to the Borough Council's proposals for the Beckenham area, which "seem to run directly contrary to the principles ... of recognising natural communities and maintaining the integrity of town centres". It argued that while other communities like Orpington and West Wickham were maintained, "central Beckenham is sliced right through the middle ... and splintered and blunting the representation of the heart of the town". Eden Park Residents' Association stated that so far as Eden Park is concerned, it was "perfectly happy with all of [the Borough Council's] proposals". As part of the Borough Council's own consultation process, Shortlands Residents' Association stated it was "very annoyed that Shortlands is to be divided and disenfranchised with", and suggested that Shortlands ward could be retained if it was expanded to include the east side of Kelsey Park ward. Canon Redman, the Vicar of Shortlands, asserted that "the loss of part of ... Shortlands ward on the eastern side is disappointing from the Parish, Beckenham and Cator deanship point of view". He also regretted that the Beckenham does not appear as a ward name in the Borough Council's proposal.

124 Having considered the representations received during Stage One, we note that there is broad agreement that the existing Copers Cope ward should be enhanced to include the Beckenham High Street area. In particular, we note the views of the Copers Cope Area Residents' Association who opposed dividing the town centre. We concur with this view and put forward a revised three-member Copers Cope ward, combining the existing Copers Cope ward with areas around Manor Road and Bromley Road, currently in Kelsey Park and Shortlands wards. The southern boundary of our proposed Copers Cope ward would follow eastwards on Manor Road and Bromley Road, southwards on Wickham Road to Crescent Road, southwards to the rear of Oakhill Road and Stanley Avenue, including Ferguson Close, to Scotts Lane. The eastern boundary of the proposed ward would follow the Catford Loop railway line to Shortlands and the rear of Shortlands Road (excluding The Glen, Charing Court, Foxes Dale and Waldrum Gardens). We are aware that our proposed Copers Cope ward provides a reasonable level of electoral equality and reflects the statutory criteria.

125 We note that there was a lack of consensus regarding proposed electoral arrangements in the Kelsey Park, Eden Park and Shortlands wards. The Borough Council and the Conservative Group both proposed creating a new Kelsey ward, but differed with respect to the precise ward boundaries. We consider that the Kelsey Park area shares some affinity with the Eden Park area, as indicated in the Conservative Group's submission, and propose the creation of a three-member Kelsey and Eden Park ward, combining the existing Eden Park ward with the area to the south of Manor Road and the High Street, and west of Oakhill Road and Stanley Avenue, currently in Kelsey Park ward. We concur with the Borough Council's assessment that the planned Langley Court residential development "will be accessed only from South Park Road, and will naturally face to the west and north in compliance terms" and propose that this should form part of our three-member Kelsey & Eden Park ward.

126 We have given serious consideration to the various proposals submitted for the Shortlands area, and in particular note the Shortlands Residents' Association's opposition to dividing the Shortlands community. We are persuaded by the evidence submitted that Shortlands constitutes a distinct community within Bromley, which should not be subsumed within other neighbouring communities. We consider that a two-member Shortlands ward would best enable the Commission to fulfil the statutory criteria in this area and put this forward as part of our draft recommendations. We propose broadly maintaining the existing Shortlands ward, excluding the Langley Park area and the area to the rear of Shortlands Road, as described above. In order to achieve a better level of electoral equality, we propose transferring 900 electors from the north of Hayes Road, by including all the roads accessed from Westmoreland Road into our revised Shortlands ward. We also propose a minor change to the existing boundary along Barnfield Wood Road, and Kent House Road to the properties on the north side, including Fairways Gardens and Elm Grove Place, thereby containing all the electors on that road within one ward. We consider that our proposed two-member Shortlands ward provides a reasonable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

127 Under our proposed warding arrangements, Copers Cope, Kelsey & Eden Park and Shortlands wards would have 1 per cent fewer, 4 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent fewer, 2 per cent fewer and 6 per cent more by 2004). Details of our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Ankerley, Penge, Lawrie Park & Kent House and Clock House wards

128 The wards of Ankerley, Clock House, Lawrie Park & Kent House and Penge are located in the north-west of the borough, adjoining the London Boroughs of Croydon, Bromley and Southwark in the west, and Lewisham in the north. The Crystal Palace and Penge community areas are located in this part of the borough. All four wards are currently represented by two councillors each. Under the existing arrangements, Ankerley has an electoral variance equal to the borough average, increasing to 1 per cent above average by 2004. Lawrie Park & Kent House and Penge wards have 5 per cent and 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (6 per cent and 9 per cent fewer by 2004). Clock House ward has 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, increasing to 9 per cent by 2004.

129 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that Lawrie Park & Kent House ward be divided between a new Crystal Palace ward and a revised Penge ward and a new Cator ward. Their proposed three-member Crystal Palace ward would comprise the area to the north of Crystal Palace Park, all of the existing Ankerley ward and the area of Clock House ward to the south of Elmers End Road. In Penge, the Borough Council proposed shifting the northern boundary of the existing ward to the borough boundary, to include the area between the Sydenham to Penge West railway line, Cator Road and Kent House Road (to the south of Lewisham Road). The revised Penge ward would be represented by three councillors. The Borough Council proposed changing the eastern boundary of the existing Clock House ward and enlarging it to include part of the Kent House Road, in order to create a three-member ward in this area. The remaining section of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward, to the west of the railway line at New Beckenham, would form part of a new Cator ward, as described above. The Borough Council's proposed Crystal Palace, Penge and Clock House wards would have an electoral variance of no more than 4 per cent from the average currently and 5 per cent by 2004, based on a council size of 60.
The Conservative Group proposed creating four wards in this area. Similar to the Borough Council, they put forward a new Crystal Palace ward comprising the majority of the existing Anerley ward, together with the part of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward to the north of Crystal Palace Park and the western part of the existing Pege ward. The Conservative Group's revised Pege ward would incorporate the area between Croydon Road and the Clock House to Elmers End railway line, currently in Anerley and Clock House wards, and the area around Parish Lane and south of Anerley Road to Beckenham Junction rail line, currently in Lawrie Park & Kent House ward. They proposed that the area of Clock House ward to the east of the Clock House to Elmers End railway line form part of a new Cator ward, and that the east part of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward form part of a new Cator ward, as described above. Under the Conservative Group's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Crystal Palace and Pege wards would be 4 per cent below and 2 per cent below the borough average respectively (4 per cent and 1 per cent by 2004), based on a council size of 60. The Beckenham Constituency Conservative Association expressed its support for the Conservative Group's proposals in the northern end of the borough, based on the current council size of 60 members. They stated that the proposal for three-member wards ensured that natural communities are not divided and gave their full support to these proposals.

Mr Fawthrop proposed eight single-member wards for this area – Crystal Palace, Anerley, Anerley North & Penge West, Penge, East Penge, Kent House, Clock House and Birkbeck. Crystal Palace and Anerley wards would broadly cover the existing Crystal Palace and Anerley wards. The proposed Birkbeck and Clock House wards would broadly cover the current Clock House ward. According to this scheme, the existing Lawrie Park & Kent House ward would be replaced by the two single-member East Penge and Kent House wards. Under Mr Fawthrop's proposal, the number of electors per councillor in each ward would vary by up to more than 5 per cent from the borough average.

Having considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that there are similarities between the proposals submitted, particularly in the Crystal Palace area and with respect to the division of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward. In view of this broad agreement, we have sought to reflect elements from all submissions received. In the Crystal Palace area, we put forward the creation of a new Crystal Palace ward. We agree with the Borough Council's assertion that the area of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward to the north of the Park "has a natural affinity with the Park and is contemporaneous with residential areas to the south and west of the Park". We also concur with the Conservative Group that the Crystal Palace Park "is the most significant landmark and focal point in the area" and recognize that Mr Fawthrop has put forward a proposal which is a single-member ward to represent the Crystal Palace area. We consider that the Sydenham to Anerley railway line provides a significant barrier in this area, particularly in the north, and propose that the ward boundary largely follows the railway line, although we propose that the new ward contain all of Anerley Road and the area to the south of it, currently in Penge and Anerley wards, in order to maintain this arterial road within a single ward.

Given the prominent boundary provided by the railway line, we have sought to create a Crystal Palace ward which would be most representative of its community and which therefore would facilitate convenient and effective local government in the area. Crystal Palace is also the most western extreme of Bromley Borough, and at an area it extends into the neighbouring boroughs of Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham, sharing more in common with these than other parts of Bromley. Given these exceptional circumstances, we consider that Crystal Palace ward should be represented by two councillors rather than three, as proposed by the Borough Council and the Conservative Group, or by a single councillor as proposed by Mr Fawthrop. Under our proposed draft recommendations, Crystal Palace ward would be represented by two electors per councillor that the borough average currently and by 2004.

In the Pege area, we consider that there is some merit in the Borough Council's proposals to combine the existing Pege ward with the part of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward to its north. However, since the Borough Council's submission was based on a council size of 69 members, the electorate of its proposed Pege ward is too small for a three-member ward within a 60-member borough council. We consider that the revised Pege ward should also contain the Cator Estate area of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward to the west of the railway line at New Beckenham. This would allow for improved electoral equality, while at the same time providing a clear identifiable boundary in the north-east section of the ward. To account for the inclusion of the Cator area, we propose that the ward be named Pege & Cator ward.

In the Clock House area, we propose broadly maintaining the current Clock House ward, albeit with minor boundary modifications in order to create a three-member ward. Our proposed ward would reflect elements of the Borough Council's proposal, by incorporating the part of Lawrie Park & Kent House ward to the south of the Pege ward to Beckenham Junction railway line, although we consider that the current eastern ward boundary along the A222 Croydon Road should be maintained. In the south, our proposed Clock House ward would include part of the existing Anerley ward, containing 1,702 electors, and Elmers End Road, Ravenscroft Road and Penge Road, in order to provide for improved electoral equality. Our proposed warding arrangements in Pege & Cator and Clock House wards would result in an electoral variance equal to the borough average in both wards currying a variance of 1 per cent by 2004. We conside that the proposed two-member Crystal Palace ward and the three-member Pege & Cator and Clock House wards provide a reasonable level of electoral equality and reflect the community interests and identities in the area.

Conclusions

We have considered carefully all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review. All three schemes would have achieved a significant improvement in electoral equality. However, as detailed earlier, there was a lack of consensus among the appropriate number of councillors to serve on Bromley Council, the number and boundaries of wards and the number of councillors per ward. As a result of our proposed council size of 69, and proposals for a mixed pattern of single-, two- and three-member wards for the borough, we have been unable to put forward any of the proposals made to us in their entirety. However, in each area, we have considered the boundaries proposed to us and taken all representations we have received into account in considering our draft recommendations. We believe that our proposals strike a satisfactory balance of the criteria guiding our work. Consequently, we propose that:

1) there should be no change to the council size of 60 members;
2) there should be 22 wards, four fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all the existing wards;
3) in looking at nine broad areas of the borough, our conclusions for each area are summarised below;
4) in Mottingham and Chislehurst, we have proposed minor amendments to the existing ward pattern to improve electoral equality;
5) in St Paul's Cray and St Mary Cray, we propose putting forward two new wards of Cray Valley East and Cray Valley West based upon the Conservaties' and Borough Council's proposals;
6) in the Orpington, Chelsfield and Farnborough areas we propose combining elements of the Borough Council's and Conservaties' schemes;
7) in Biggin Hill and Darwin, we propose modifications to the existing ward pattern based, in part, on the Conservaties' and Mr Fawthrop's schemes;
8) in Bromley Common & Keston, Bickley, Pilsdon & Sundridge and Shortlands we have built on the existing arrangements, with changes to improve electoral equality;
9) in West Wickham, we have put forward proposals based on the Conservaties' scheme;
10) in Bromley, we propose an expanded ward to encompass the town centre and neighbouring residential areas;
11) in Beckenham, we have replaced the three two-member Eden Park, Kelsey Park and Copers Cope wards with two new three-member wards;
12) the existing four two-member wards of Penge, Anerley, Lawrie Park & Kent House and Clock House would be replaced by two three-member wards and one two-member ward.
We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Bromley and welcome comments from the Borough Council and others on the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors and ward names. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

Draft Recommendation

Bromley Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors serving 22 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted in the back of the report.

Figure 5:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999 electorate</th>
<th>2004 forecast electorate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current arrangements</td>
<td>Draft recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
<td>3,732</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
5. NEXT STEPS

The Commission is putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Bromley. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 13 September 1999. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

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

Fax: 0171 404 6142
E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk

In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.
APPENDIX A

Proposed Electoral Arrangements

The following tables illustrate the electoral variances under the schemes submitted by the Borough Council, the Conservative Group on the Council and Mr Fowthrop. Full details of each submission, including accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

Bromley Borough Council’s Proposal

**Figure A1: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1999)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2004)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bickley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,320</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9,919</td>
<td>3,306</td>
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<td>2 Biggin Hill</td>
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<td>9,706</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Variance from average %</th>
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Source: Electorate figures are based on Bromley Borough Council’s submission.

Note: The ‘variance from average’ column shows 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.
Mr Fawthrop's Proposal

### Figure A3: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

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<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
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<th>Electorate (1999)</th>
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<th>Variance from average %</th>
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Source: Electorate figures are based on Mr Fewthrop's submission.
APPENDIX B

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: The Commission’s Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission’s predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBK), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas have been included in the Commission’s review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

2 Under section 13(15) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

(a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
(b) secure effective and convenient local government.

3 In reporting to the Secretary of State, the Commission may make recommendations for such changes to electoral arrangements as are specified in section 14(4) of the 1992 Act. In relation to principal authorities, these are:

- the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral area, and the years in which they are to be elected (although current legislation provides for elections in London boroughs to be held every four years); and
- the name of any electoral area.

Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

4 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1972, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the “rules” set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

5 In relation to London boroughs:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the borough likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

(a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the borough.

6 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a) above, regard should be had to:

(a) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
(b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.