LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

March 1999
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)
Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)
Peter Brokenshire
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 the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 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 the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 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 extremal administrative boundary of the borough as part of this review.

This report sets out our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. 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


- 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 the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea:

- in 10 of the 21 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and in four wards varied by more than 20 per cent from the average;
- by 2003 electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 11 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in four wards.

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraph 85) are that:

- the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea should be served by 54 councillors, as at present;
- there should be 18 wards, three fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of 16 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 all of the 18 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.
- The electoral equality is forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 6 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003.

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

- We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 23 March 1999. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.
- After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations 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.
- The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 17 May 1999:

Director of Reviews
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphyn Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 0171 404 6142
E-mail: reviews@lgcc.gov.uk
### The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors</th>
<th>Constituent areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Abingdon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Brompton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bromption ward; Church ward (part); Courtfield ward (part); Hans Town ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Camden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Colville</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Avondale ward (part); Colville ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Courtfield</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Courtfield ward (part); Ear's Court ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Crenmore</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cheyne ward (part); South Stanley ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Earl's Court</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Earl's Court ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Golborne</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Golborne ward; St Charles ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Holland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Norland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Avondale ward (part); Norland ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Notting Barns</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Avondale ward (part); Kentfield ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Pembroke</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Queen's Gate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Redcliffe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Courtfield ward (part); Earl's Court ward (part); Redcliffe ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Royal Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cheyne ward (part); Royal Hospital ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Hans Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Church ward (part); Hans Town ward (part); Royal Hospital ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 St Charles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kentfield ward (part); St Charles ward (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Stanley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Church ward (part); North Stanley ward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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### The Commission's Draft Recommendations for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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</thead>
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<td>5,768</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>6,119</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,738</td>
<td>5,623</td>
<td>1,874</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<td>4 Colville</td>
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<td>1,865</td>
<td>5,715</td>
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<td>6,073</td>
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<td>5,744</td>
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<td>6,170</td>
<td>2,054</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1,951</td>
<td>5,963</td>
<td>1,988</td>
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<td>5,890</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6,081</td>
<td>2,037</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Notting Barns</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>5,920</td>
<td>1,973</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5,558</td>
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<td>1,900</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,765</td>
<td>5,500</td>
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<td>6,164</td>
<td>2,055</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5,789</td>
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<td>1,798</td>
<td>5,780</td>
<td>1,910</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Stanley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,260</td>
<td>1,753</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals:** 54, 101,383, - , - , 105,741, -

**Averages:** - , - , 1,877, - , - , 1,958, -

*Source: Electorate figures are based on Kensington & Chelsea Royal Borough Council's submission.*

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

*2 The total electorate figure in 2003 differs marginally from Figure 4; however, we consider that this has a negligible effect on electoral variance.*
1. INTRODUCTION

1. This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

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

3. 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.

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

The London Boroughs

5. Our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all 386 local authorities in England started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

The 1992 Act requires us to review most local authorities every 10 to 15 years. However, the Act is silent on the timing of reviews of the London boroughs. (The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.)

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.

7. 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.

Figure 3:
Stages of the Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
Before we started our work in London, the Government published for consultation a Green Paper, *Modifying Local Government — Local Democracy and Community Leadership* (February 1998) which, inter alia, promoted the possibility of London boroughs having annual elections with three-member wards so that one councillor in each ward would stand for election each year. In view of this, we decided that the order in which the London reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea is in the third phase of reviews.

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.

Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 Peral 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 PERAs as set out in the March 1998 Guidance. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would not doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State’s intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERAs of their areas. Our general experience so far is that proposals for three-member ward patterns are emerging from most areas in London.

As a quite separate exercise to the PERAs, 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.

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 the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea**

This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCC), which reported to the Secretary of State in May 1977 (Report No. 207).

Stage One began on 22 September 1998, when we wrote to the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 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 14 December 1998.

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

Stage Three began on 23 March 1999 and will end on 17 May 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.

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 determine when any changes come into effect.

**2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea has a population of 138,394 and covers 1,226 hectares. The Borough is highly residential with one of the highest population densities in London. It contains the areas of Chelsea, Brompton, Kensington and Notting Hill and is bounded by the River Thames in the south. The Borough includes Kensington Palace and over 70 embassies.

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’.

The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 101,383. The Council currently has 54 councillors who are elected from 21 wards (Map 1 and Figure 4). Twelve wards are each represented by three councillors and nine wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

Since the last electoral review, there has been a decrease in electorate in the borough, with around 15 per cent fewer electors than two decades ago.

At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,777 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,960 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 10 of the 21 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in four wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Earl’s Court ward where each of the three councillors represents on average 26 per cent more electors than the borough average.
Figure 4:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td>6,104</td>
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continued overleaf
### Existing Electoral Arrangements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
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Source: Electorate figures are based on the submission from the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

Notes:
1. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Brompton ward were relatively over-represented by 25 per cent, whilst electors in Earl's Court ward were relatively under-represented by 26 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2. The total electorate figures in 2003 differ marginally from Figure 2; however we consider that this has a negligible effect on electoral variances.

### 3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

23 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 the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

24 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 co-operation and assistance. We received six representations during Stage One. These were from the Borough Council and the Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats, which both submitted borough-wide schemes, together with the Labour Group on the Council, the Kensington & Chelsea Conservative Association, the Kensington & Chelsea Constituency Labour Party and a borough councillor. These, with accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission by appointment.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

25 In its submission, the Borough Council proposed the retention of 54 councillors in a pattern of 18 three-member wards, a reduction of three wards, noting the White Paper's proposals for annual elections in London. It proposed no change to the boundaries of six wards—Golborne, Golborne, Pembroke, Holland, Cressfield and Campden. It did, however, propose a reorganisation of wards in the south of the borough to fit a pattern of three-member wards. The Council also attempted to retain clear ward boundaries throughout the borough but stated that its overriding aim had been to improve electoral equality. In 2003, it estimated that, under its scheme, all wards would have variances within 10 per cent except Golborne which would vary by 11 per cent. The Council's proposals are summarised in Appendix A.

#### Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats

26 The Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats proposed two alternative borough-wide schemes, both retaining a council size of 54. Its preferred scheme provided for a pattern of two- and three-member wards. It also proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. It stated that its proposals for a mixture of two- and three-member wards would preserve local community ties in nearly all of the wards, keep wards to a practical size and minimise disruption to the existing wards, while providing good electoral equality.

27 In proposing its three-member ward scheme, the Liberal Democrats specifically opposed the Borough Council's proposed boundaries between Abingdon and Earl's Court wards, Abingdon and Queen's Gate wards, and Brompton and Hammers Town wards. It did not provide detailed proposals for the wards in the north-west of the borough stating that it could not agree with a three-member ward pattern in this area.

28 The Liberal Democrats also commented on the electorate projections provided by the Borough Council. It considered that there were under-estimates in a number of the development sites in the borough. Both schemes would significantly improve electoral equality. For comparative purposes the Liberal Democrats proposal for three-member wards only is summarised in Appendix A.

#### Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council Labour Group

29 The Labour Group on the Council generally supported the Borough Council's proposals for 54 councillors in a pattern of 18 three-member wards. It commented on six of the Borough Council's proposed wards: Notting Barns, Notlor, Abingdon,
4. ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 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".

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.

It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of councillors per ward 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.

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

The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 4 per cent from 101,383 to 105,824 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. 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.

The Liberal Democrats considered that there were some discrepancies between the number of units allocated to the majority of the development sites in the local plan and those estimated by the Borough Council to be completed by 2003. In response to the Liberal Democrats' submission, the Borough Council generally reiterated its initial projections but revised its electorate figures in Abingdon ward, increasing its estimate for the development site at Warwick Road (Central and South). As a consequence it also revised its pro-rata allocation of electorate due to natural population change in each of the wards. These changes would not materially affect the Borough Council's proposals for warding arrangements. The Borough Council ensured its revised electorate projections were placed on deposit at its offices.

We accept that this is an inexact science, and having given consideration to the Council's forecast electorates, together with its revisions, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. We welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during Stage Three.

Council Size

We indicated in our Guidance that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80.
Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council currently has 54 members. Over the past 20 years the borough has experienced a 15% per cent decrease in electorate, but is forecast to grow over the next five years. The Borough Council, the Labour Group on the Council and the Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats all proposed retaining the current council size.

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 and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 54 members.

Electoral Arrangements

We have carefully considered all the representations received, including the borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats. We are grateful for the positive approach taken by the respondents and for the detailed borough-wide proposals submitted during Stage One. From these representations, some considerations have emerged which have informed us when preparing our draft recommendations.

First, there is consensus on retaining a council of 54 members. Second, the current electoral arrangements provide for a majority of three-member wards in the borough, although there are also nine two-member wards. The Borough Council submitted proposals for future electoral arrangements based on a pattern of 18 three-member wards for the borough, noting the Government's White Paper proposals for annual elections. This ward pattern was supported by the Labour Group on the Council, although with some amendments to individual ward boundaries and a different configuration in the south-west of the borough. The Liberal Democrats also put forward a pattern of three-member wards (without details for the north-west of the borough) although they preferred a mixture of two- and three-member wards, for community identity reasons. This approach was supported by the Conservative Association. In view of this consensus, particularly of both political parties represented on the Council, we consider that a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough would provide appropriate representation. We have therefore considered in detail the Liberal Democrats' three-member ward proposal in this report.

Third, there is consensus on ward configuration in much of the borough, together with a recognition that main roads, such as Ladbroke Grove, the West Crosswall Road, the Kings Road and the Fulham Road provide good boundaries. We consider that main roads do generally provide good boundaries in the borough, but this factor must be weighed against our objective of seeking electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria.

Fourth, 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 boundaries of such communities.

Fifth, the two borough-wide schemes would provide improved electoral equality, although to varying degrees. Under the Borough Council's proposals the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough would be reduced from 10 to one, and under the Liberal Democrats' scheme to zero (although without detailed proposals for the remainder of the borough). This level of improvement would be maintained in 2003. The Labour Group's proposed wards in the south-west of the borough would, however, result in high levels of electoral inequality.

We have sought to build on these proposals in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve yet further improvements in electoral equality, while also seeking to reflect the statutory criteria. Where it exists, we have sought to reflect the consensus among representatives for warding arrangements in particular parts of the borough. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all of the respondents in our draft recommendations.

In view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we have concluded that we should base our recommendations on the Borough Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- St Charles, Goldborne, Kelfield, Avondale and Colville wards;
- Norland and Penbridge wards;
- Holland and Campden wards;
- Earl's Court, Courtfield, Abingdon, Queen's Gate and Redcliffe wards;
- Brompton, Church, North Stanley and Han Town wards;
- South Stanley, Royal Hospital and Cheyne wards.

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

St Charles, Goldborne, Kelfield, Avondale and Colville wards

The number of electors per councillor in the two-member St Charles and Kelfield wards is 15 per cent above and 25 per cent below the borough average respectively (19 per cent above and 22 per cent below in 2003). In the three-member Goldborne, Avondale and Colville wards the number of electors per councillor is 9 per cent below, 4 per cent below and 4 per cent below the borough average respectively (11 per cent above, 7 per cent below and 6 per cent below in 2003).

The Borough Council proposed that part of Kelfield ward should be included in an expanded St Charles ward with the boundary clipped along Oxford Gardens in order to provide good electoral equality in a three-member ward pattern. For the same reason, it also proposed a new Notting Barns ward combining the remainder of Kelfield ward with part of Avondale ward. While acknowledging that there is "no natural boundary" between the proposed Notting Barns ward and Norland ward to the south, the Council stated that it had "preserved the integrity of two notable communities – Nottingwood House and the Henry Dickens Estate". The Borough Council, however, proposed no change to Goldborne and Colville wards, arguing that they are currently defined by clear boundaries, although a relatively high level of electoral inequality would continue to exist in Colville ward. Under its proposals, the number of electors per councillor in St Charles, Goldborne, Colville and Notting Barns wards would be 3 per cent above, 9 per cent below and 4 per cent below the borough average respectively (4 per cent above, 11 per cent below, 6 per cent below and 4 per cent above the average respectively in 2003).

The Labour Group objected to the boundary between the Borough Council's proposed Notting Barns and Norland wards, proposing instead that the boundary should reflect current polling district boundaries in the area by including polling district DA in Norland ward and polling district D in Notting Barns ward. Additionally, it considered that Norland ward should be renamed Notting Dale, to reflect community identity.

The Liberal Democrats proposed transferring the area south of Goldborne Road and west of the Portobello Road from Goldborne ward to Colville ward, together with the area bounded by St Charles Square, Esmoor Street and Barby Road from the current St Charles ward to Goldborne ward. The Liberal Democrats did not provide detailed proposals for the remainder of the wards in this area, considering that ideally there should be four wards, represented by nine councillors, covering the north-west part of the borough, extending as far south as Holland Park Avenue, but that this would not fit a three-member ward scheme.

On balance, we consider that the Borough Council's scheme provides a good pattern of representation in this area, basing its proposals on the existing arrangements and providing improved electoral equality. However, we consider that the electoral equality in this area could be further improved and therefore propose two additional changes to the Borough Council's scheme. We propose transferring the area south of Goldborne Road and west of the Portobello Road from St Charles Square, Esmoor Street and Barby Road, covering the Tiverton and Balfour of Burley estates from St Charles ward to Goldborne ward, partly reflecting the Liberal Democrats' proposal for this area. We note that the proposed ward would cross Ladbroke Grove, but given the improvement to electoral equality achieved, particularly in Goldborne ward, and having visited the area, we have concluded that such a proposal would provide for the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Under our draft recommendations for St Charles and Goldborne wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent and 2 per cent below the average respectively (2 per cent below and 4 per cent below in 2003).
Additionally, in order to improve electoral equality in the new Notting Barns and Colville wards, we propose transferring 175 electors on the north side of Lancaster Road, including Ruston Mews, from Notting Barns ward to Colville ward. Again, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality is not outweighed by arguments for retaining Ladbroke Grove as a boundary. Under our draft recommendations for Notting Barns and Colville wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent above and 1 per cent below the average respectively (1 per cent above and 3 per cent below in 2003).

**Norland and Pembroke wards**

In the two-member Norland ward, the number of electors per councillor is 11 per cent below the average (12 per cent below in 2003). In the three-member Pembroke ward, the number of electors per councillor is 1 per cent below the average (4 per cent below in 2003).

The Borough Council proposed combining the current Norland ward with part of Avondale ward to form a new three-member Norland ward, with the remainder of Avondale ward being included in a new Notting Barns ward, described above. It also proposed no change to Pembroke ward stating that the ward, currently bounded by Westbourne Grove, Ladbroke Grove and Notting Hill Gate, has an electoral variance of under 10 per cent. Under the Borough Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor for Pembroke ward would remain unchanged. In the enlarged Norland ward, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above the average (3 per cent above in 2003).

The Liberal Democrats proposed a minor change to Pembroke ward, transferring the area bounded by Colville Terrace and Portobello Road from Colville ward to Pembroke ward, but did not provide details for the area west of Ladbroke Grove. Under its proposals for Pembroke ward, the number of electors per councillor would be 10 per cent above the borough average (5 per cent above in 2003).

In view of the good electoral equality achieved under the Borough Council's scheme for Norland and Pembroke wards, together with the retention of the majority of the current boundaries, we are adopting the Borough Council's proposals for these wards as part of our draft recommendations, although electoral variances in Figure 2 differ slightly in 2003, due to a minor difference in total electorate.

**Holland and Campden wards**

In the three-member wards of Holland and Campden the number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent below and 8 per cent below the borough average respectively (equal to the average and 4 per cent below in 2003).

The Borough Council proposed no change to Holland and Campden wards, both of which it stated had electorates “within acceptable limits”. It also considered that these wards currently have clear boundaries such as Holland Park Avenue and Notting Hill Gate, to the north, and Kensington High Street to the south.

The Liberal Democrats proposed that both the northern and southern boundaries of these two wards should be retained but that the boundary between them should be amended to run along Phillimore Gardens, Exner Villas and Ampleforth Road, transferring Duchess of Bedford Walk (south side), Upper Bournmore Place, Phillimore Place and Exner Villas (north side) to Campden ward. Under its proposals, the number of electors per council in the Holland and Campden wards would be 2 per cent below and 7 per cent below the borough average respectively (equal to the average and 1 per cent below in 2003).

In view of the current good levels of electoral equality achieved, combined with the retention of the well-defined ward boundaries, we are adopting the Borough Council's proposals for no change to Campden and Holland wards as part of our draft recommendations.

**Abingdon, Courtfield, Earl's Court, Queen's Gate and Redcliffe wards**

The number of electors per councillor in the three-member Abingdon, Courtfield, Earl's Court, Queen's Gate and Redcliffe wards is 3 per cent below, equal to 26 per cent above. In order to improve electoral equality it proposed amending the eastern boundary to follow Barkston Gardens and Earl's Court Road, transferring part of Barkston Gardens, Hesper Mews, Bramham Gardens and Bolton Gardens from Earl's Court ward to Courtfield ward. In addition to retaining the West Cromwell Road as a boundary, the Liberal Democrats proposed no change to the remaining boundaries of Abingdon ward for community identity reasons and proposed that the current Queen's Gate ward be retained. The Liberal Democrats proposed no change to Redcliffe ward. Under this proposal the number of electors per councillor in Earl's Court, Abingdon, Courtfield and Redcliffe wards would be 4 per cent above, 6 per cent below, 5 per cent below and 1 per cent below the average respectively (equal to the average, 1 per cent above, 1 per cent below and 5 per cent below in 2003).

On balance, we consider that the Borough Council's proposals provide a good level of electoral equality while generally reflecting the statutory criteria. However, we agree with the Labour Group, the Constituency Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats that the West Cromwell Road constitutes a clear boundary in this area and therefore propose retaining it between Earl's Court and Abingdon wards. This would also facilitate the retention of the existing boundary between Abingdon and Queen's Gate wards, as proposed by the Liberal Democrats, providing good electoral equality while reflecting community identity.

Having retained the West Cromwell Road as the boundary between Abingdon and Earl's Court wards, three further consequential changes would be necessary to ensure electoral equality in this area. As stated by both the Liberal Democrats and the Labour Group, Earl's Court ward would be under-represented, necessitating a further transfer of electors. Having considered the alternatives, we propose transferring Barkston Gardens, Earl's Court Gardens and Moreton Mews from Earl's Court ward to Courtfield ward, with the western boundary in this area following Earl's Court Road, partly reflecting the Labour Group's and the Liberal Democrats' proposals. As a consequence of the transfer from Earl's Court ward, Courtfield ward is slightly under-represented, and we therefore propose transferring Onslow Gardens from Courtfield ward to Brompton ward, where the current boundary is less well defined, to ensure...
better electoral equality. Additionally, we are proposing a transfer of part of Bolton Gardens, Brunham Gardens and Hesper Mews from Earl’s Court to South Stanley and Redcliffe ward, partially reflecting the Borough Council’s proposals.

Under our draft recommendations for Earl’s Court, Courtfield, Redcliffe, Abingdon and Queen’s Gate wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent above, 6 per cent above, 8 per cent above, 3 per cent below and 6 per cent below the borough average respectively (5 per cent above, 3 per cent above, 5 per cent above, 4 per cent above and 6 per cent below the borough average respectively in 2003).

Brompton, Church, North Stanley and Hans Town wards

In the two-member Brompton, Church and North Stanley wards the number of electors per councillor is 25 per cent below, 15 per cent below and 12 per cent above the borough average respectively (20 per cent below, 16 per cent below and 22 per cent above in 2003). The three-member Hans Town ward is 11 per cent below the average (18 per cent below in 2003).

The Borough Council proposed an expanded Brompton ward to provide enough electors for an increase in the number of councillors from two to three. It proposed combining the current Brompton ward with part of Hans Town ward, north of Walton Street and Pont Street, together with the area bounded by Bury Walk, Iswoth Street and Elystan Street, currently in Church ward. Under its proposal for Brompton ward, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average (1 per cent above the average in 2003).

The Liberal Democrats also proposed an enlarged Brompton ward, with its southern and eastern boundaries following Walton Street, Pont Street and Sloane Street and the western boundary following Stanhope Gardens, Gloucester Road and Cranley Gardens. Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor in Brompton ward would be 1 per cent below the average (3 per cent below the average in 2003).

We consider that the Borough Council’s proposal for an enlarged Brompton ward meets the statutory criteria while helping to provide improved electoral equality in a pattern of three-member wards in the area. We are therefore adopting its proposal for Brompton ward, together with our additional transfer of part of Ousklow Gardens from Courtfield ward, as detailed above, as part of our draft recommendations. The number of electors per councillor in Brompton ward would be 2 per cent above the average (4 per cent in 2003).

In addition to including part of Church ward in an expanded Brompton ward, the Borough Council proposed that part of Church ward bounded by Iswoth Place, Draycott Avenue, Whiteheads Grove and Cale Street (containing the Sutton Dwellings), should be included in a revised Hans Town ward. Additionally, Hans Town ward would include part of the current Royal Hospital ward, between the King’s Road and Cadogan Street.

It also proposed that the remainder of Church ward should be included with North Stanley ward to form a new three-member Stanley ward retaining the existing boundaries of the Kings Road and the Fulham Road, but with the eastern boundary following Bury Walk, Cale Street and Markham Street. Consequently, Church ward would be abolished in order to provide improved electoral equality and to facilitate a pattern of three-member wards. Under the Borough Council’s proposals for Hans Town and Stanley wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent above and 7 per cent below the borough average respectively (1 per cent above and equal to the average in 2003).

The Labour Group supported the Borough Council’s proposal for Hans Town ward. It, however, proposed a different configuration covering the current North Stanley and South Stanley wards for community identity reasons, stating that “the community within the present South Stanley ward has little affinity with that in the area to the east of Old Church Street, and a far greater affinity with ... the other side of Kings Road.” Its proposal for a three-member ward bounded by the Fulham Road and Old Church Street, together with a different configuration for the remainder of the area covered by the two current wards would, however, result in high levels of electoral inequality of over 20 per cent.

The Liberal Democrats supported the Borough Council’s proposal for Stanley ward, but preferred the retention of the name North Stanley. It also proposed a similar configuration for Hans Town ward, but with a slightly different boundary to the north, running along Sloane Street, to include streets between the borough boundary and Pont Street. Under its proposals for Hans Town and North Stanley wards, the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent above and equal to the average respectively (2 per cent below and 1 per cent below in 2003).

We consider that the Borough Council’s scheme for the wards in this area provides good levels of electoral equality in a pattern of three-member wards while retaining identifiable boundaries, particularly the Kings Road and the Fulham Road. Moreover, there is agreement between the Borough Council and the Labour Group on the proposed Hans Town ward, and between the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats’ proposals on the area covered by Stanley ward. We are therefore adopting the Borough Council’s proposals for Hans Town and Stanley wards as part of our draft recommendations.

South Stanley, Royal Hospital and Cheyne wards

In the two-member South Stanley, Royal Hospital and Cheyne wards, the number of electors per councillor is 21 per cent above, 7 per cent below and 19 per cent above the average respectively (23 per cent above, 6 per cent below and 16 per cent above the borough average in 2003).

To facilitate a pattern of three-member wards, the Borough Council proposed that there should be two wards in this area, Cremorne (covering an area similar to the current South Stanley ward) and Royal Hospital, with the boundary between them following Oakley Street. It additionally proposed amending the northern boundary of Royal Hospital ward to follow the Kings Road. As a consequence Cheyne ward would be abolished. The number of electors per councillor in Cremorne and Royal Hospital wards would be 4 per cent below and equal to the average respectively (both 2 per cent below the average in 2003).

The Liberal Democrats supported the Borough Council’s proposals for Cremorne ward, but proposed that Cheyne ward should be retained as the ward name. They also proposed a Royal Hospital ward similar to that of the Borough Council, but with the northern boundary following Markham Street, Elystan Place, Draycott Place, Cadogan Gardens and Sloane Square. Under the Liberal Democrats’ proposals, the number of electors per councillor in South Stanley and Royal Hospital wards would be 2 per cent below and 8 per cent above the average respectively (both 1 per cent below in 2003).

The Labour Group proposed a different configuration of the wards covering the current North Stanley and South Stanley wards for community identity reasons, as described above. Its proposal, however, would result in high levels of electoral inequality. Councillor Boulton (member for South Stanley ward) supported the Labour Group’s proposals, but included the Sutton Estate in Stanley ward, to provide better electoral equality. This would, however, worsen electoral equality in the surrounding wards. The Constituency Labour Party put forward an alternative name for South Stanley ward, World’s End, to reflect community identity.

We consider that the Borough Council’s proposals, generally supported by the Liberal Democrats, achieve improved equality while providing a pattern of three-member wards. Moreover, we consider that the proposed wards continue to reflect the broad community areas and provide for the retention of clear boundaries. Accordingly, we are adopting the Borough Council’s proposals for Cremorne and Royal Hospital wards as part of our draft recommendations.

Conclusions

We have considered carefully all the evidence and representations received during the stage of the review. We consider that the Borough Council’s proposals would achieve a significant improvement to electoral equality. However, we consider that there are a number of areas where further modifications would improve electoral equality, or where clearer boundaries could be provided and which would reflect some of the alternative proposals received during Stage One. We therefore propose six modifications to the boundaries proposed by the Borough Council: between Earl’s Court and Abingdon wards, Earl’s Court and Courtfield wards, St Charles and Golborne wards, Courtfield ward and Earl’s Court and Redcliffe wards and Notting Barns and Colville wards. We conclude that any further improvements in electoral equality may be
at the expense of the statutory criteria, namely the need to reflect community identities and interests and to secure effective and convenient local government. We believe that our proposals strike a satisfactory balance of the criteria guiding our work. Consequently, we propose that:

(a) the council size should be 54 members, the same as at present;
(b) there should be 18 wards, three less than at present, which would involve changes to 16 of the existing wards.

56 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2003.

57 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from 10 to zero. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue in 2003. Our draft recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted in the back of this report.

Draft Recommendation
The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea should comprise 54 councillors serving 18 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.

We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea 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.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

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<td>Number of wards</td>
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5. NEXT STEPS

The Commission is putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 17 May 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:

Director of Reviews
The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphin Court
10/11 Great Tew St
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 0171 404 6142
E-mail: reviews@gce.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 and the Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats. Full details of each submission, including accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea’s Proposal

Figure A1: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

<table>
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<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance Electorate from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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continued overleaf
Kensington & Chelsea
Liberal Democrats’ Proposal

The Kensington & Chelsea Liberal Democrats submitted two proposals – a mixture of two- and three-member wards and an entirely three-member ward scheme. For comparative purposes we have included the three-member ward scheme only. Detailed proposals for three wards in the north-west of the borough were not provided.

![Table](image)

**Source:** Electorate figures are based on Kensington & Chelsea’s submission.

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Note: The ‘variance from average’ column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (−) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
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 18 years, after this Commission’s predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), 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(5) 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 total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
• the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions);
• 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 1992, 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 1 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:

(b) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
(c) 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.