

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
WANDSWORTH

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

July 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Wandsworth.

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



Local Government Commission for England

27 July 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 4 August 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Wandsworth under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in March 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 163-164) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Wandsworth.

We recommend that Wandsworth Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors representing 20 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

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

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Wandsworth on 4 August 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 2 March 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

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

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

- **in one of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **by 2003 electoral equality shows no overall improvement, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in three wards, although no ward would vary by more than 20 per cent.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 163-164) are that:

- **Wandsworth Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors, compared to 61 at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, two fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.**

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

- **In all of the 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average, with the highest imbalance being in East Putney ward, where the number of electors per councillor would vary by 8 per cent.**
- **This level of electoral equality is forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 7 September 1999:

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

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)
1 Balham	3	Balham ward; Northcote ward (part)
2 Bedford	3	Bedford ward (part)
3 Earlsfield	3	Earlsfield ward (part); Springfield ward (part)
4 East Putney	3	East Putney ward (part); West Hill ward (part)
5 Fairfield	3	East Putney ward (part); Fairfield ward (part); St John ward (part)
6 Furzedown	3	Furzedown ward (part)
7 Graveney	3	Furzedown ward (part); Graveney ward (part)
8 Latchmere	3	Latchmere ward (part); St John ward (part); St Mary's Park ward (part)
9 Nightingale	3	Bedford ward (part); Nightingale ward (part); Tooting ward (part)
10 Northcote	3	Northcote ward (part); St John ward (part)
11 Queenstown	3	Latchmere ward (part); Queenstown ward; St Mary's Park ward (part)
12 Riverside	3	Latchmere ward (part); St John ward (part); St Mary's Park ward (part)
13 Roehampton	3	Roehampton ward; West Putney ward (part)
14 Shaftesbury	3	Shaftesbury ward; St John ward (part)
15 Southfields	3	<i>Unchanged</i> Southfield ward
16 Thamesfield	3	Thamesfield ward (part)
17 Tooting	3	Graveney ward (part); Tooting ward (part)
18 Wandsworth Common	3	Earlsfield ward (part); Fairfield ward (part); Nightingale ward (part); Springfield ward (part); St John ward (part)
19 West Hill	3	Parkside ward; West Hill ward (part)
20 West Putney	3	East Putney ward (part); Thamesfield ward (part); West Putney ward (part)

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

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Wandsworth

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Balham	3	10,093	3,364	1	9,958	3,319	-1
2 Bedford	3	9,359	3,120	-6	9,842	3,281	-2
3 Earlsfield	3	9,893	3,298	-1	9,884	3,295	-2
4 East Putney	3	10,752	3,584	8	10,375	3,458	3
5 Fairfield	3	9,369	3,123	-6	10,208	3,403	1
6 Furzedown	3	10,191	3,397	2	9,983	3,328	-1
7 Graveney	3	10,231	3,410	3	10,101	3,367	0
8 Latchmere	3	9,899	3,300	-1	9,899	3,300	-2
9 Nightingale	3	10,307	3,436	3	10,003	3,334	-1
10 Northcote	3	10,348	3,449	4	10,263	3,421	2
11 Queenstown	3	9,509	3,170	-5	10,126	3,375	1
12 Riverside	3	9,390	3,130	-6	10,332	3,444	3
13 Roehampton	3	9,634	3,211	-3	9,708	3,236	-4
14 Shaftesbury	3	10,425	3,475	4	10,106	3,369	0
15 Southfields	3	10,514	3,505	5	10,284	3,428	2
16 Thamesfield	3	9,698	3,233	-3	9,908	3,303	-2
17 Tooting	3	10,100	3,367	1	9,984	3,328	-1
18 Wandsworth Common	3	9,423	3,141	-6	9,850	3,283	-2
19 West Hill	3	10,146	3,382	2	10,236	3,412	2
20 West Putney	3	10,275	3,425	3	10,360	3,453	3
Totals	60	199,556	—	—	201,410	—	—
Averages	—	—	3,326	—	—	3,357	—

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

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

1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

5 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as 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 secures effective and convenient local government in that borough but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a borough's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other boroughs.

The London Boroughs

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

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

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs,

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

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

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

12 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the London boroughs, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain the approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would no doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. Our general experience has been that proposals for three-member ward patterns emerged from most areas in London.

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

The Review of Wandsworth

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Wandsworth. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in September 1977 (Report No. 249).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 4 August 1998, when we wrote to Wandsworth Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 9 November 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 Stage Three began on 2 March 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Wandsworth*, and ended on 26 April 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

17 The borough of Wandsworth is situated south of the River Thames, close to central London and covers 13.25 square miles with a population of 265,000. It has the largest population of any of the 12 inner London boroughs and comprises a number of communities – Balham, Battersea, Earlsfield, Putney, Roehampton, Tooting and Wandsworth itself – each of which has its own distinct character. The character of the borough varies from areas of inner-urban industrial and commercial activity and high density housing to the 600 acres of open spaces, including Battersea Park, Putney Heath and Tooting and Wandsworth commons (Municipal Year Book). The borough has good rail links, being served by Clapham Junction, the Wimbledon branch of the London Underground District Line and the Northern Line.

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

19 The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 199,556. The Council currently has 61 councillors who are elected from 22 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Seventeen wards are each represented by three councillors and five wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

20 Since the last electoral review, there has been a decrease in electorate in the borough, with around 3 per cent fewer electors than two decades ago.

21 At present, each councillor represents an average of 3,271 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 3,302 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 one of the 22 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. The worst imbalance is in Latchmere ward where each of the three councillors represents on average 16 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Wandsworth

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Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Balham	3	9,314	3,105	-5	9,179	3,060	-7
2 Bedford	3	9,693	3,231	-1	10,176	3,392	3
3 Earlsfield	2	6,778	3,389	4	6,769	3,385	3
4 East Putney	3	10,376	3,459	6	9,999	3,333	1
5 Fairfield	2	6,025	3,013	-8	6,864	3,432	4
6 Furzedown	3	10,429	3,476	6	10,221	3,407	3
7 Graveney	3	10,585	3,528	8	10,455	3,485	6
8 Latchmere	3	8,289	2,763	-16	8,536	2,845	-14
9 Nightingale	3	9,609	3,203	-2	9,305	3,102	-6
10 Northcote	3	9,165	3,055	-7	9,080	3,027	-8
11 Parkside	2	5,968	2,984	-9	6,027	3,014	-9
12 Queenstown	2	7,137	3,569	9	7,754	3,877	17
13 Roehampton	3	8,910	2,970	-9	8,984	2,995	-9
14 Shaftesbury	3	10,138	3,379	3	9,819	3,273	-1
15 Southfield	3	10,514	3,505	7	10,284	3,428	4
16 Springfield	3	10,726	3,575	9	11,154	3,718	13
17 St John	3	9,972	3,324	2	10,686	3,562	8
18 St Mary's Park	3	9,166	3,055	-7	9,147	3,049	-8
19 Thamesfield	3	10,422	3,474	6	10,632	3,544	7
20 Tooting	3	10,342	3,447	5	10,226	3,409	3

continued overleaf

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
21 West Hill	2	6,189	3,095	-5	6,220	3,110	-6
22 West Putney	3	9,809	3,270	0	9,894	3,298	0
Totals	61	199,556	—	—	201,411	—	—
Averages	—	—	3,271	—	—	3,302	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Wandsworth Borough Council's revised electorate figures.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Latchmere ward were relatively over-represented by 16 per cent, while electors in Springfield ward were relatively under-represented by 9 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

²² During Stage One we received representations from the Borough Council, the Putney, Battersea and Tooting Conservative Associations, the Wandsworth Labour Parties, the Wandsworth Liberal Democrats and a resident of Balham ward. Only the Conservative Associations and the Labour Parties submitted borough-wide schemes. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Wandsworth*.

²³ Our draft recommendations were based on the Wandsworth Labour Parties' scheme, which achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and provided a pattern of entirely three-member wards. However, we moved away from the Labour Parties' scheme in eight areas, affecting 11 wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Wandsworth Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors;
- (b) there should be 20 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all but one of the 22 existing wards.

Draft Recommendation

Wandsworth Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors serving 20 wards.

²⁴ Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all of the 20 wards varying by no more than 9 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 8 per cent from the borough average in 2003 using the Borough Council's modified electorate forecasts.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

²⁵ During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 81 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Wandsworth Borough Council and the Commission.

Wandsworth Borough Council

²⁶ The Borough Council did not make a detailed Stage One submission. At Stage Three, it stated that it had examined the draft recommendations against a number of criteria, including the degree of overall change, the need to respect parliamentary constituency boundaries, and the “future proofing” of electorate forecasts beyond 2003. It also submitted revised electorate forecasts for the existing Fairfield and St John wards “following planning consents granted to two riverside sites”.

²⁷ The Borough Council rejected the draft recommendations, objecting particularly to the proposed Earlsfield, Fairfield and Wandsworth Common wards, and put forward two new borough-wide schemes.

²⁸ Its preferred option for “minimal change”, involved the retention of the existing council size of 61 and pattern of 22 wards represented by two and three members, with changes to existing ward boundaries to improve electoral equality.

²⁹ Its alternative option involved a council size of 63 members, representing 21 three-member wards.

Wandsworth Labour Parties

³⁰ The Wandsworth Labour parties considered the draft recommendations to be an “acceptable balance between electoral equality and community identity” and supported a pattern of three-member wards and a council size of 60 members. They queried the Borough Council’s projected electorate figures for the Gargoyle Wharf site in St John ward, and stated that if we were to accept the

revised projected electorate figures for the Smuggler’s Way development in Fairfield ward, and the Gargoyle Wharf development in our proposed Riverside ward, we should modify the boundaries between East Putney and Fairfield wards, East Putney and West Putney wards, and Riverside and Queenstown wards. They also proposed a number of minor modifications to the draft recommendations, including that Southfield ward be renamed Southfields and that the electors around Clapham Junction station should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward on community identity grounds.

Wandsworth Labour Councillors

³¹ The Leader of the Wandsworth Labour Group, responding on behalf of the Labour members, considered our draft recommendations to be “a coherent and sensible whole, which give a true and fair representation of the various Wandsworth communities”. The Group recognised that the review “must be a compromise between electoral equality and geographic and community features”, supported three-member wards and considered that the current arrangements have “a number of serious faults”. It particularly supported our proposals for Earlsfield, Queenstown and West Hill wards, as better reflecting local communities.

³² The Group considered that the Borough Council’s Stage Three proposals were based on “irrelevant or highly subjective criteria” ... “misplaced rejection of annual elections without any objective justification” and “failed to recognise changes to local communities in the past 22 years”.

Battersea Conservative Association

³³ The Battersea Conservative Association supported the Borough Council’s Stage Three ‘preferred option’ for minimal change to the existing arrangements. However, it also stated that if the Commission was “minded to consider only

schemes comprised entirely of three-member wards”, then it proposed an alternative warding pattern for the Battersea area. Its scheme was identical to the Borough Council’s alternative option for Latchmere, Queenstown and St Mary’s Park/Riverside wards, but differed from it in the remainder of the Battersea area.

Putney Conservative Association

34 The Putney Conservative Association opposed the draft recommendations and supported the Borough Council’s preferred option for minimal change. It also put forward an alternative proposal for 21 three-member wards if the Commission “insist on adopting a plan for only three-member wards”. It supported having an odd number of councillors and its proposals for three-member wards in Putney were almost identical to the Borough Council’s alternative option except for a minor boundary amendment between the wards of Roehampton and West Putney.

Tooting Conservative Association

35 The Tooting Conservative Association opposed the draft recommendations for the area and supported the Borough Council’s preferred option to modify the existing arrangements and provide for a scheme based on a mixture of two- and three-member wards. They submitted an alternative warding proposal for the Tooting area, comprising seven three-member wards, although this differed from the Borough Council’s alternative option for the area. It stated that they supported an odd number of councillors and considered a 63-member council to be “the only viable alternative to the present 61”. It proposed establishing new wards of St George’s, Upper Tooting and Wandsworth Common.

Members of Parliament

36 We received submissions from all three Members of Parliament with constituencies covering Wandsworth at Stage Three. Tony Colman, MP for Putney, supported the draft recommendations to reduce the number of councillors to 60 and the number of wards to 20. He considered that the draft recommendations would be “particularly helpful if and when we move to annual elections”. He also

stated that he supported the majority of the proposed ward boundary changes in his constituency and considered that they recognised natural communities and produced better electoral equality. He particularly supported the proposal to combine the existing wards of Parkside and West Hill.

37 Tom Cox, MP for Tooting, supported the draft recommendations for a council size of 60 representing 20 three-member wards and considered that our draft recommendations “do in fact truly represent the local communities that live in the Tooting constituency”.

38 Martin Linton, MP for Battersea, welcomed the draft recommendations, but proposed that the electorate around Clapham Junction station should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward, on community identity grounds. He further proposed that the Spencer Park area should form part of Fairfield ward rather than Wandsworth Common ward, and that the area between Schubert Road and Putney Bridge Road should remain in East Putney ward.

Other Representations

39 A further 72 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from borough residents. Seventy of these supported our draft recommendations, while two opposed them.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

42 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.

43 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, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance 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

44 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of around 1 per cent from 199,556 to 200,165 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. It expected most of the growth to be in Bedford, Queenstown and Springfield wards. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

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

46 At Stage Three the Borough Council modified its five-year forecasts, stating that Fairfield ward polling district FA (Smuggler’s Way), would increase by an additional 690 electors, and that St John ward polling district LA (Gargoyle Wharf), would increase by an additional 556 electors. The Labour parties expressed the view that the Borough Council had over-estimated the expected level of growth, particularly in the Gargoyle Wharf site. However, the Borough Council maintained that its revised forecasts were accurate. In the absence of alternative estimates, we are satisfied that the Borough Council’s figures represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

47 We indicated in our *Guidance* that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving

a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80. As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government.

48 Wandsworth Borough Council currently has 61 members. At Stage One the Wandsworth Conservatives proposed a council size of 63, an increase of two councillors, and the Wandsworth Labour parties proposed a reduction of one to 60. The Borough Council did not make specific proposals for council size during Stage One.

49 In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 60 members.

50 At Stage Three, the Borough Council and the three Conservative Associations put forward two alternative schemes, one based on retaining a council size of 61, involving minimal change to the existing ward pattern, the other based on a council of 63 members, representing a pattern of 21 three-member wards.

51 With regard to council size, our Guidance states that, in response to the 1995 consultation "the local authority associations were clear that equality of representation within an area was more important than between areas, and that diversity was to be welcomed". We therefore set out indicative ranges of council size for different types of authority and consider that these broad ranges of council size allow for sufficient flexibility to take account of local circumstances. For London boroughs this is between 40 and 80 councillors. Our draft recommendations are based on a council size of 60. The Borough Council's preferred option at Stage Three, for retaining the current mix of two- and three-member wards, would retain a council size of 61 members, while the alternative scheme, providing for 21 three-member wards, would result in an increase in council size of two. As stated in our Guidance, we "do not accept that increases in an authority's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of an authority simply to make it more consistent with that of a neighbouring area" and require that all increases in council size to be fully justified.

52 The Council's preferred option for minimal change would retain a council size of 61. However, these are new proposals which were not put forward at Stage One and which have not therefore been consulted upon locally (unlike the draft recommendations). Furthermore, they would not produce a demonstrably better level of electoral equality than the draft recommendations.

53 The Council's argumentation for two additional councillors, in its alternative scheme, is based upon a possible requirement to have a uniform pattern of three-member wards, thus requiring a total number of councillors divisible by three, and, given this criteria, which it states it does not itself accept, the need to have 21 wards in order to facilitate the creation of equal-sized parliamentary constituencies in any future review by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission.

54 While the Commission is obliged to have regard to convenient and effective local government when developing recommendations, we do not consider that equalising parliamentary constituency electorates should be a decisive factor.

55 As stated earlier, the Commission is not required to have regard to parliamentary boundaries when considering borough ward boundaries, as any new ward boundaries will be taken into account by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission in its later reviews of parliamentary constituencies. We cannot predict or pre-empt the basis of a Parliamentary Boundary Commission review. For example, a different MP:elector ratio may be sought and therefore the convenience of parliamentary representation in Wandsworth cannot be considered in isolation. We do not consider these factors justify an increase in councillors and have therefore rejected the Council's alternative option for a 21 three-member ward scheme.

56 In view of the improved level of electoral equality which could be achieved under our draft recommendations for a council of 60 members, and in the light of the fact that we do not feel our draft recommendations have been proved to be fundamentally flawed with regard to the statutory criteria after local consultation, we are confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 60 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

57 During Stage One of the review we received submissions from both the Wandsworth

Conservatives and the Wandsworth Labour parties. We did not receive a scheme from the Borough Council at Stage One. We critically evaluated both these schemes, and the other representations received in the light of our objective of seeking to provide for electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. Our draft recommendations were developed from locally-generated proposals which adhered to the policies outlined in our *Guidance* (March 1998).

58 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the borough-wide schemes from the Wandsworth Conservatives and the Wandsworth Labour parties. We expressed gratitude for the positive approach taken by respondents who had submitted detailed borough-wide proposals for change to the present electoral arrangements. From these representations some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

59 First, there was broad agreement that the size of the council should remain roughly the same, although the Conservatives proposed a council size of 63 and the Labour parties proposed a council size of 60 members.

60 Second, the current electoral arrangements provide for a combination of two- and three-member wards in Wandsworth. Both schemes submitted at Stage One were based on a pattern of entirely three-member wards for the borough; the Conservatives proposed 21 wards while the Labour parties proposed 20 wards.

61 Third, there was a degree of consensus between the two borough-wide schemes. Although the wards proposed under the two schemes were not based on identical boundaries, they generally reflected similar community areas and we sought to reflect this degree of consensus in our draft recommendations. The main differences between the schemes focused on the central wards of Earlsfield, Springfield and Southfield. While the Labour parties proposed the creation of a new Wandsworth Common ward, comprising much of the current Springfield ward, the Conservatives proposed redistributing the current Southfield ward between surrounding wards, but retaining Springfield ward.

62 Fourth, we noted the arguments put to us about community identities in the borough. We tried

to reflect such considerations in our draft recommendations where it would be consistent with our objective of electoral equality, although we noted that there was no consensus locally on the precise boundaries of communities.

63 Fifth, both borough-wide schemes provided improved electoral equality, although to varying degrees. The Conservatives' proposals would result in the number of electors per councillor varying by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in one ward, while under the Labour parties' proposal all wards would have an electoral variance of under 10 per cent. By 2003, all wards in both the Conservatives' and the Labour parties' schemes would vary by less than 10 per cent from the borough average.

64 Finally, the issue of existing parliamentary constituency boundaries was raised during Stage One of the review. While the Conservatives' proposed warding did not reflect the existing parliamentary constituencies, the Labour parties argued that "in view of the very strong community identities established in Battersea, Putney and Tooting which are coterminous with the parliamentary constituency boundaries no change is proposed that would require ward boundaries to extend into a neighbouring parliamentary constituency". As we have stated in our *Guidance*, we are not required to have regard to Parliamentary constituency boundaries in developing our recommendations for new wards or changes to existing wards. Indeed, in order to address levels of electoral imbalance within a local authority area, it may be necessary to recommend a pattern of ward boundaries which does not coincide with constituency boundaries. These new ward boundaries will then be taken into account by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission in its review of parliamentary constituencies.

65 In our draft recommendations we sought to build on both the Conservatives' and the Labour parties' proposals in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve good electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. Where it existed, we tried to reflect the consensus between the two schemes for warding arrangements in particular parts of the borough. This was most notable in the eastern part of the borough. We considered that the Labour parties' proposals for a new Wandsworth Common ward, the disbandment of St John ward and the retention of Southfield ward would better reflect local community

identities. However, we departed from both the schemes received, in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve yet further improvements in electoral equality, while also seeking to reflect the statutory criteria. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all respondents in our draft recommendations.

66 It is relevant to reflect on the nature and status of our draft recommendations. The Commission develops draft recommendations which, given the evidence available at the time, we would be content to present to the Secretary of State. We then undertake consultation on these draft recommendations in order to gauge local opinion on the recommendations and to seek further evidence to support or oppose them. We consider that the purpose of Stage Three is primarily to consult on our draft recommendations, and to make any amendments, in the light of the further evidence received, which we consider would result in a demonstrable improvement to the current arrangements and to our draft recommendations. If however, the Commission decided to subsequently move to a totally new scheme, it would wish to undertake further consultation.

67 Before the Commission commenced its programme of periodic electoral reviews in 1996, it undertook consultation with principal authorities, the local authority associations, Members of Parliament and the main political parties. From this consultation the Commission has defined its objective as seeking electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria and has developed policy guidance (first published in 1996, updated in March 1998). We have therefore reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three representations, comparing them against our criteria. We have also compared the Borough Council's proposed options, and those of the Labour parties against these criteria.

68 In its Policy & Resources Committee Paper the Borough Council stated that at the beginning of the review the Commission stated that the review "would aim to produce three-member wards to facilitate annual elections by thirds in the event that Government proposals for these were progressed via legislation". It continued "however, the Government's position and priority now appears changed following consultation ... the LGC's position on this issue also appears to have now become slightly modified". It considered that "this

perspective is very different from August 1998 when proposals were invited" and therefore proposed as its preferred option, "minimal change", retaining the existing pattern of 22 wards represented by two or three members with changes to ward boundaries to improve electoral equality.

69 However, this is incorrect, and in fact, our approach to three-member wards has not changed. We cannot assume that it is no longer the Government's intention to introduce elections by thirds for London, and in any case, our draft recommendations were produced after considering the locally generated schemes which we received at Stage One from the Labour parties and the Conservative Associations. As stated earlier the Borough Council did not make a submission at Stage One.

70 Following the publication of the Government's White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, published in July 1998, the Chief Executive wrote to all local authorities in October 1998, expanding further on our *Guidance*, and stating that while councils and local interests may wish to have regard to this White Paper, the Commission would be continuing to take the same approach as outlined in our March 1998 *Guidance* – a view which was reiterated at local meetings. We are not ourselves prescriptive on the number of councillors which should represent each ward, instead we will look to build on local consensus. During Stage One, both the borough-wide schemes from the Conservative Associations and Labour parties were based on a uniform pattern of three-member wards, a pattern which we adopted as part of our draft recommendations, insofar as it facilitated the improvements to the level of electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. In the light of all the evidence we have received at Stage Three, we have not been persuaded to modify the warding pattern of three-member wards.

71 In addition to the submissions from the Borough Council, the Conservative Associations, the Labour parties and the Members of Parliament, we also received a further 72 representations from local residents, 70 of which expressed support for our draft recommendations, while two supported alternative arrangements.

72 Wandsworth Borough Council's submission detailed a number of criteria which it had taken

into account in formulating its Stage Three scheme, but which are issues to which the Commission cannot have regard, including comparisons between the average number of electors per councillor with neighbouring London boroughs, “future proofing” electorate projections beyond 2003, the need to have regard to parliamentary constituency boundaries, and the degree of change from the existing system.

73 The Borough Council also considered that our draft recommendations did not take sufficient account of community identities. However, as stated in our draft recommendations report, we have tried to reflect community identities in the borough where this is consistent with our objective of electoral equality, although we note that there is no consensus locally on the precise boundary of such communities, opinions differ as to the extent of a community. Indeed, the Borough Council stated that “it is important to draw a distinction between local residents’ understanding of the meaning of a geographical area, which may well be dictated by reference to names of railway stations and their catchment areas and actual community boundaries, which will be influenced by barriers to movement and natural population flows”.

74 It is acknowledged that the definition of a community area is a subjective issue, however, weight has been given to submissions which provide evidence to back up an assertion about where ward boundaries should be drawn. During Stage Three we received a number of submissions from local residents outlining their views on the draft recommendations and on communities. Many of these supported our recommendations, stating that they reflected a community as it was understood by people living in the area.

75 At Stage Three we have received a number of evidence-based representations in support of and opposing our draft recommendations. While there is some opposition, we have not been made aware of a groundswell of opposition to our draft recommendations and we have also received significant evidence of support. Furthermore, we note that unlike our draft recommendations, none of the other schemes put forward at Stage Three have been consulted upon locally. We are grateful to all respondents for their constructive assessment of our draft recommendations, and conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed on the basis of the statutory criteria.

76 However, in the light of further evidence, particularly the revised electorate forecasts supplied by the Borough Council at Stage Three, and the other representations received during Stage Three, we judge that modifications should be made to a number of our proposed boundaries. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) East Putney, Roehampton, Thamesfield and West Putney wards;
- (b) Parkside, Southfield and West Hill wards;
- (c) Latchmere, Queenstown, St John, St Mary’s Park and Shaftesbury wards;
- (d) Earlsfield, Fairfield and Springfield wards;
- (e) Balham and Northcote wards;
- (f) Bedford, Furzedown, Graveney, Nightingale and Tooting wards.

77 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map inside the back cover of the report.

East Putney, Roehampton, Thamesfield and West Putney wards

78 The north-west of the borough is covered by these four three-member wards. The number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent above the borough average in East Putney ward, 9 per cent below in Roehampton ward, 6 per cent above in Thamesfield ward and equal to the average in West Putney ward (1 per cent above, 9 per cent below, 7 per cent above and equal to the average respectively in 2003).

79 At Stage One we based our draft recommendations for this area on the Labour parties’ proposals, but in order to provide more appropriate levels of representation for each ward and for the area as a whole, we proposed realigning a number of boundaries.

80 We proposed that the boundary between Roehampton ward and West Putney ward should be modified to run to the south of the hospital, east along Coppice Drive, south along Dover House Road until it meets Putney Heath, then east along Putney Heath until it meets Tibbett’s Ride and Putney Hill. The number of electors per councillor in Roehampton ward would be 3 per cent below the average (4 per cent below in 2003).

81 We also proposed modifying the boundary between the wards of West Putney and Thamesfield, to follow the railway line as far as Balmuir Gardens, similar to the Labour parties' proposal. The number of electors per councillor in Thamesfield ward would be 3 per cent below the average (2 per cent below in 2003) and 2 per cent below the average in West Putney ward (1 per cent below in 2003).

82 We proposed retaining the existing boundary between the wards of East Putney and West Putney, but we proposed modifying the boundary between the wards of East Putney and West Hill, and East Putney and Fairfield. In order to secure improved electoral equality in the area as a whole and to utilise a clear boundary, we proposed that the area to the north of West Hill should be transferred from West Hill ward to East Putney ward, as suggested by the Labour parties. However, as this would create an unacceptable level of under-representation in East Putney ward, we proposed that the area in the north-east of East Putney ward, to the east of and including Schubert Road, and north of West Hill, should form part of Fairfield ward. The number of electors per councillor in East Putney ward would be 7 per cent above the average (2 per cent in 2003). We were aware that this proposal would cross existing parliamentary boundaries, something which the Labour parties had sought to avoid but, as stated earlier, the Commission is not required to have regard to parliamentary boundaries when considering borough ward boundaries.

83 We considered that our proposals would broadly reflect community identities in the area while providing further improvements to electoral equality, particularly under the 2003 electorate figures, when the largest imbalance would be in Roehampton ward – the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the average. We therefore put these proposals forward as part of our draft recommendations.

84 As stated earlier, the Borough Council considered that our draft recommendations were flawed and proposed two alternatives, a preferred option based on minimum change to the existing wards, and an alternative option providing for a pattern of three-member wards in the area.

85 In its preferred option, the Borough Council proposed that those electors in the area south of Carlton Drive, Portinscale Road, West Hill Road,

Cromer Villas and Gressenhall Road should be transferred from East Putney ward to West Hill ward, and endorsed our draft recommendation that the boundary between the wards of West Putney and Thamesfield should follow the railway line as far as Balmuir Gardens. Finally in this area it proposed that those electors in West Putney ward south of Queen Mary's Hospital, Coppice Drive, Highdown Road and Putney Heath should be transferred to Roehampton ward. Under the Borough Council's preferred option no ward would vary by more than 1 per cent from the borough average by 2003, but 1998 figures were not provided.

86 The Borough Council's alternative option in this area was similar to our draft recommendations. It proposed that West Putney ward south of Putney Heath and Rodway Road should form part of Roehampton ward, that the area west of Isis Close and south of the railway line should form part of West Putney ward rather than Thamesfield ward, and that West Hill ward north of West Hill should form part of East Putney ward. It proposed that a similar area of East Putney ward, west of and including Schubert Road, should be transferred to Fairfield ward, as in our draft recommendations.

87 Its major departures from our draft recommendations for these wards were its proposals that the hospital and the college, north of Linstead Way, should be transferred from West Hill ward to East Putney ward, and that Thamesfield ward east of and including Wandsworth Park and Skelgill Road should form part of Fairfield ward. Under the Borough Council's alternative option the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the borough average in East Putney ward, 1 per cent below in Roehampton ward, 1 per cent below in Thamesfield ward and equal to the average in West Putney ward in 2003. The Borough Council did not provide 1998 figures.

88 The Putney Conservative Association also rejected the draft recommendations and stated that they would support "the present status quo on the present wards with minor alterations taking into account electorates". They also stated that they would support an alternative proposal for 21 three-member wards which they considered would reduce electoral variances "and take into account natural boundaries and communities". The Putney Conservative Association's Stage Three proposals for the wards of East Putney, Roehampton, Thamesfield and West Putney were the same as

those put forward in the Borough Council's alternative option, except for a minor modification to the boundary between the wards of Roehampton and West Putney, which would affect 65 electors.

89 The Labour parties described the draft recommendations for these wards as "sensible in terms of their representation of the communities that live in Roehampton and East and West Putney". They stated that if the Commission accepted the Borough Council's revised electorate forecasts for Fairfield ward, then the boundary between East Putney and Fairfield, and East Putney and West Putney should be modified to ensure electoral equality in the area.

90 As stated earlier, Tony Colman, MP for Putney, supported most of the draft recommendations for the wards in his constituency as he considered that they recognised natural communities and produced better electoral equality. He did not specify any proposals with which he disagreed.

91 Martin Linton, MP for Battersea, supported the draft recommendations but proposed that the area between Schubert Road and Putney Bridge Road should remain in East Putney ward.

92 A resident of Roehampton ward expressed general support for the draft recommendations, particularly for a council size of 60 members. A resident of West Putney ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward and a resident of East Putney ward generally supported the draft recommendations but proposed several boundary modifications in the area to better reflect local community identities.

93 A resident of Thamesfield ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward and the surrounding area, considering that they reflected local communities. He also supported a council size of 60 members. Finally, a resident of Bedford ward supported the draft recommendations for Roehampton ward on community identity grounds.

94 We have given careful consideration to the further evidence and representations received. As stated earlier, we do not consider that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed with regard to the statutory criteria, and have not been persuaded to substantially move away from them. However, in the light of the Borough Council's

revised electorate projections for the Smuggler's Way development in nearby Fairfield ward, which provides for an additional 691 electors, we propose modifying our draft recommendations for this area in order to ensure electoral equality in the area. Consequently, we propose that Schubert Road and Galveston Road remain in East Putney ward and not be transferred to Fairfield ward.

95 This modification would have a consequential effect on electoral equality in East Putney ward, which would require a further modification to the draft recommendations. In order to secure good electoral equality, we propose that the boundary between the wards of East Putney and West Putney should be modified to run along the middle of Carmalt Gardens, Tideswell Road, Hazelwell Road and Genoa Avenue, before rejoining the existing boundary at Westleigh Avenue. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent above the average in East Putney ward (3 per cent above in 2003) and 3 per cent above in West Putney ward (unchanged in 2003).

96 Other than as a result of the revised electorate projections, we are not convinced that there is justification for substantial change to our draft recommendations in the north-west of the borough. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Roehampton and Thamesfield wards as final.

Parkside, Southfield and West Hill wards

97 These wards cover the central southern area of the borough. The number of electors per councillor in the two-member Parkside ward is 9 per cent below the average, 5 per cent below the average in the two-member West Hill ward and 7 per cent above the average in the three-member Southfield ward (9 per cent below, 6 per cent below and 4 per cent above respectively in 2003).

98 In order to achieve improved levels of electoral equality in the area while having regard to community identity, we adopted as part of our draft recommendations, the Labour parties' proposal for no change to Southfield ward, resulting in the number of electors per councillor being 5 per cent above the average (2 per cent above in 2003). We also adopted the Labour parties' proposals that the remainder of West Hill ward (the area south of West Hill) should be

combined with Parkside ward to form a new three-member West Hill ward, in which the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent above the average (unchanged in 2003). We were satisfied that these proposals would provide a good level of electoral equality, utilise clear boundaries and reflect local communities.

⁹⁹ The Council, in its preferred option at Stage Three, proposed no change for Southfield ward, and as stated earlier, proposed that part of East Putney ward should be included in West Hill ward. It also proposed that West Hill ward south of Southmead Road and Manningtree Close should form part of Parkside ward. Under the Borough Council's preferred option the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average in Parkside ward, 2 per cent below the average in Southfield ward and 2 per cent below the average in West Hill ward.

¹⁰⁰ The Council's alternative option for these wards was similar to the draft recommendations, the main difference being that it proposed that the hospital and the college north of Linstead Way should be transferred from West Hill ward to East Putney ward, as stated earlier, that the area south of Seymour Road should be transferred from East Putney ward to Southfield ward, and that the north-east of Southfield ward including King George's Park and the Arndale Centre, should form part of a modified Fairfield ward. Under the Borough Council's alternative option the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Southfield ward and 1 per cent below in West Hill ward; no 1998 figures were provided. The Putney Conservative Association expressed support for both the Borough Council's Stage Three options for the wards of Parkside, Southfield and West Hill.

¹⁰¹ The Labour parties supported the draft recommendations for these wards but proposed a minor amendment to rename Southfield ward as Southfields "as this is how the area is referred to in practice". Tony Colman, MP for Putney, particularly supported the proposal to combine the wards of Parkside and West Hill.

¹⁰² A resident of West Hill ward supported the draft recommendations for the area and for three-member wards and a council size of 60 members. Two residents of Southfield ward supported the draft recommendations for no change to the ward and that the borough be represented by three-

member wards with a council size of 60 members. One of the Southfield residents also supported the draft recommendations for West Hill ward on community identity grounds, as did a resident of Bedford ward.

¹⁰³ In addition to the Labour parties, several residents of Southfield ward proposed that the ward be renamed Southfields to reflect the local area, and we also noted that the London Underground station in the west of the ward is called Southfields.

¹⁰⁴ We have carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period and as stated earlier, we do not consider that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed with regard to the statutory criteria. We have not, therefore, been persuaded to substantially move away from them. We remain of the view that the proposals put forward by the Labour parties at Stage One for the three wards in this area would provide the best electoral equality and build on the existing ward pattern, having regard to well-defined boundaries and communities. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for the three wards as final, other than to rename Southfield ward as Southfields.

Latchmere, Queenstown, St John, St Mary's Park and Shaftesbury wards

¹⁰⁵ The north-east of the borough is covered by the two-member ward of Queenstown and the three-member wards of Latchmere, St John, St Mary's Park and Shaftesbury. The number of electors per councillor in Queenstown ward is 9 per cent above the borough average, 16 per cent below in Latchmere ward, 2 per cent above in St John ward, 7 per cent below in St Mary's Park ward and 3 per cent above in Shaftesbury ward (17 per cent above, 14 per cent below, 8 per cent above, 8 per cent below and 1 per cent below the average respectively in 2003).

¹⁰⁶ We carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period and used both the schemes submitted at Stage One as a basis for our draft recommendations. However, we made some modifications in order to improve electoral equality still further. In view of the clear boundaries which would be utilised and the good level of electoral equality which would result, we proposed endorsing the Labour parties' proposal that St John ward be disbanded and the area distributed among the neighbouring wards of

Fairfield, Latchmere, Northcote, St Mary's Park, Shaftesbury and a new Wandsworth Common ward. In addition to the improved levels of electoral equality which would result, our proposals sought to utilise strong local boundaries including railway lines and main roads.

107 At Stage One we proposed the following boundary modifications:

- (a) the area in the north-east of St John ward (St John polling district LD), bounded by Falcon Road, Ingrave Street, Lavender Road, Newcomen Road, Plough Road and the railway line should form part of Latchmere ward;
- (b) the eastern part of Latchmere ward, the area east of Harpsden Street, Austin Road and Henley Street (polling district MD), should form part of Queenstown ward;
- (c) the riverside area of St John ward to the north of York Road, together with that part of Latchmere ward which lies to the north of York Road, should form part of St Mary's Park ward which we propose should be renamed Riverside ward;
- (d) the area to the south of the railway line be transferred from St John ward to Northcote ward;
- (e) the boundary between the wards of Northcote and Shaftesbury should run along the centre of Lavender Sweep; and

(f)

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considered that they would better reflect local community identities. One particularly supported the proposal to include the Doddington Estate in the ward, while another supported a pattern of three-member wards and opposed increasing the overall council size.

115 Two residents of St John ward generally supported the draft recommendations including proposals for a 60-member council size and a pattern of three-member wards. One supported the proposals on the grounds that the York Road estate would be united in the modified Latchmere ward, and both supported the use of railway lines and main roads as ward boundaries. Two residents of Shaftesbury ward supported the draft recommendations for this ward and for a pattern of 20 three-member wards. One also supported the draft recommendations for Riverside ward.

116 Four residents of St Mary's Park ward supported the draft recommendations for the Latchmere, St John and St Mary's Park areas, including the creation of a new Riverside ward, considering that the new warding pattern would utilise better boundaries. Two supported the move to a pattern of three-member wards and opposed increasing council size.

117 A resident of Earlsfield ward considered that the draft recommendations for Latchmere and St Mary's Park wards took more account of community identities, and a resident of Bedford ward supported the draft recommendations for Riverside ward on community identity grounds.

118 In the light of the Borough Council's revised electorate projections for the Gargoyle Wharf site in St John ward, where it forecast an additional 556 electors by 2003, and having carefully considered the representations received, we have decided to modify our draft recommendations for the Queenstown and Riverside wards. In order to secure good electoral equality in the area we propose modifying our draft recommendations so that 403 electors in the area east of Albert Bridge Road and north of Brynmaer Road would be transferred from Riverside ward to Queenstown ward. We consider that such warding would reflect general community areas while providing improved levels of electoral equality. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5 per cent below the average in Queenstown ward (1 per cent above in 2003)

and 6 per cent below in Riverside ward (3 per cent above in 2003).

119 We remain of the view that the draft recommendations for the remainder of the area would achieve the best electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Latchmere and Shaftesbury wards as final.

Earlsfield, Fairfield and Springfield wards

120 The centre of the borough is covered by the two-member wards of Earlsfield and Fairfield and the three-member ward of Springfield. The number of electors per councillor in Fairfield ward is 8 per cent below the borough average, 4 per cent above in Earlsfield ward and 9 per cent above in Springfield ward (4 per cent above, 3 per cent above and 13 per cent above respectively in 2003).

121 At Stage One, having considered all the evidence received, we generally endorsed the Labour parties' proposals for the creation of a new Wandsworth Common ward, involving the disbandment of Springfield ward, as we considered that this would better reflect community identities in the area, establishing wards which would have a clear focus for the electorate. However, we proposed some modifications to the proposed boundaries of Wandsworth Common ward, in order to further improve electoral equality. In order to secure a more coherent boundary, to include the whole of Wandsworth Common in a single ward and to improve electoral equality, we proposed that the northern boundary of Wandsworth Common ward should run along the middle of Northside Wandsworth Common, thereby incorporating the Spencer Park area, currently in St John ward, in the proposed Wandsworth Common ward. We also proposed that the boundary should run westward along Huguenot Place, south along the centre of Geraldine Road, rejoining the existing boundary between Fairfield ward and Earlsfield ward at the junction of Wandsworth Common Westside and Allfarthing Lane. The number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Fairfield ward (8 per cent above in 2003).

122 We also endorsed the Labour parties' proposal that Earlsfield ward should additionally include the south-western part of Springfield ward – the area south of the railway line and to the west of

Openview. We proposed modifying the Labour parties' proposal that the electors to the west of Trinity Road in both Nightingale and Tooting wards should form part of the proposed Wandsworth Common ward, and that the area to the south of Wandle Road and east of Trinity Road remain part of Nightingale ward. The number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average in Earlsfield ward (2 per cent below in 2003), and 6 per cent below the average in Wandsworth Common ward (2 per cent below in 2003).

123 At Stage Three the Borough Council opposed the draft recommendations for Earlsfield and Wandsworth Common wards as it considered that they did not reflect communities in the area.

124 The Borough Council, in its preferred option for these wards, proposed that the area east of Crieff Road, Westover Road and Heathfield Road should be transferred from Earlsfield ward to Fairfield ward, and as stated earlier, that the Fitzhugh Grove area should be transferred from Springfield ward to St John ward. Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Earlsfield ward, 7 per cent above the average in Fairfield ward and 2 per cent above the average in Springfield ward, by 2003. No electorate figures for 1998 were provided.

125 The Borough Council's alternative option for this area was significantly different from the draft recommendations. Its proposal that St John ward be retained would align the eastern boundary of Fairfield ward along Trinity Road. It also proposed that Fairfield ward south of Huguenot Place and east of Geraldine Road should form part of a modified St John ward. As stated earlier, it proposed that Fairfield ward should also comprise parts of East Putney, Southfield and Thamesfield wards.

126 While the Borough Council proposed that a modified Earlsfield ward should straddle Garratt Lane, as in our draft recommendations, it proposed different boundaries so that the whole of the existing ward would be combined with Springfield ward west of Tranmere Road and Garratt Green. It proposed that Tooting ward west of Blackshaw Road and north of Worlde Road and Rostella Road should be combined with the remainder of Springfield ward to form a modified Springfield ward. Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 2 per cent

below the average in Earlsfield ward, 8 per cent above the average in Fairfield ward and 1 per cent above the average in Springfield ward, by 2003.

127 Both the Battersea and Putney Conservative Associations supported the Borough Council's Stage Three proposals for Fairfield ward.

128 The Labour parties supported the draft recommendations but proposed that the area around Clapham Junction station should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward. They stated that they "wholeheartedly agree that the area covered by the new Earlsfield ward is that which local residents understand to be Earlsfield" and considered that the new Wandsworth Common ward "reflects the distinctive community that lives along the southern edge of Wandsworth Common".

129 Tom Cox, MP for Tooting, also supported the draft recommendations and considered that they "truly represent the local communities that live in the Tooting constituency". Martin Linton, MP for Battersea, generally supported the draft recommendations but proposed that the Spencer Park area should form part of Fairfield ward rather than Wandsworth Common ward and that the area around Clapham Junction station should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward.

130 The Tooting Conservative Association supported the current arrangements and the Borough Council's proposals for a modified 61-member scheme. However, it considered a 63-member council to be the only viable alternative. At Stage Three it submitted proposals for three-member wards in the Tooting area which differed from those put forward by the Borough Council. It proposed that the Tooting area be represented by 21 councillors representing seven three-member wards and considered that its proposals would better reflect community identities and use more clearly defined boundaries than the draft recommendations.

131 The Association opposed the Commission's draft recommendations for Earlsfield ward on the grounds that it had "only one connecting route between its two halves". It proposed that the existing Earlsfield ward should be joined with that part of Springfield ward bounded by Magdalen Road, Tranmere Road, Burntwood Lane, Ellerton Road, Magdalen Road and Trinity Road to form a

revised Earlsfield ward. It further proposed that the area west of Tranmere Road and Aboyne Road should form part of a new St George's ward, the area east of Aboyne Road and south of Burntwood Lane should form part of a new Upper Tooting ward, while the remainder of Springfield ward should form part of a new Wandsworth Common ward, detailed below. Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor in Earlsfield ward would be 4 per cent below the borough average in 2003.

132 Six residents of Springfield ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward. Three residents considered the present Springfield ward to be an anomaly and that the proposed Earlsfield ward better reflected local communities in the area. One resident argued that the proposed Earlsfield ward would reflect the community along Garratt Lane which he considered to be distinct from that around the Common. Three of the residents supported a council size of 60, representing a pattern of 20 three-member wards.

133 Two residents of Bedford ward expressed support for the draft recommendations for the wards of Earlsfield and Wandsworth Common, as did four residents of Nightingale ward on community identity grounds.

134 Three residents of Earlsfield ward supported the draft recommendations for the proposed Earlsfield ward. One considered that the existing ward "does not reflect real communities", another considered that the draft recommendations for the wards of Earlsfield, Springfield, Latchmere and St Mary's Park took more account of community identities, while the third also supported the establishment of Wandsworth Common ward.

135 Another resident of Earlsfield ward considered that the draft recommendations for Earlsfield and Wandsworth Common wards did not take account of community identities, and a resident of Springfield ward urged that the existing boundary of the railway line be retained as the boundary between the wards of Earlsfield and Springfield wards, rather than the proposed wards of Earlsfield and Wandsworth Common.

136 We have given careful consideration to the views expressed to us during the consultation stage. As stated earlier, we do not consider that our draft recommendations for these wards are fundamentally flawed with regard to the statutory criteria, and have not been persuaded to move

away from them substantially. We are satisfied that our draft recommendations for Earlsfield, Fairfield and Wandsworth Common wards would achieve a good level of electoral equality and reflect community identities and propose to confirm them as final, subject to three modifications. As stated earlier, as a result of the Borough Council's revised electorate projections for the Smuggler's Way development in Fairfield ward, which would provide for an additional 690 electors in Fairfield, we have been persuaded to modify our draft recommendations for this area, in order to ensure electoral equality throughout the borough. We propose modifying our draft recommendations so that Schubert Road and Galveston Road should remain in East Putney ward and not be included in Fairfield ward.

137 We propose two further modifications to the draft recommendations in this area. In order to take more account of community identity in the Clapham Junction area and to better reflect the separate town centres of Clapham and Wandsworth, we propose moving away from our draft recommendations for Fairfield ward and propose that the area around Clapham Junction station, east of Plough Road and Strath Terrace should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward. We also propose modifying the boundary between the wards of Earlsfield and Wandsworth Common so that Earlsfield library (currently in Springfield ward) is included in the proposed Earlsfield ward. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the average in Fairfield ward (1 per cent above in 2003).

Balham and Northcote wards

138 The three-member wards of Balham and Northcote lie in the east of the borough. The number of electors per councillor in Balham ward is 5 per cent below the borough average and 7 per cent below in Northcote (7 per cent below and 8 per cent below respectively in 2003).

139 At Stage One the Labour parties proposed that the area in the current St John ward, south of St John's Hill should form part of Northcote ward, and that the boundary between Balham and Northcote wards should be modified to run along Thurleigh Road until it rejoins the existing boundary. They noted that Northcote ward would be bounded to the west by Wandsworth Common ward and the railway line "thus sitting nicely within the existing local features that will naturally

dictate boundaries in this part of the borough". They also considered that the modified Balham ward "becomes a convenient and suitable shape and electoral size". The Labour parties proposed that the boundary between Shaftesbury and Northcote wards should run along Lavender Sweep until it rejoins the existing boundary. The number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the borough average in Balham ward (1 per cent below in 2003) and 3 per cent above the average in Northcote ward (1 per cent above in 2003).

¹⁴⁰ Having considered all the evidence received, we decided to endorse the Labour parties' proposals for the wards of Balham and Northcote as part of our draft recommendations. We considered that they utilised clear boundaries, provided a good level of electoral equality and reflected the general community areas in this part of the borough. Although the Conservatives' proposals produced a slightly better level of electoral equality in this area than the Labour parties', their wards were based on a different pattern and council size and therefore could not be adopted in isolation for this area alone.

¹⁴¹ At Stage Three the Council's preferred option involved transferring the area north and west of Wroughton Road, Roseneath Road, Amner Road and Kyrle Road from Balham ward to Northcote ward, the area east of Endlesham Road and Chestnut Grove from Nightingale ward to Balham ward, and the area north of Elmfield Road and west of Bedford Hill, from Bedford ward to Balham ward. Under this option the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average in both Balham and Northcote wards.

¹⁴² The Borough Council's alternative option was broadly similar to the draft recommendations, although it involved transferring the north-west of Balham ward to Northcote ward and the north-west of Northcote ward to St John ward.

¹⁴³ The Labour parties considered that the draft recommendations for the wards of Northcote and Shaftesbury reflect the existing local communities in these wards, and that the recommendations for Balham ward "utilise clear local boundaries, provide a very good level of electoral equality and clearly reflect the area local residents would know as Balham".

¹⁴⁴ As stated earlier, Martin Linton, MP for Battersea, generally supported the draft recommendations for Balham and Northcote wards. Both the Labour

parties and Martin Linton proposed that the area around Clapham Junction station should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward on community identity grounds.

¹⁴⁵ The Battersea Conservative Association opposed the draft recommendations for the wards of Balham and Northcote, and considered that they did not reflect the identities and interests of local communities. Its Stage Three proposals for these wards were similar to those proposed by the Borough Council, as were the proposals from the Putney Conservative Association.

¹⁴⁶ Three residents of Balham ward supported the draft recommendations for a pattern of 20 three-member wards and considered the proposed boundaries generally reflected local community identities. A resident of Bedford ward also expressed support for the draft recommendations for Balham ward.

¹⁴⁷ We have also noted the views expressed to us regarding the configuration of the proposed Fairfield ward, which lies to the north-west of Northcote ward. As stated earlier, in order to better reflect community identity in the Clapham Junction area, we propose moving away from our draft recommendations, and instead propose that the area around Clapham Junction station, east of Plough Road and Strath Terrace, should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward. We note the views expressed by the Borough Council and the Conservative Associations in this area, but do not consider on the evidence presented that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed, and consider that they would provide a good level of electoral equality for the wards of Balham and Northcote and reflect local communities, and therefore propose to confirm them as final. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in Balham and Northcote wards would be 1 per cent above and 4 per cent above the borough average respectively (1 per cent below and 2 per cent above in 2003).

Bedford, Furzedown, Graveney, Nightingale and Tooting wards

¹⁴⁸ The south-east of the borough is covered by these five three-member wards. The number of electors per councillor in Bedford ward is 1 per cent below the borough average, 6 per cent above in Furzedown, 8 per cent above in Graveney, 2 per

cent below in Nightingale and 5 per cent above in Tooting (3 per cent above, 3 per cent above, 6 per cent above, 6 per cent below and 3 per cent above respectively in 2003).

149 At Stage One we noted the degree of similarity between both Conservative and Labour proposals in this area. Having considered all the evidence received we proposed endorsing the Labour parties' proposal that the boundary between the wards of Tooting and Graveney should be modified to run along Totterdown Street, Blakenham Road, Derinton Road and Franciscan Road, as it would provide an improved level of electoral equality while using an identifiable boundary. In order to improve the level of electoral equality in the area, we also proposed modifying the boundary between the wards of Furzedown and Graveney to run to the rear of the houses on the east side of Rectory Lane so that both sides of the road would be in Graveney ward. The number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent above the average in Graveney ward (equal to the average in 2003) and 2 per cent above in Furzedown ward (1 per cent below in 2003).

150 In order to achieve an even better level of electoral equality, we also proposed modifying the Labour parties' proposal for the wards of Bedford, Nightingale and Wandsworth Common. We proposed that the electors in Elmfield Road, Cheriton Square and Larch Close should remain in Bedford ward, and that the boundary between the wards of Nightingale and Wandsworth Common should follow the existing boundary of Bellevue Road, before turning south and running along Trinity Road, then turn westwards and run to the rear of the properties on the south side of Wandle Road, until it rejoins the existing boundary at Beechcroft Road. We also proposed that the boundary between Tooting and Nightingale wards should run along the middle of Brenda Road and to the rear of the properties on the west side of Langroyd Road and Noyna Road. The number of electors per councillor would be 6 per cent below the average in Bedford ward (2 per cent in 2003), 3 per cent above the average in Nightingale ward (1 per cent below in 2003) and 1 per cent above in Tooting ward (1 per cent below in 2003).

151 At Stage Three, under its preferred option, which as stated earlier was supported by the Tooting Conservative Association, the Borough Council proposed that Furzedown ward north of

Furzedown Road and Ullathorne Road should form part of Bedford ward, and as stated earlier, that Bedford ward north of Elmfield Road and west of Bedford Hill should form part of Balham ward. It also proposed that Graveney ward north of Blakenham Road, Derinton Road and Franciscan Road should form part of Tooting ward and that Tooting ward east of Glenburnie Road and Beechcroft Road should form part of Nightingale ward, together with Springfield ward south of Burntwood Lane and east of and including College Gardens. Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average in Bedford, Furzedown and Graveney wards, 2 per cent above in Nightingale ward and 1 per cent below in Tooting ward by 2003. No electorate figures were provided for 1998.

152 The Borough Council's alternative option for these wards was similar to the draft recommendations except that it proposed that the area north of Furzedown Road and Ullathorne Road should be transferred from Furzedown ward to Bedford ward, and that the north-west corner of Bedford ward should form part of Balham ward. As stated earlier, it also proposed that the north-west of Tooting ward should form part of a modified Springfield ward. Under its proposals, which were supported by the Putney Conservative Association, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the average in Bedford ward, and equal to the average in Furzedown, Graveney, Nightingale and Tooting wards, by 2003.

153 As stated earlier, at Stage Three the Tooting Conservative Association opposed the draft recommendations for the wards in the Tooting area and submitted proposals for three-member wards which differed from those put forward by the Borough Council, arguing that its proposals would better reflect community identities in the area. It proposed that Nightingale ward west of Trinity Road and Upper Tooting Park should form part of a new Upper Tooting ward, together with Bedford ward north of Romberg Road and west of Tooting Bec Road, Graveney ward north of Blakenham Road, Derinton Road and Franciscan Road, Tooting ward east of Rogers Road and Broadwater Road, and Springfield ward east of Aboyne Road and south of Burntwood Lane. The remainder of Nightingale ward would then form part of a new Wandsworth Common ward together with Springfield ward east of Trinity Road, south of Magdalen Road and east of Ellerton Road.

154 It also proposed that that part of Springfield ward west of Tranmere Road and Aboyne Avenue should form part of a new St George's ward together with Tooting ward west of Rogers Road and Broadwater Road, while Furzedown ward north of Furzedown Road, Ullathorne Road and west of Aldrington Road should form part of Bedford ward. The remainder of Springfield ward should form part of a modified Earlsfield ward.

155 Under its proposals the number of electors per councillor in 2003 would be 2 per cent below the average in Bedford ward, equal to the average in Furzedown ward, equal to the average in Graveney ward, 3 per cent below the average in St George's ward, 2 per cent above the average in Upper Tooting ward and 1 per cent above the average in Wandsworth Common ward. Figures were not provided for 1998.

156 The Labour parties considered that the draft recommendations for these wards maintained the existing ward structure, "that already more than adequately reflects the communities in Tooting". They particularly opposed the Conservative Association's proposal that roads in the north-east of Furzedown ward be transferred to a modified Bedford ward. The draft recommendations were also supported by Tom Cox, MP for Tooting.

157 Eleven residents of Furzedown ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward. Nine residents supported a pattern of three-member wards across the borough and a council size of 60. Ten residents of Tooting ward supported the draft recommendations for the area, four of which supported a pattern of three-member wards and a 60-member council.

158 Eight residents of Bedford ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward itself and for a pattern of three-member wards across the borough without increasing council size. Three supported the retention of Tooting Bec Common as a ward boundary, one also supported the draft recommendations for the neighbouring ward of Furzedown.

159 Another resident of Bedford ward opposed the proposed transfer of Oakmead Road and Ravenstone Street from Bedford ward to Nightingale ward, which he considered "would make no sense in geographical or community terms".

160 Seven residents of Nightingale ward supported the draft recommendations for Nightingale and also for no increase in council size and for a pattern of three-member wards across the borough.

161 Three residents of Graveney ward supported the draft recommendations for the ward. Two supported the draft recommendations in general, including proposals for a 60-member council and that the borough be represented by a pattern of 20 three-member wards, while a resident of Earlsfield ward also supported the draft recommendations for Furzedown ward as he considered that they reflected the "natural community of the area".

162 As stated earlier, we do not consider that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed with regard to the statutory criteria. We maintain the view that the draft recommendations for the wards of Bedford, Furzedown, Graveney, Nightingale and Tooting would provide a good level of electoral equality while respecting local communities and note the significant degree of support which our draft recommendations received locally. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for all five wards as final.

Conclusions

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

- (a) the area around Clapham Junction station, east of Plough Road and Strath Terrace should form part of Northcote ward rather than Fairfield ward;
- (b) the area east of Albert Bridge Road should form part of Queenstown ward rather than Riverside ward;
- (c) the area west of and including Galveston Road should form part of East Putney ward rather than Fairfield ward;
- (d) the boundary between the wards of East Putney and West Putney should be modified to run along Carmalt Gardens, Tideswell Road, Hazelwell Road and Genoa Avenue, before rejoining the existing boundary at Westleigh Avenue;

(e) Earlsfield library should be included in Earlsfield ward rather than Wandsworth Common ward;

(f) Southfield ward should be renamed Southfields.

164 We conclude that, in Wandsworth:

(a) there should be a reduction in council size from 61 to 60;

(b) there should be 20 wards, two less than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.

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

166 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Wandsworth Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from one to none. This improved balance of representation is expected to improve further with all wards expected to vary by less than 10 per cent in 2003, in fact varying by less than 4 per cent. Our final recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

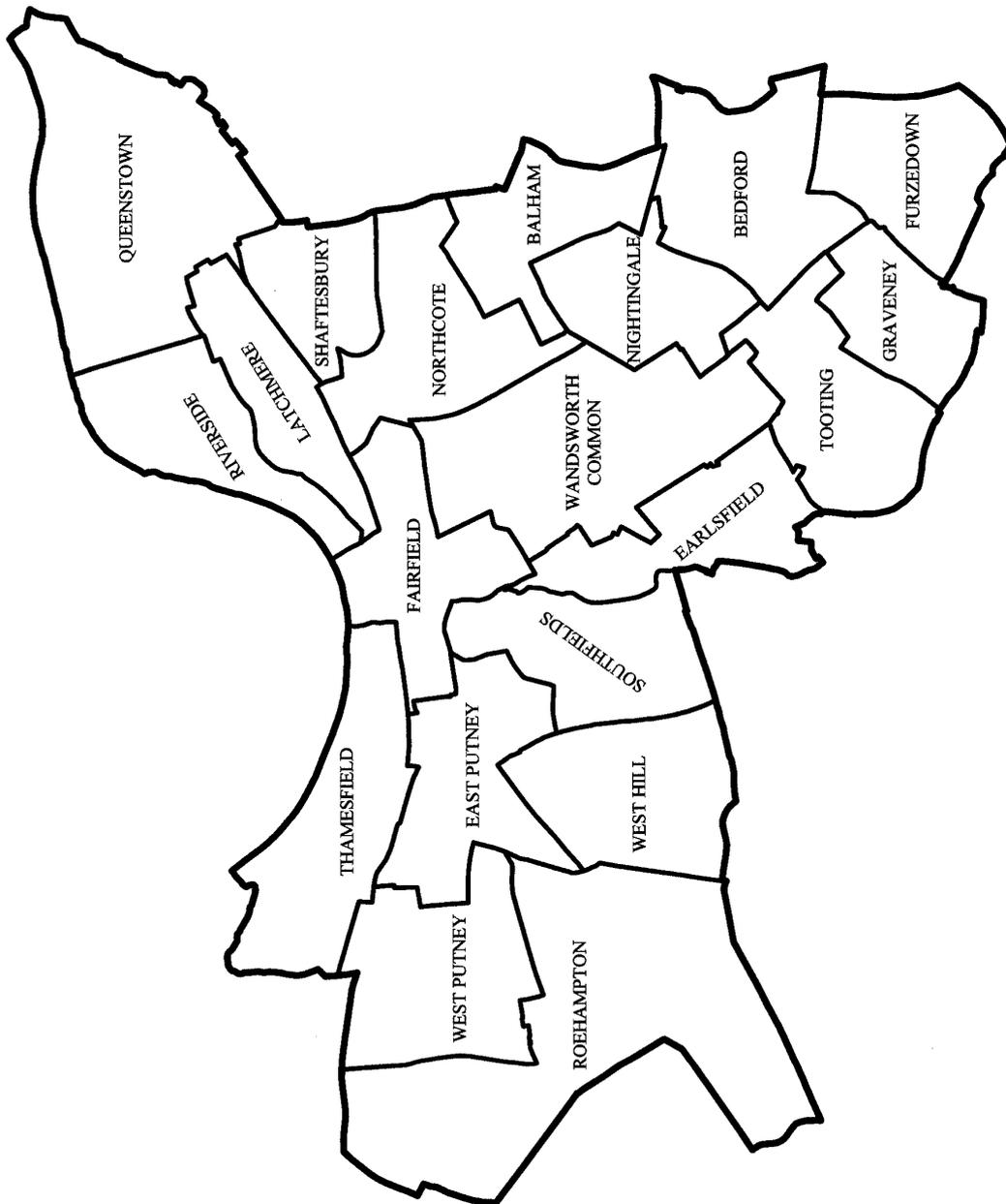
Final Recommendation

Wandsworth Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map in the back of the report.

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

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	61	60	61	60
Number of wards	22	20	22	20
Average number of electors per councillor	3,271	3,326	3,302	3,357
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	1	0	3	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	0	0	0	0

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Wandsworth



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6. NEXT STEPS

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for Wandsworth

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of six wards where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other change from draft to final recommendations, which is not included in Figure A1, is the renaming of Southfield ward as Southfields.

Figure A1:

The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
East Putney	3	10,668	3,556	7	10,291	3,430	3
Fairfield	3	10,011	3,337	0	10,160	3,387	2
Northcote	3	10,256	3,419	3	10,171	3,390	2
Queenstown	3	9,106	3,035	-9	9,723	3,241	-3
Riverside	3	9,793	3,264	-2	10,179	3,393	2
West Putney	3	9,809	3,270	-2	9,894	3,298	-1

Source: Electorate figures are based on Wandsworth Borough Council's revised electorate figures.

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.

