

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
TOWER HAMLETS

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

*September 1999*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Kru Desai

Pamela Gordon

Robin Gray

Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

© Crown Copyright 1999

Applications for reproduction should be made to: Her Majesty's Stationery Office Copyright Unit.

The mapping in this report is reproduced from OS mapping by The Local Government Commission for England with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: GD 03114G.

This report is printed on recycled paper. 

# CONTENTS

	page
LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE	<i>v</i>
SUMMARY	<i>vii</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>3</i>
3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>7</i>
4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION	<i>9</i>
5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>11</i>
6 NEXT STEPS	<i>27</i>
APPENDICES	
A Final Recommendations for Tower Hamlets: Detailed Mapping	<i>29</i>
B Draft Recommendations for Tower Hamlets (March 1999)	<i>35</i>

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





## Local Government Commission for England

7 September 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 22 September 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Tower Hamlets 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 120-121) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Tower Hamlets.

We recommend that Tower Hamlets Borough Council should be served by 51 councillors representing 17 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 Tower Hamlets on 22 September 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 23 March 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

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

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

- **in 12 of the 19 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough and in three wards by more than 20 per cent;**
- **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 12 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in six wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 120-121) are that:

- **Tower Hamlets Borough Council should be served by 51 councillors, compared to 50 at present;**
- **there should be 17 wards, two fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all 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 14 of the 17 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average;**

- **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 8 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 19 October 1999:

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

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

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas (existing wards)</b>
1	Bethnal Green North	3	St James' ward (part); St Peter's ward (part)
2	Bethnal Green South	3	Holy Trinity ward (part); Spitalfields ward (part); St Peter's ward (part)
3	Blackwall & Cubitt Town	3	Blackwall ward (part); Millwall ward (part)
4	Bow East	3	Bow ward (part); Park ward (part)
5	Bow West	3	Grove ward; Bow ward (part); Park ward (part)
6	Bromley-by-Bow	3	Bromley ward (part); Lansbury ward (part)
7	East India & Lansbury	3	East India ward; Lansbury ward (part)
8	Limehouse	3	Blackwall ward (part); Lansbury ward (part); Limehouse ward (part); Shadwell ward (part)
9	Mile End East	3	Bromley ward (part); Limehouse ward (part)
10	Mile End & Globe Town	3	Holy Trinity ward (part); St Dunstan's ward (part); St James' ward (part)
11	Millwall	3	Blackwall ward (part); Millwall ward (part); Shadwell ward (part)
12	St Dunstan's & Stepney Green	3	Redcoat ward (part); St Dunstan's ward (part)
13	St Katharine's & Wapping	3	St Katharine's ward (part); Shadwell ward (part)
14	Shadwell	3	Shadwell ward (part); St Katharine's ward (part)
15	Spitalfields & Banglatown	3	Spitalfields ward (part)
16	Weavers	3	Weavers ward; St Peter's ward (part)
17	Whitechapel	3	St Mary's ward; Redcoat ward (part); St Katharine's ward (part)

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

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Tower Hamlets

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 Bethnal Green North	3	7,864	2,621	8	7,100	2,367	-8
2 Bethnal Green South	3	7,793	2,598	7	7,928	2,643	3
3 Blackwall & Cubitt Town	3	6,705	2,235	-8	8,070	2,690	5
4 Bow East	3	7,164	2,388	-2	7,743	2,581	1
5 Bow West	3	7,595	2,521	4	8,249	2,750	7
6 Bromley-by-Bow	3	7,112	2,371	-2	7,963	2,654	4
7 East India & Lansbury	3	7,406	2,469	2	7,574	2,525	-1
8 Limehouse	3	7,699	2,566	6	8,074	2,691	5
9 Mile End East	3	6,620	2,207	-9	7,346	2,449	-4
10 Mile End & Globe Town	3	8,059	2,686	11	7,673	2,558	0
11 Millwall	3	6,714	2,238	-8	7,617	2,539	-1
12 St Dunstan's & Stepney Green	3	8,476	2,825	16	7,697	2,566	0
13 St Katharine's & Wapping	3	7,577	2,526	4	7,316	2,439	-5
14 Shadwell	3	7,047	2,349	-3	7,754	2,585	1
15 Spitalfields & Banglatown	3	5,416	1,805	-26	7,392	2,464	-4
16 Weavers	3	7,305	2,435	0	7,540	2,513	-2
17 Whitechapel	3	7,294	2,431	0	7,631	2,544	-1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>123,847</b>	—	—	<b>130,669</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,428</b>	—	—	<b>2,562</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Tower Hamlets Borough Council's submissions.

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 Tower Hamlets.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review (PER) of Tower Hamlets 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 reviews by the Commission of the London boroughs. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

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

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we welcomed the 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, Tower Hamlets was in the third phase of reviews.

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

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

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

highly and provide the building blocks for district or borough wards.

## **The Review of Tower Hamlets**

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Tower Hamlets. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1977 (Report No. 244).

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

16 As stated in our *Guidance*, we are required by Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act to have regard not only to the current electorate of an area but also to changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over the next five years. Accordingly, at the start of the review we requested that the Borough Council produce five-year electoral projections, and make these figures available to all interested parties. However, because of the significant levels of development expected in some areas of Tower Hamlets, the Borough Council experienced difficulties in producing a satisfactory set of projections. Because of this, the Council requested, and received, an extension of Stage One until 6 January 1999.

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

18 Stage Three began on 23 March 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Tower Hamlets*, and ended on 18 May 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

<sup>19</sup> The borough of Tower Hamlets covers an area of 1,980 hectares in East London. The borough is bounded by the boroughs of Hackney to the north, Newham to the east, and the City of London to the west. The River Thames forms the borough's southern boundary. One of the smallest of the London boroughs, Tower Hamlets is diverse in character and is currently undergoing rapid change. The Docklands area in the south of the borough, once a thriving port, is being transformed into a major residential and business centre. In the west, the Spitalfields area is the focus of a campaign of regeneration.

<sup>20</sup> 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'.

<sup>21</sup> The electorate of the borough (February 1998) was 123,832. Since the last electoral review, there has been an increase in electorate in the borough, with around 8 per cent more electors than two decades ago. The Council currently has 50 councillors who are elected from 19 wards (Map 1 and Figure 4). Of these, 12 wards are each represented by three councillors while seven wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

<sup>22</sup> At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,477 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,611 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. Due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 12 of the 19 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in three wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Millwall ward where each of the three councillors represents on average 64 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Tower Hamlets



© Crown Copyright 1999

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 Blackwall	2	3,703	1,852	-25	4,441	2,221	-15
2 Bow	3	6,487	2,162	-13	7,306	2,435	-7
3 Bromley	3	7,277	2,426	-2	8,550	2,850	9
4 East India	2	4,625	2,313	-7	4,871	2,436	-7
5 Grove	2	4,200	2,100	-15	4,560	2,280	-13
6 Holy Trinity	3	7,514	2,505	1	7,521	2,507	-4
7 Lansbury	3	6,271	2,090	-16	6,089	2,030	-22
8 Limehouse	3	6,174	2,058	-17	6,575	2,192	-16
9 Millwall	3	12,202	4,067	64	13,820	4,607	76
10 Park	2	4,075	2,038	-18	4,132	2,066	-21
11 Redcoat	2	4,671	2,336	-6	3,987	1,994	-24
12 Shadwell	3	8,022	2,674	8	9,217	3,072	18
13 Spitalfields	3	6,472	2,157	-13	8,832	2,944	13
14 St. James'	2	5,241	2,621	6	4,617	2,309	-12
15 St. Dunstan's	3	6,275	2,092	-16	5,974	1,991	-24
16 St. Katharine's	3	10,748	3,583	45	10,222	3,407	30
17 St. Mary's	2	4,376	2,188	-12	4,840	2,420	-7
18 St. Peter's	3	8,267	2,756	11	7,556	2,519	-4
19 Weavers	3	7,232	2,411	-3	7,464	2,488	-5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>123,832</b>	—	—	<b>130,574</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,477</b>	—	—	<b>2,611</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Tower Hamlets Borough Council's Stage One submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Blackwall ward were relatively over-represented by 25 per cent, while electors in Millwall ward were relatively under-represented by 64 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

23 During Stage One we received seven representations, including submissions from the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs, all of whom 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 Tower Hamlets*.

24 Our draft recommendations were based on the Borough Council's scheme, which achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. However, we moved away from the Borough Council's scheme in four areas, affecting 13 wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Tower Hamlets Borough Council should be served by 51 councillors;
- (b) there should be 17 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all existing wards.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Tower Hamlets Borough Council should comprise 51 councillors serving 17 wards.

25 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 14 of the 17 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 8 per cent from the borough average in 2003.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

<sup>26</sup> During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 84 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Tower Hamlets Borough Council and the Commission.

### **Tower Hamlets Borough Council**

<sup>27</sup> Generally, the Borough Council supported our draft recommendations, but suggested amendments to seven of the proposed wards and revised arrangements for four which they argued would better reflect community interests. They suggested amended boundaries to the proposed Millwall, Blackwall & Cubitt Town, Limehouse, Mile End East, Bow East and Bow West wards, while more major amendments were suggested for the proposed Bethnal Green North, Bethnal Green South and Mile End & Globe Town wards. Amendments were also suggested to a number of proposed ward names.

### **Tower Hamlets Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group**

<sup>28</sup> The Liberal Democrat Group on the Borough Council supported our draft recommendations in their entirety. They strongly objected to the amendments suggested by the majority Labour Group in the Bethnal Green and Mile End areas.

### **Councillor Morton**

<sup>29</sup> Councillor Morton, who submitted a borough-wide scheme at Stage One, broadly supported our draft recommendations. He proposed the same amendments as the Borough Council regarding Limehouse, Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town wards, but supported our draft recommendations in the Bethnal Green area of the borough.

### **Councillor Biggs**

<sup>30</sup> Councillor Biggs, who proposed a council size of 45 at Stage One, responded that, although he still believed that such an arrangement would be best for the borough, he was happy to broadly accept our draft recommendations. He did, however suggest a number of amendments. In the Isle of Dogs, Limehouse and Bow areas he agreed with Councillor Morton's proposed amendments. In Bethnal Green he endorsed the arrangements put forward by the Borough Council as a basis for further work. Councillor Biggs also suggested a number of alternative ward names.

### **Other Representations**

<sup>31</sup> A further 80 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations, from local residents, political groups and residents and tenants' associations. We received four submissions supporting our draft recommendations for the borough, including a petition with 38 signatories in support of our recommendations in Bethnal Green. Nine representations registered objections to the Commission's recommendations for specific boundaries within the borough, including a petition with 87 signatories which opposed the transfer of the Clichy Estate and Redmans Road from Redcoat ward.

<sup>32</sup> We received a large number of submissions at Stage Three concerned with the issue of ward names in the borough. 41 respondents welcomed the Commission's recommendation that the original name of Spitalfields ward should be retained, whilst we received a further eight submissions in support of the Borough Council's proposed name of Banglatown ward, including a petition of some 1,500 signatures supporting such a ward name change. 15 respondents objected to the loss of ward names based on church parish names, whilst we received a further three submissions suggesting alternative names for several individual wards.



## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

33 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Tower Hamlets 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”.

34 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.

35 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.

36 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

37 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase of over 6,000 electors from 123,832 to 130,574 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003, with Millwall and Spitalfields wards in particular expecting significant change. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

38 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.

39 We received three comments which touched on the subject of projected electorates. Councillor Biggs, the St Peter’s ward Labour Party and one local resident expressed reservations over the predicted growth in Spitalfields ward. We have liaised with the Borough Council and remain satisfied that the estimates remain the best that can be reasonably made at this time.

### Council Size

40 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.

41 Tower Hamlets Borough Council is at present served by 50 councillors. At Stage One, we received borough-wide schemes based on a council size of 45 and 51 members. 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 51 members.

42 At Stage Three, we received no further comments on council size and remain content that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 51 members.

## Ward Names

43 The issue of ward names has provoked some controversy in this area. Two issues proved particularly contentious. The proposal by the Borough Council at Stage One to rename Spitalfields ward as Banglatown and our subsequent draft recommendation to retain the existing name led to over 50 representations at Stage Three on both sides of the debate, including a 1,500 signature petition. The disappearance of names based on ecclesiastical parishes from ward titles in our draft recommendations also caused a number of residents to register their objections.

## Electoral Arrangements

44 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered the representations received at Stage One from the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council, Councillor Biggs and Councillor Morton. We expressed gratitude for the positive approach taken by respondents who had each 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.

45 First, there was a consensus among the majority of members of the Council for a small increase in council size to 51.

46 Second, the current electoral arrangements provide for predominantly three-member wards in Tower Hamlets, although there are also seven two-member wards. All Stage One schemes were based on a pattern of entirely three-member wards for the borough; the Borough Council, Liberal Democrat Group and Councillor Morton each proposed 17 wards while Councillor Biggs proposed 15 wards.

47 In our draft recommendations we sought to build on all of the borough-wide 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 schemes for warding arrangements in particular parts of the borough. However, we made further modifications 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.

48 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three, and judge that modifications should be made to a number of our proposed boundaries. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

### Isle of Dogs

– Blackwall and Millwall wards;

### Bromley and Limehouse

– Bromley, East India and Lansbury wards;  
– Limehouse ward;

### Bow

– Bow, Grove and Park wards;

### Bethnal Green

– St Peter's, Spitalfields and Weavers wards;  
– Holy Trinity and St James' wards;

### Whitechapel, Stepney and Wapping

– St Katharine's and Shadwell wards;  
– Redcoat, St Dunstan's and St Mary's wards.

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.

## Isle of Dogs

### Blackwall and Millwall wards

49 Millwall and Blackwall wards encompass the Isle of Dogs and the area to the south of the East India Dock Road, in the far south of the borough. Until the closure of the London Docks, the Isle of Dogs was a thriving centre of commerce and transportation. In the last decade it has experienced a transformation, with the construction of significant commercial and residential developments. These developments have had a dramatic effect on the electorates of the two wards. Millwall ward currently

has 64 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average and is predicted to have 76 per cent more than average by 2003. Blackwall ward, conversely, is currently over-represented, containing 25 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (and 15 per cent fewer than the average by 2003).

50 At Stage One, all the borough-wide schemes considered Millwall and Blackwall wards together, and proposed that the Isle of Dogs be divided between two new wards. The Borough Council, Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs all proposed that the area be divided east/west as opposed to north/south as at present. The Poplar & Canning Town Conservative Association expressed their support for two three-member wards for the Isle of Dogs. They considered, however, that given the scope for population growth, the wards should be of a smaller geographic size than proposed by the council. Further, they argued that rather than an east/west division, the boundary between the two wards should divide the north from the south.

51 We recognised that the Isle of Dogs is a self-contained area and considered that it should be divided between two new wards. We considered the option of dividing the Isle of Dogs between separate wards for the north and the south, but concluded that any such division would inevitably divide residential areas in the east of the Isle and would combine areas either side of the large commercial development at South Quay. We therefore decided to divide the Isle of Dog between wards for the east and the west. We considered that, of the two boundaries suggested, using the docks, as suggested by Councillor Biggs, was preferable to using the Docklands Light Railway as a boundary as this would use the significant physical boundary of the Millwall Docks and allowed the majority of the Canary Wharf complex to be contained in one ward. At the north of the Isle we proposed that Aspen Way, the Docklands Light Railway and East India Dock Road should form the northern boundary of both wards (as proposed by the Borough Council). We also proposed one further amendment to the Council's proposed boundary in the west. Whereas the Council proposed using the Limehouse Link tunnel, we considered that a better boundary would be Westferry Road and West India Dock Road.

52 We also received different proposals for the most appropriate names for the new wards. The Borough Council, Councillor Morton and the Liberal Democrats proposed that the westerly ward

retain the existing name of Millwall ward, with the ward to its east becoming Blackwall & Cubitt Town ward. Councillor Biggs, on the other hand, suggested that the ward in the west be named Millwall & Canary Wharf and, in the east, Leamouth & Cubitt Town. We considered that the existing names of Millwall and Blackwall wards reflect recognisable communities and should be retained. We also considered that including Cubitt Town in the ward title would recognise the new geography of Blackwall ward and has some merit. We therefore proposed putting forward the names of Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town wards as part of our draft recommendations.

53 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs suggested some minor amendments to our proposed boundaries in the Isle of Dogs. At the south of the Isle, they proposed adjusting the boundary between Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town wards so that it would follow the Docklands Light Railway to the edge of the borough, rather than following the East Ferry Road as proposed in our draft recommendations. In the north of the Isle they also proposed that the boundary between Limehouse and Millwall wards should follow the route of Hale Street rather than the Docklands Light Railway. This, according to Councillor Morton, was necessary to compensate for changes which they proposed for Limehouse ward. One resident of Tower Hamlets expressed concern over the east/west division of the Isle of Dogs and suggested the name Mudchute for the proposed Blackwall & Cubitt Town ward.

54 We note that there is a high level of support for the division of the Isle of Dogs between east and west wards. We have examined the alternative arrangements proposed by the Borough Council, Councillor Biggs and Councillor Morton, but are not convinced that they provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations. We recognise that this is an area of considerable growth and are reluctant to enlarge either of the wards proposed in our draft recommendations, as would be the case with Millwall ward under the Borough Council's proposals. We are therefore content to confirm our draft recommendations as final in respect to this area. Neither have we been persuaded that the alternative ward name suggested would better reflect communities than our proposals.

55 Under our final recommendations, Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town wards would each contain 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor

than the borough average currently (1 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more than average by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on Map A2 at Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report.

## **Bromley and Limehouse**

### **Bromley, East India and Lansbury wards**

56 Situated in the east of the borough, Bromley, East India and Lansbury wards form part of the boundary with Newham borough. All three wards are currently over-represented, containing 2 per cent, 7 per cent and 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. East India and Lansbury wards are predicted to continue to contain fewer electors than average by 2003 (7 per cent and 22 per cent), whereas Bromley ward's electorate is expected to increase, so the ward would contain 9 per cent more electors per councillor than average. Bromley and Lansbury wards currently return three borough councillors each, while East India ward returns two councillors.

57 At Stage One, the Borough Council and Councillor Morton proposed dividing the existing Lansbury ward between three new wards. The Borough Council proposed that East India ward combine with the eastern part of Lansbury ward and be renamed Lansbury ward. A revised Bromley ward would combine the part of Lansbury ward to the north of the Limehouse Cut with the existing Bromley ward, with the exception of those areas to the north of the London Underground District and Hammersmith & City lines and west of the Docklands Light Railway Stratford to Canary Wharf line, which would form part of a new Mile End East Ward. The remaining south-western part of Lansbury ward would, under the Council's proposals, form part of a new Limehouse ward.

58 The Liberal Democrats proposed a significantly different combination of wards in this area of the borough. Under their scheme, the existing East India ward would be divided between new Lansbury and Devons wards. A revised Bromley ward would include the northern part of the existing ward together with the northern part of Limehouse ward. Councillor Biggs' proposals were similar to the Borough Council's scheme in the East India area of the borough, but suggested a radically different arrangement in Bromley. Under his proposals, the new Lansbury ward would consist of the whole of the current East India ward together with part of Lansbury ward to the south

of Devons Road and east of Bartlett Park and Saracen Street. A new Bromley with Bow ward would combine the eastern area of the current Bromley and Bow wards. We also received two representations on issues concerning this area from residents of Tower Hamlets. The residents expressed concern that the Liberal Democrats' proposal would divide the Teviot, Brownfield, and Aberfeldy estates, all currently within East India ward, between two wards. One resident argued that East India ward should remain intact and, if necessary, be extended to include parts of either Bromley or Lansbury ward.

59 There was a degree of consensus that, in order to facilitate a pattern of three-member wards in this area, Lansbury and East India wards should be considered together. We considered that, in the interests of community identity, there was a strong case for retaining the whole of the current East India ward in one ward. We considered that the Borough Council's proposed Lansbury ward would maintain identifiable boundaries, would retain the current East India ward in a single new ward and would provide a reasonable level of electoral equality. We therefore adopted this as part of our draft recommendations. However, we decided to retain the ward name of East India rather than that of Lansbury. In the area of the current Bromley ward, we agreed with the Borough Council, Councillor Morton and the Liberal Democrats that the A11 should be retained as a boundary. In addition, we considered that, on balance, we should put forward the revised Bromley ward, as proposed by the Borough Council, as part of our draft recommendations. We noted that this ward would produce a reasonable level of electoral equality, be relatively compact, and have clear, identifiable boundaries.

60 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs all supported our draft recommendations concerning the boundaries for Bromley and East India ward. The East India Branch Labour Party also supported the recommendations for East India ward. The Borough Council, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs proposed amendments to the ward names in this area. The Borough Council requested that East India ward be renamed East India & Lansbury and both the council and Councillor Biggs requested that the proposed Bromley ward should be renamed Bromley-by-Bow. Councillor Morton accepted the Commission's reasoning for not using the

Lansbury name, but requested that it be brought to the Secretary of State's attention as an option, and suggested that the ward be renamed Poplar. We received letters from two residents of the borough who opposed the use of the name East India, on the grounds that the East India Dock is not contained in the ward. One of those residents suggested that Poplar be used instead, whereas the other argued that the name of Lansbury be retained. The East India Branch Labour Party were prepared to endorse the name East India, but reported that some residents of the Lansbury Estate, who were included in the proposed East India ward, were unhappy with the proposed ward name.

61 We note the level of agreement over our draft recommendations in relation to the boundaries of Bromley and East India wards and are content to confirm them as final. We have no objection to the request from the Borough Council to rename Bromley ward as Bromley-by-Bow and adopt this as part of our final recommendations. We have been presented with three options in relation to the naming of the proposed East India ward: adopting the proposal as final or amending the ward name to include either Poplar or Lansbury. We are not persuaded of the case for a change to Poplar, as the name describes a much larger area than that covered by the ward. We have no objection to the Council's proposal to retain the name of Lansbury for the ward, and therefore propose adopting the name East India & Lansbury as part of our final recommendations.

62 Under our final recommendations, Bromley-by-Bow and East India & Lansbury wards would currently contain 2 per cent fewer and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer than average respectively by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Limehouse ward**

63 At present, Limehouse ward is represented by three borough councillors and contains 17 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. The ward is situated between Limehouse Cut and the A11 (Mile End Road), and includes Mile End Park and Mile End Stadium. Over the next five years, the ward's electorate is expected to increase by around 400 electors, resulting in a marginal improvement in electoral equality to 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average.

64 Under the Borough Council's and Councillor Morton's Stage One schemes, most of the current Limehouse ward would be combined with the north-west corner of the current Bromley ward to form a new Mile End East ward, while the south-west corner of Limehouse ward would be combined with parts of Lansbury, Blackwall and Shadwell wards to form a new Limehouse ward. The Council proposed that the boundary between Mile End East and Limehouse wards should be the centre of Rhodeswell Road, Dora Street, Carbis Street, Norbiton Road, Copenhagen Place and Pixley Street. The new Limehouse ward would comprise an area between the Limehouse Basin and the Grand Union Canal in the west, to All Saints station and Upper North Street in the East.

65 The Liberal Democrats proposed that parts of Limehouse, Lansbury, Blackwall, Shadwell and St Dunstan's wards should be combined to form a new Shadwell ward. The new Shadwell ward would stretch from Devonport Street, Cable Street and Butchers Row and the London Underground District and Hammersmith & City lines in the west, through to Burdett Road and All Saints Docklands Light Railway station in the east, and the River Thames, Limehouse Link tunnel and Aspen Way in the south. They also proposed that the area to the east of Burdett Road would be divided between Bromley and Devons wards. They further proposed that the area to the west of Burdett Road but north of the London Underground District and Hammersmith & City lines, be transferred to St Dunstan's ward.

66 At Stage One, Councillor Biggs proposed dividing the current Limehouse ward between Limehouse and Mile End wards along the route of the London Underground District and Hammersmith & City lines and Bow Common Lane. The proposed Limehouse ward would also contain part of Lansbury ward to the west of Bartlett Park, Saracen Street to the west of Wade's Place, Ming Street and Garford Street from Blackwall ward and east of Limehouse Basin from Shadwell ward. The Poplar & Canning Town Conservative Association argued that the Limehouse area is distinct from Shadwell. They argued that The Highway and Butcher Row effectively isolate the area from Shadwell, and that the two areas are served by separate railway stations, shops and pubs.

67 On balance, we decided to base our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's proposal for Limehouse ward. We examined a

number of alternative arrangements for the most appropriate boundary between Limehouse and Mile End East wards. However we were unable to improve on the proposed boundary in this area without a detrimental effect on the level of electoral equality. Similarly, we put forward the Borough Council's proposals for Mile End East ward as we considered that they reflected community identities well while achieving a reasonable level of electoral equality. By using the A11 as its northern boundary and the Grand Union Canal as the boundary in the west, the ward maintained clearly identifiable boundaries.

68 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Councillor Morton, Councillor Biggs, the Locksley Community Association and one local resident opposed the boundary between the proposed Limehouse and Mile End East wards. The Locksley Community Association argued that the Locksley Estate, which is a small community, would be divided by the proposed boundary. They further contended that the effect on electoral equality of uniting the estate in one ward would be minimal and suggested an alternative boundary. These arguments were supported by the Borough Council who suggested an amended boundary using the Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line, St Pauls Way, Burdett Road and the Limehouse Cut as Limehouse ward's northern boundary. The Council also proposed that the proposed Mile End East ward be renamed Bow Common.

69 We note that there is a degree of concern over the proposed division of the Locksley Estate between Limehouse and Mile End East wards. We have given this matter serious consideration and have been persuaded that the balance between our statutory criteria would best be met by including the whole estate within one ward. Consequently, we have decided to modify our proposals to include the whole estate in Limehouse ward. The Locksley Community Association proposed altering the northern boundary of Limehouse ward so as to run the length of Clemence Street, southward down Burdett Road, along Agnes Street, Copenhagen Place, Foley Street, continuing down Burdett Road to the present boundary. While we are in agreement with the principle of this arrangement, we propose amending the boundary to also include the properties south of Agnes Street but north of Pixley Street in Limehouse ward. With this amendment, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final in relation to this area.

70 Under our final recommendations, Limehouse and Mile End East wards would currently contain 6 per cent more and 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (5 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on Maps A2 and A3 at Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Bow**

### **Bow, Grove and Park wards**

71 Bow, Grove and Park wards are situated in the north-eastern corner of the borough. The area is bordered by the Grand Union Canal to the west, the A11 (Mile End Road) to the south and the London Boroughs of Hackney and Newham to the north and east. Grove and Park wards are both represented by two borough councillors and currently contain 15 per cent and 18 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (and 13 per cent and 21 per cent fewer by 2003). Bow ward is also over-represented, and its three councillors each represent 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average currently (and 7 per cent fewer by 2003).

72 At Stage One, the Borough Council, Councillor Morton and the Liberal Democrats proposed that the area currently containing the three wards of Grove, Bow and Park, be combined to form two wards of Bow East and Bow West. The Borough Council proposed that the boundary between the two wards should follow the Docklands Light Railway line northwards from Bow Church Station, westward along the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line and northwards along St Stephen's Road and Gunmakers Lane, eastwards along the Hertford Union Canal and northwards along Cadogan Terrace to the borough's edge. The Liberal Democrats' proposal was identical, except that it proposed that the boundary to the north of the A11 should follow Fairfield Road rather than the Docklands Light Railway.

73 Councillor Biggs proposed that the area currently covered by Bow, Grove and Park wards be divided between new Mile End, Park and Bromley with Bow wards. The proposed Park ward would extend the existing ward southwards to include parts of Bow and Grove wards to the north of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line and east of Cardigan Road and Ordell Road. Mile End ward would combine the southern part of Grove ward

with parts of Bow, Limehouse and Bromley wards. The eastern part of Bow ward would be combined with the eastern part of Bromley ward to form a new Bromley with Bow ward.

74 We considered that Bow is a relatively self-contained community in the north-east of the borough and that, if possible, we should retain the A11 and the Grand Union Canal as ward boundaries in this area. We considered that the boundary proposed by the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats would not divide housing estates, is identifiable, would provide better electoral equality than the current arrangements and should therefore form the basis for our draft recommendations. We also considered that, of the two proposals, the Borough Council's proposal to use the Docklands Light Railway was preferable. However, in order to further improve electoral equality, we proposed including all properties in the existing Park ward to the north of Old Ford Road in Bow East ward.

75 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs largely supported our draft recommendations in relation to this area, but suggested one amendment. At the north of the borough, the proposed boundary between the two wards would run along Old Ford Road before continuing to the borough boundary via the Hertford Union Canal and Victoria Park. Councillor Biggs described this boundary as "odd", and Councillor Morton suggested that the boundary follow Gunmakers Lane instead of Old Ford Road which would produce "a straighter and more rational boundary with only a marginal sacrifice in electoral equality."

76 We note that the Borough Council, Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs all broadly supported our draft recommendations in relation to this area. We have considered the amendment proposed by the Borough Council, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs and have concluded that, while the change would lead to a slightly worse level of electoral equality, it would produce a more identifiable boundary. With this amendment we propose confirming our draft recommendations as final.

77 Under our final recommendations, Bow East and Bow West would currently contain 2 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (1 per cent

and 7 per cent more than average by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Bethnal Green and Spitalfields**

### **St Peter's, Spitalfields and Weavers wards**

78 St Peter's, Spitalfields and Weavers wards are situated in the north-west of the borough, bordering the London Borough of Hackney and the City of London. The area is bordered by the A11 to the south, Cambridge Heath Road to the east and includes the restaurants and shopping areas of Brick Lane and the rich diversity of population which has been a characteristic of the area for the last two centuries. At present, Spitalfields, Weavers and St Peter's wards each return three borough councillors. Due to the demographic profile of the area, the electorate in Spitalfields ward is forecast to grow significantly over the next five years. Spitalfields and St Peter's wards currently contain 13 per cent fewer and 11 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, and are predicted to contain 13 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than average by 2003. Weavers ward currently contains 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (and 5 per cent fewer by 2003).

79 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed relatively few changes in this area. Under its proposals, Spitalfields ward would be extended eastward to include an area from St Peter's ward. A minor change was also proposed for the boundary between Weavers and St Peter's wards, transferring the area to the west of Warner Place to Weavers ward. No further changes were proposed for St Peter's ward. The Borough Council also proposed modifying two of the ward names in this area, Spitalfields ward would be renamed Banglatown ward and St Peter's would be renamed Bethnal Green West ward. Councillor Morton agreed with the Borough Council's proposals in their entirety, with the exception that he proposed retaining the ward name of Spitalfields.

80 The Liberal Democrats also proposed relatively little change to the existing ward structure. The Liberal Democrats' scheme would maintain the existing northern and eastern boundary of Spitalfields ward, but would enlarge the ward to include an area north of the A13. Weavers ward would remain unchanged under their scheme, while St Peter's ward would no longer extend to

the south of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line but instead would include an area from St James' ward. Councillor Biggs also proposed retaining the current southern and eastern boundaries of Spitalfields ward, but proposed that the ward be expanded northwards to include areas from Weavers and St Peter's wards. He proposed extending Weavers ward to include the north-western part of St Peter's ward. St Peter's ward would, in turn, be extended eastwards to include an area from Holy Trinity ward. The Poplar & Canning Town Conservative Association commented on the future of Spitalfields ward. They argued that the ward "has a recognised character of its own and strong community ties" and is expected to experience population growth. They argued that the present ward boundaries should, as far as possible, be maintained.

81 In order to reflect the level of growth predicted for Spitalfields ward, we proposed reducing the size of the ward by using Vallance Road as the ward's eastern boundary. The area to the east of Vallance Road, currently in Spitalfields ward, would be combined with part of St Peter's and Holy Trinity wards to its east. In this area, we based our draft recommendations on Councillor Biggs' proposal, and proposed to form a new ward based upon the southern part of St Peter's ward together with the western part of Holy Trinity ward. We proposed that the part of St Peter's ward to the south of Bethnal Green Road should be combined with the eastern part of Spitalfields ward and the part of Holy Trinity ward to the west of Globe Road. The resulting ward would be named Bethnal Green South ward. We proposed that the remaining part of St Peter's ward to the north of Bethnal Green Road should be combined with the part of St James' ward to the north of Old Ford Road to form a new Bethnal Green North ward. We were content to put forward the Borough Council's proposals for Weavers ward which we considered would provide reasonable electoral equality and clear and identifiable boundaries.

82 There was no consensus over the appropriate ward names for this area. The Borough Council proposed that Spitalfields ward be renamed Banglatown ward in order to reflect "the current ethnic profile of a large proportion of the community of the area". The Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs all preferred that the existing ward name be retained, reflecting the historic name for the area. We were not convinced that a compelling case had been made for a change in name and proposed retaining

the name of Spitalfields. We did, however, welcome the views of local residents on this matter during Stage Three. The Liberal Democrats also opposed the Borough Council's proposal to rename St Peter's ward. They considered that the change was "politically motivated", to remove a name associated with the Christian religion. However, under our draft recommendations, our proposed ward differed significantly from the boundaries of the current St Peter's ward. For this reason, we proposed that the new ward be named Bethnal Green South ward.

83 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Liberal Democrats, and Councillors Morton and Biggs all supported the proposed boundaries of Spitalfields ward. The Spitalfields Trust accepted the reduction in the size of the ward and warned against any proposal which breached the Whitechapel Road. Conversely, we received a representation from one active resident of Spitalfields ward who protested that, under the draft recommendations, her property was moved to another ward. St Peter's ward Labour Party saw "little pressing need to radically reform the whole shape of Spitalfields ward."

84 The Borough Council and Councillor Biggs objected to our proposed Bethnal Green North and Bethnal Green South wards. Councillor Biggs argued that the proposed Bethnal Green North ward "is not very coherent", and supported the Council's proposal for an east/west division of the area. The Borough Council's proposed ward, for the most part, would use the Cambridge Heath Road as its eastern boundary and Hackney Road, Temple Street and Old Bethnal Green Road as the boundary in the north. St Peter's Labour Party also protested that our proposal "goes against natural boundaries", and pointed to the Cambridge Heath Road as a natural dividing line which would not be used as a ward boundary under the draft recommendations. They further argued that the ward forums which are in existence have "helped cement the current ward shapes into discrete communities" and that they provide an argument for sticking to the current arrangements as closely as possible.

85 The Liberal Democrats and Councillor Morton both supported our proposals for the Bethnal Green area, and the Holy Trinity ward Labour Party supported our draft recommendations in relation to Bethnal Green South ward. The Liberal Democrats argued that the draft recommendations for Bethnal Green South ward "provide clear boundaries and satisfy the objective of electoral

equality” and could see no justification for the proposals put forward by the Borough Council which they saw as “very confusing and unworkable.” The Holy Trinity ward Labour Party agreed that the proposed changes “would have a positive effect on the Holy Trinity ward” and argued that the proposed Bethnal Green South ward would “greatly enhance the electoral arrangements” for the area. We also received a petition signed by 38 residents in support of our draft recommendations for the proposed Bethnal Green North, Bethnal Green South and Mile End & Globe Town wards, which also protested that the alternative proposals from the Borough Council were “ill thought out with no benefit to our community and are an obvious attempt to make changes for purely party political reasons.”

86 We received around 50 representations solely on the issue of ward names in this area. As described above, at Stage One the Borough Council proposed that Spitalfields ward be renamed Banglatown. At Stage Three the Borough Council reiterated this view. They were supported by a number of local residents and community groups, including the Bangladesh Welfare Association, who enclosed a petition with some 1,500 signatures arguing for the adoption of the name Banglatown. Councillor Hoque noted that in our draft recommendations the name Spitalfields was retained on the grounds of history but argued that in this case there is “significant need for change”. He contended that the area has become the “nerve centre of the activities of the Bengali people” and that such a change in name would be “a bit of sincere recognition of their existence and contribution to the welfare of this country.” The Greater Sylhet Development & Welfare Council in UK and Dewkalash Agrani Shomaj Kallan Jubo Shango UK, the voluntary youth organisation representing Bangladeshis in Britain, both highlighted the efforts which have been made to promote regeneration of the area under the title Banglatown and argued that a change in ward name would work as an initiative to promote economic regeneration. The Bangladesh Welfare Association, in addition to submitting the above petition, reported the results of a public meeting on the matter where local voluntary sector, private and business organisations in Tower Hamlets called for a change in the ward name. The Save the Bangla Town Committee noted the contribution which the Bangladeshi community has made to the area and Britain as a whole since the 1920s economically, socially, politically and in the armed services during the Second World War and urged

the Commission to reconsider our draft recommendations. This view was supported by representations from the Boundary Community School, Brunswick & Wentworth Community Centre, Class One Community Enterprise and the Senior Citizen Society.

87 The Liberal Democrats and Councillor Morton supported our draft recommendations to retain the name of Spitalfields. The Liberal Democrats argued that there is support throughout the community for retaining “this historical name”. Councillor Morton maintained that the name Spitalfields has a long history and was still in common usage. He pointed to the comparison with Chinatown, which is used as a common name for the area, but at no stage has been the title of a ward in the City of Westminster. The Spitalfields Trust, Spitalfields Society, Spitalfields Community Association, Huguenot Society, some 40 residents and a petition containing 238 signatures all supported our draft recommendations. The Spitalfields Society argued that the area has an “extraordinarily strong identity, founded on its history and enlivened in the present” and the Huguenot Society pointed to the name of Spitalfields having survived the last 300 years. A number of local residents argued that a change of ward name to Banglatown would be divisive as it would fail to reflect the multi-cultural nature of the ward.

88 We also received a number of representations protesting against the removal of all Christian titles from ward names across the borough. While many of the representations did not address St Peter’s ward specifically, St Peter’s ward was included by some residents as an example of a trend in our draft recommendations to replace names with “historical weight” with “purely geographical and rather clinical” titles. The Holy Trinity ward Labour Party requested that Bethnal Green South ward be renamed Cambridge Heath. The Boundary Community School also requested that Weavers ward be renamed Cityside.

89 We note the level of support for the boundaries of our proposed Spitalfields and Weavers wards and, having been unable to find a better balance between electoral equality and community interests, confirm our draft recommendations in relation to the boundaries of these two wards as final. We note the objections of the Borough Council, Councillor Biggs and St Peter’s Ward Labour Party concerning our proposed Bethnal Green South ward. We have given the alternative presented to us careful consideration, but have not been convinced that it achieves a better

balance between the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations. We also note that our draft recommendations in relation to this area have the support of the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton, Holy Trinity ward Labour Party and a number of local residents and therefore confirm them as final.

90 In relation to ward names, we have considered the alternatives presented to us for the proposed Bethnal Green South and Weavers wards. We note that Weavers ward has a substantial degree of support and we are content to confirm the name as final. While we are aware of the protests against the removal of all Christian titles from wards, we maintain that the boundaries of the proposed Bethnal Green South ward bear little resemblance to the existing St Peter's ward and therefore, in this case, it is appropriate to change the name. We have considered the option of naming the ward Cambridge Heath, but have concluded that there is a danger of confusion as Cambridge Heath railway station would not be included in the ward. Therefore, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations in relation to Bethnal Green South ward as final.

91 We are aware of the controversy which has been caused by the Borough Council's proposal to rename Spitalfields ward as Banglatown and our subsequent draft recommendation to retain the existing ward title. We recognise that there are strong feelings among local residents on both sides of the argument. This is an issue on which many residents of the ward obviously attach a great deal of importance. The Commission has concluded therefore that the interest of residents in the area would be best served by the inclusion of both names within the ward title. Consequently we propose adopting the name of Spitalfields & Banglatown ward as part of our final recommendations.

92 Under our final recommendations, Weavers, Bethnal Green South and Spitalfields & Banglatown wards would currently contain equal to, 7 per cent more and 26 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (2 per cent fewer, 3 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than average respectively by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Holy Trinity and St James' wards**

93 St James' and Holy Trinity wards are currently represented by two and three borough councillors respectively, and cover the eastern part of Bethnal

Green and western part of Mile End. The wards currently contain 6 per cent and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. The level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate over the next five years, so that the wards would contain 12 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average by 2003.

94 The Borough Council and Councillor Morton proposed that St James' ward should be expanded to include the part of Holy Trinity ward between Roman Road and the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line. The Council argued that the proposed ward would reflect the eastern part of the former borough of Bethnal Green and should therefore be named Bethnal Green East ward. The Borough Council also proposed that Holy Trinity ward be expanded to include the area to the north of Ben Jonson Road and east of White Horse Lane from St Dunstan's ward and be renamed Mile End West ward.

95 The Liberal Democrats proposed relatively few boundary changes in this area. With the exception of the area to the north of Bishop's Way, which it proposed should form part of a revised St Peter's ward (as detailed above), the Liberal Democrats proposed that St James' ward should be identical to the Borough Council's proposed Bethnal Green East ward. To compensate for the loss of part of the ward to the neighbouring St James' ward, the Liberal Democrats proposed that Holy Trinity ward be expanded to include the part of St Peter's ward to the south of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line and be renamed Globe ward.

96 Under Councillor Biggs' Stage One proposals, the current Holy Trinity ward would be divided among three wards. Its western area would form part of a new Bethnal Green West ward as detailed above, while its south-eastern corner would form part of a new Stepney Green & St Dunstan's ward. The remaining area of the ward would be combined with the whole of the current St James' ward to form a new Bethnal Green East ward.

97 Our draft recommendations for this area were informed by the proposals in relation to the neighbouring St Peter's ward. As outlined above we proposed combining the part of St James' ward to the north of Old Ford Road with the part of St Peter's ward to the north of Bethnal Green Road to form a new Bethnal Green North ward. Also, as outlined above, we proposed that part of Holy Trinity ward to the west of Globe Road be

combined with parts of St Peter's and Spitalfields wards in a new Bethnal Green South ward. We proposed that the remaining part of St James' ward be combined with the eastern part of Holy Trinity ward and the part of St Dunstan's ward to the east of White Horse Lane and north of Shandy Street and Commodore Street in a new ward. While this proposal crossed the A11, this was the only part of the borough in which this occurs, and we considered that this is inevitable if we are to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality in this area. We considered that the name of this ward should be altered to reflect the new composition of this ward, and should be called Mile End & Globe Town.

98 At Stage Three, the Borough Council proposed an alternative configuration of wards to our draft recommendations. It proposed dividing the area between a Bethnal Green East ward and a Mile End West, the boundary between which would follow Roman Road, Letherdale Street and the Liverpool Street to Stratford railway line. As with our draft recommendations, the Borough Council's proposed Mile End West ward included properties on either side of the Mile End Road, southwards to Shandy Street. Cambridge Heath Road, Bethnal Green Road and Hackney Road (as described above) would form the western boundary of the two wards, with the Regents Canal making the eastern boundary. These proposals were supported by Councillor Biggs. We also received representations from two local residents who protested over the inclusions of properties either side of the Mile End Road which one described as "not only...a physical barrier but...a cultural one".

99 The Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton, the Holy Trinity Ward Labour Party and 38 local residents expressed their support for our draft recommendations in this area. The Liberal Democrats commented that while they initially felt that to cross the Mile End Road was undesirable, they supported the draft recommendations in this area, because the boundaries chosen for the proposed Mile End & Globe Town ward are "clear and easily identifiable." The Holy Trinity Ward Labour Party commented that the combination of parts of Holy Trinity, St Dunstan's and St James' ward to form a new ward would "have a positive effect for that particular area".

100 We also received a number of different suggestions for ward names in this area. The Borough Council proposed that the ward to the north of Roman Road and the Liverpool Street to

Stratford railway line should be named Bethnal Green East, with the ward to the south named Mile End West. Councillor Morton objected to inclusion of the name Globe Town on the grounds that this is a "second tier name" which describes a smaller area than that covered by the whole ward. One resident suggested that our proposed Bethnal Green North ward be renamed Approach (as to Victoria Park) and Mile End & Globe Town as St Dunstan's. We also received a number of submissions protesting at the removal of such names as Holy Trinity and St James'. These submissions included representations from The Rt Rev Dr John Sentamu, The Bishop of Stepney and The Reverend Christopher Chessun, Area Dean of Tower Hamlets who argued that many of the ecclesiastical parish names were not only of historical importance, (St Dunstan's even pre-dating the Tower of London) but were also a public reminder of the work the churches continue to do serving people of all faiths.

101 We considered the different possible combinations of wards in this area, but remain convinced that our draft recommendations remain the best balance of the statutory criteria in this area. While we have some sympathy with the views of residents who objected to a borough ward including properties on both sides of the Mile End Road (A11), the size of the electorate in this part of the borough meant that it is necessary to cross this road at some point, if a reasonable level of electoral equality is to be maintained. We remain convinced that our proposed Mile End & Globe Town ward crosses the A11 at its most appropriate point. Consequently, in relation to ward boundaries in this area, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. As in Bethnal Green South, while we note the arguments put forward surrounding the use of names of Christian origin, we maintain that the pattern of wards in this area is significantly different from the existing pattern, which makes it difficult to retain the existing titles. We remain convinced that our proposals provide easily identifiable ward names for this area, and confirm them as final.

102 Under our final recommendations Bethnal Green North and Mile End & Globe Town ward would currently contain 8 per cent and 11 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (8 per cent fewer and equal to average by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on Map A4 at Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

## Whitechapel, Stepney and Wapping

### St Katharine's and Shadwell wards

<sup>103</sup> Shadwell and St Katharine's wards cover the south-western part of the borough and have been subject to significant change with the development of the waterfront parts of both wards. In particular, growth has centred on the Wapping area within St Katharine's ward. Both wards are represented by three borough councillors and are currently under-represented. St Katharine's ward currently contains 45 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (and 30 per cent more by 2003) while Shadwell ward contains 8 per cent more electors per councillor than the average (and 18 per cent more by 2003).

<sup>104</sup> At Stage One, under the Borough Council's and Councillor Morton's proposals, St Katharine's ward would be reduced in size in order to improve electoral equality. The part of St Katharine's ward to the north of the Fenchurch Street to Southend and Docklands Light Railway lines and west of Cannon Street Road would be combined with St Mary's ward to its north. They also proposed that the area to the east of Cannon Street Road and north of The Highway be combined with the part of Shadwell ward to the west of Limehouse Basin and the Grand Union Canal in a revised Shadwell ward. The Council proposed that the part of Shadwell ward to the east of Limehouse Basin would form part of a revised Limehouse ward. The remainder of the current St Katharine's ward would gain a small part of Shadwell ward to the south of the Shadwell Basin and be renamed Wapping ward.

<sup>105</sup> The Liberal Democrats proposed a significantly different warding arrangement in this area. They proposed that a new St Katharine's ward be formed from the parts of the current Shadwell and St Katharine's wards to the south of The Highway and Cable Street. A new Cable ward would be formed from the parts of St Katharine's and Shadwell wards to the north of The Highway and Cable Street. As a result, the proposed Shadwell ward would lie further to the east than the current ward. The new ward would stretch from Devonport Street, Cable Street, Butchers Row and the London Underground District and Hammersmith & City lines in the west, through to Burdett Road and All Saints Docklands Light Railway station in the east.

<sup>106</sup> Councillor Biggs proposed fewer changes to St

Katharine's ward. He proposed that the area to the north and west of Royal Mint Street, Back Church Lane, Fairclough Street and Christian Street be combined with St Mary's ward and part of Redcoat ward in a new Whitechapel & Stepney West ward. In addition, he proposed that the part of St Katharine's ward to the east of Tench Street and Reardon Street should be combined with the part of Shadwell ward to the west of Limehouse Basin in a new Shadwell & Ratcliff ward. The remainder of the current Shadwell ward would form part of a revised Limehouse ward. The Poplar & Canning Town Conservative Association supported the creation of a new Wapping ward containing parts of the existing St Katharine's and Shadwell wards. In particular, it argued that the Wapping area, to the south of The Highway, has a sense of community identity and should form its own ward, and that the current boundary between Shadwell and St Katharine's wards (Garnett Street) is artificial and divides the same neighbourhood. It argued that while the area would be marginally over-represented currently, growth would improve electoral equality by 2003. It considered, however, that the Royal Mint Street area could form part of a new Wapping ward as this area has a greater affinity with Wapping than with the area to its north.

<sup>107</sup> We considered that there was some merit in the comments by the Poplar & Canning Town Conservative Association. The Wapping area has changed significantly since the last review and today forms a self-contained community. We considered that the most appropriate boundary between the two wards is Shadwell Basin. To the east of this lies the King Edward Memorial Park, which we considered acts as a physical boundary to the Wapping community. We decided to put forward the Borough Council's proposal, which would extend Wapping ward beyond The Highway to include the part of the current St Katharine's ward to the west of Cannon Street Road and south of the Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line. We also decided to base our draft recommendations for a revised Shadwell ward on the Borough Council's proposals.

<sup>108</sup> At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs agreed with our draft recommendations in this area. The Borough Council did, however, also agree with a number of residents that the name of St Katharine's should be retained. We also received a representation from a resident of the borough who argued that the proposed ward pattern would

lead to Wapping ward crossing a Parliamentary boundary which could cause confusion. Some minor amendments were suggested to prevent this eventuality.

109 We have no objection to the inclusion of St Katharine's in the name of our proposed Wapping ward as there is evidence that the ward and ecclesiastical parish are largely coincident, and consequently intend adopting the Borough Council's proposed ward name of St Katharine's & Wapping. We note the comments made to us regarding the crossing of Parliamentary boundaries; however, we are not required to have regard to Parliamentary boundaries as, once our review is complete, the new ward boundaries will then be taken into account by the Boundary Commission in its forthcoming review of Parliamentary constituencies. We received no further comments on the ward arrangements for this area and thus, with the name change described above, are content to adopt our draft recommendations as final.

110 Under our final recommendations, Shadwell and St Katherine's & Wapping wards would currently contain 3 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (1 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer than average respectively by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Redcoat, St Dunstan's and St Mary's wards**

111 Redcoat, St Dunstan's and St Mary's wards cover the Whitechapel and Stepney areas of the borough, and currently return two, three and two borough councillors respectively. All three wards are currently over-represented, containing 6 per cent, 16 per cent and 12 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (and 24 per cent, 24 per cent and 7 per cent fewer than average by 2003).

112 At Stage One, the Borough Council and Councillor Morton proposed two new wards for this area. Their proposals were identical with the exception of ward names. The Council proposed that the wards be named Whitechapel and Stepney, while Councillor Morton proposed Stepney West and Stepney East. The Council's proposed Whitechapel ward would combine the north-west part of St Katharine's ward together with the current St Mary's ward and the part of Redcoat

ward to the north of Stepney Way and west of Jamaica Street and Assembly Passage. The remainder of the current Redcoat ward would be combined with the whole of St Dunstan's ward, with the exception of the area to the north of Ben Jonson Road and east of White Horse Lane, to form a revised Stepney ward.

113 The Liberal Democrats proposed a significantly different ward structure in this area. As detailed above, they proposed that the part of St Mary's ward to the west of New Road should form part of a revised Spitalfields ward. They proposed that the eastern part of the ward should be combined with the whole of Redcoat ward, with the exception of the area to the north of Adelina Grove and Redman's Road, and Stepney Green to form a new Stepney Green ward. The parts of St Mary's and Redcoat wards to the north of Adelina Grove and Redmans Road would be combined with the part of Limehouse ward to the west of Burdett Road and north of the Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line in a revised St Dunstan's ward.

114 Councillor Biggs proposed that the area currently covered by St Mary's, Redcoat and St Dunstan's wards, be divided into new Whitechapel & Stepney West and Stepney Green & St Dunstan wards. Whitechapel & Stepney West ward would, under his proposal, consist of the part of St Katharine's ward to the north of the Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line and west of Back Church Lane, Fairclough Street and Christian Street together with St Mary's ward and the whole of Redcoat ward with the exception of the area to the north of Stepney Way but east of Jamaica Street and Hannibal Road. The remaining part of Redcoat ward would be combined with the whole of St Dunstan's ward and the south-east part of Holy Trinity ward (as detailed earlier) in a new Stepney Green & St Dunstan ward.

115 Because of the significant degree of over-representation in Redcoat and St Dunstan's wards, all of the submissions we received proposed two three-member wards for this area. In order to achieve reasonable electoral equality and as a consequence of the decisions made in neighbouring wards, we decided to base our draft recommendations on the Borough Council's proposals for this area. We considered that the Council's proposals reflected the communities of Whitechapel and Stepney reasonably well, and would significantly improve electoral equality.

However, in view of the effect of projected electorates on ward electorates for 2003, to further improve electoral equality we proposed extending Stepney ward to include an area to the north of Ben Jonson Road and south of Shandy Street and Commodore Street. We did, for the purposes of our draft recommendations, also put forward the ward names of Whitechapel and Stepney, although we welcomed comments on these at Stage Three.

116 At Stage Three, the Borough Council, Liberal Democrats and Councillors Biggs and Morton supported our draft recommendations in relation to the boundaries in this area. The Borough Council also suggested that the proposed Stepney ward be renamed St Dunstan's & Stepney Green. We had one representation from a resident who welcomed the title Stepney replacing St Dunstan's. We also received a number of submissions which protested at the disappearance of the name St Dunstan's.

117 We received three representations from residents of the current Redcoat ward. We received a petition containing 87 signatures from residents of the Clichy Estate and Redmans Road. They protested that their area is an integral part of the Stepney Green community and objected to the proposal in our draft recommendations to transfer their part of Redcoat ward to a new Whitechapel ward. The Redcoat Local Forum also protested that the draft recommendations would split both the Stifford and Clichy Estates between wards, undoing much of the positive work achieved by these communities and contended that the effect would be "irreparable." One resident of Redcoat ward also objected to the draft recommendations in relation to this area on the grounds that Assembly Passage is itself divided between wards.

118 We note the objections to our draft recommendations registered by local residents in this area. Our proposals have the effect of dividing both the Stifford and Clichy estates between wards. In the case of the Stifford Estate, we propose amending the ward boundary to include the properties to the west of Jamaica Street, north of Smithy Street and south of Redmans Road, which are part of the Stifford Estate, in Stepney ward. We have investigated similar alternatives in relation to the Clichy Estate but have concluded that to unite the Estate in one ward without a significant deterioration in electoral equality would entail consequential changes to other wards in the area.

We have not received any such proposals for alternate ward patterns in the area. We note the comments received regarding Assembly Passage and, as such a change would not affect any electors, we are content to amend the boundary to include it wholly within the proposed Stepney Ward. Noting that our draft recommendations in this area were supported by the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Morton and Councillor Biggs, with the exception of two minor amendments around the Stifford Estate and Assembly Passage, we propose confirming our draft recommendations concerning the boundaries in this area as final. We have no objection to the proposal received from the Borough Council to rename the proposed Stepney ward as St Dunstan's & Stepney Green as again there is evidence that the ward is largely coincident with that parish, and adopt the name as part of our final recommendations.

119 Under our final draft recommendations, St Dunstan's & Stepney Green and Whitechapel wards would currently contain 16 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average and equal to the average respectively (equal to and 1 per cent fewer than average respectively by 2003). The proposed wards are illustrated on Map A5 at Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

## Conclusions

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

- (a) the boundary between Limehouse and Mile End East wards should be changed to include the whole of the Locksley estate in Limehouse ward as illustrated on Map A3 at Appendix A;
- (b) the boundary between Bow East and Bow West should be changed to follow Gunmakers Lane as illustrated on the large map at the back of the report;
- (c) the boundary between Stepney and Whitechapel wards should be changed as illustrated on Map A5 at Appendix A;
- (d) Stepney ward should be renamed St Dunstan's & Stepney Green;
- (e) East India ward should be renamed East India

& Lansbury;

- (f) Wapping ward should be renamed St Katharine's & Wapping;
- (g) Bromley ward should be renamed Bromley-by-Bow;
- (h) Spitalfields ward should be renamed Spitalfields & Banglatown.

121 We conclude that, in Tower Hamlets:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 50 to 51;
- (b) there should be 17 wards, two less than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.

122 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.

123 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Tower Hamlets 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 12 to three. 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 8 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

Tower Hamlets Borough Council should comprise 51 councillors serving 17 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	50	51	50	51
Number of wards	19	17	19	17
Average number of electors per councillor	2,477	2,428	2,611	2,562
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	12	3	12	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	3	1	6	0

Map 2:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Tower Hamlets*



© Crown Copyright 1999

## 6. NEXT STEPS

<sup>124</sup> Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Tower Hamlets and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

<sup>125</sup> 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.

<sup>126</sup> 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

## Final Recommendations for Tower Hamlets: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Tower Hamlets area:

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Maps A2 to A5.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed boundary between Millwall and Limehouse wards.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposed boundary between Limehouse and Mile End East wards.

**Map A4** illustrates the proposed boundary between St Dunstan's & Stepney Green and Mile End & Globe Town wards.

**Map A5** illustrates the proposed boundary between Whitechapel and St Dunstan's & Stepney Green wards.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed ward boundaries within the borough of Tower Hamlets.

Map A1:  
Final Recommendations for Tower Hamlets: Key Map



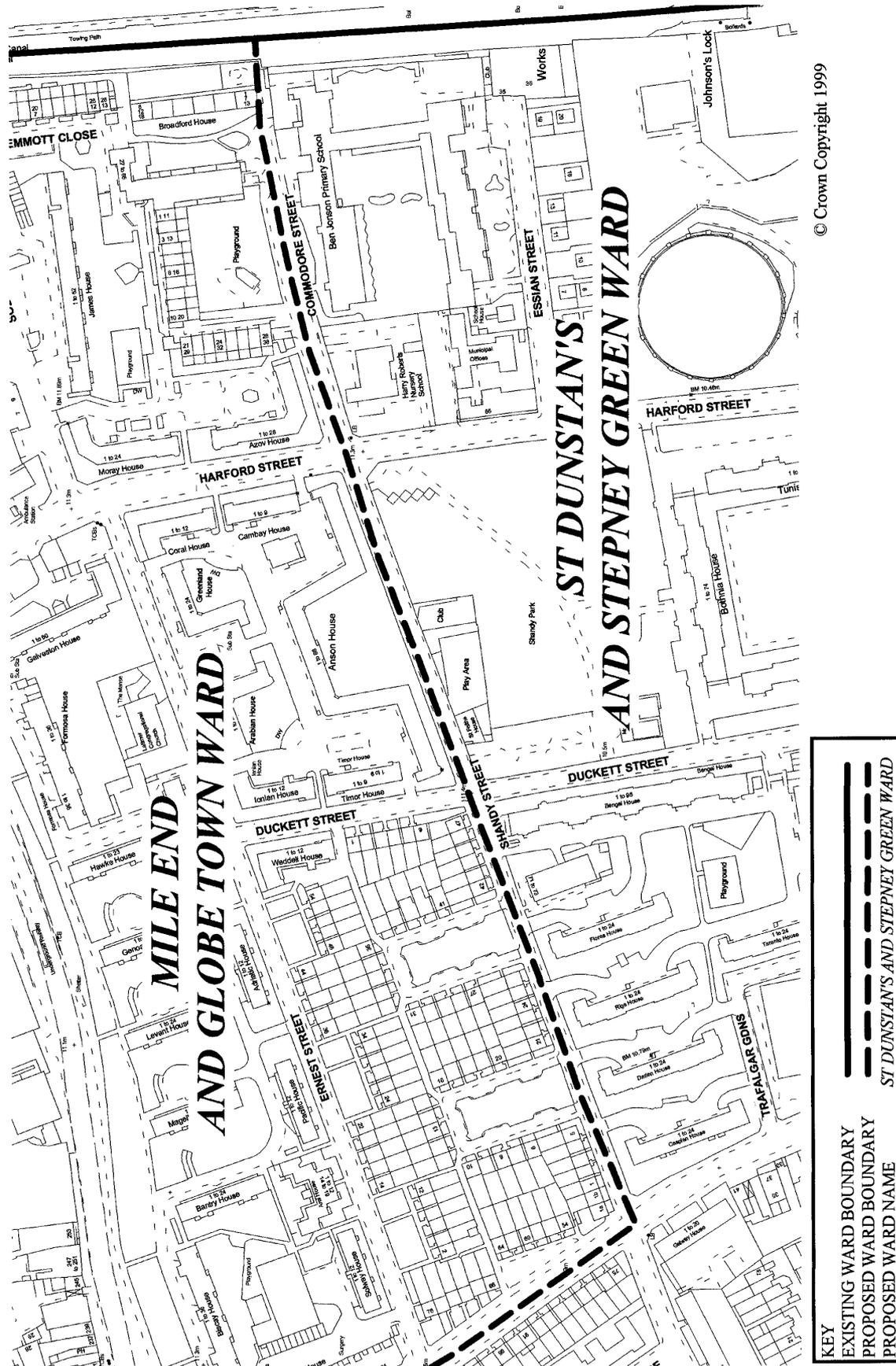
© Crown Copyright 1999

Map A2:  
Proposed Boundary Between Millwall and Limehouse Wards



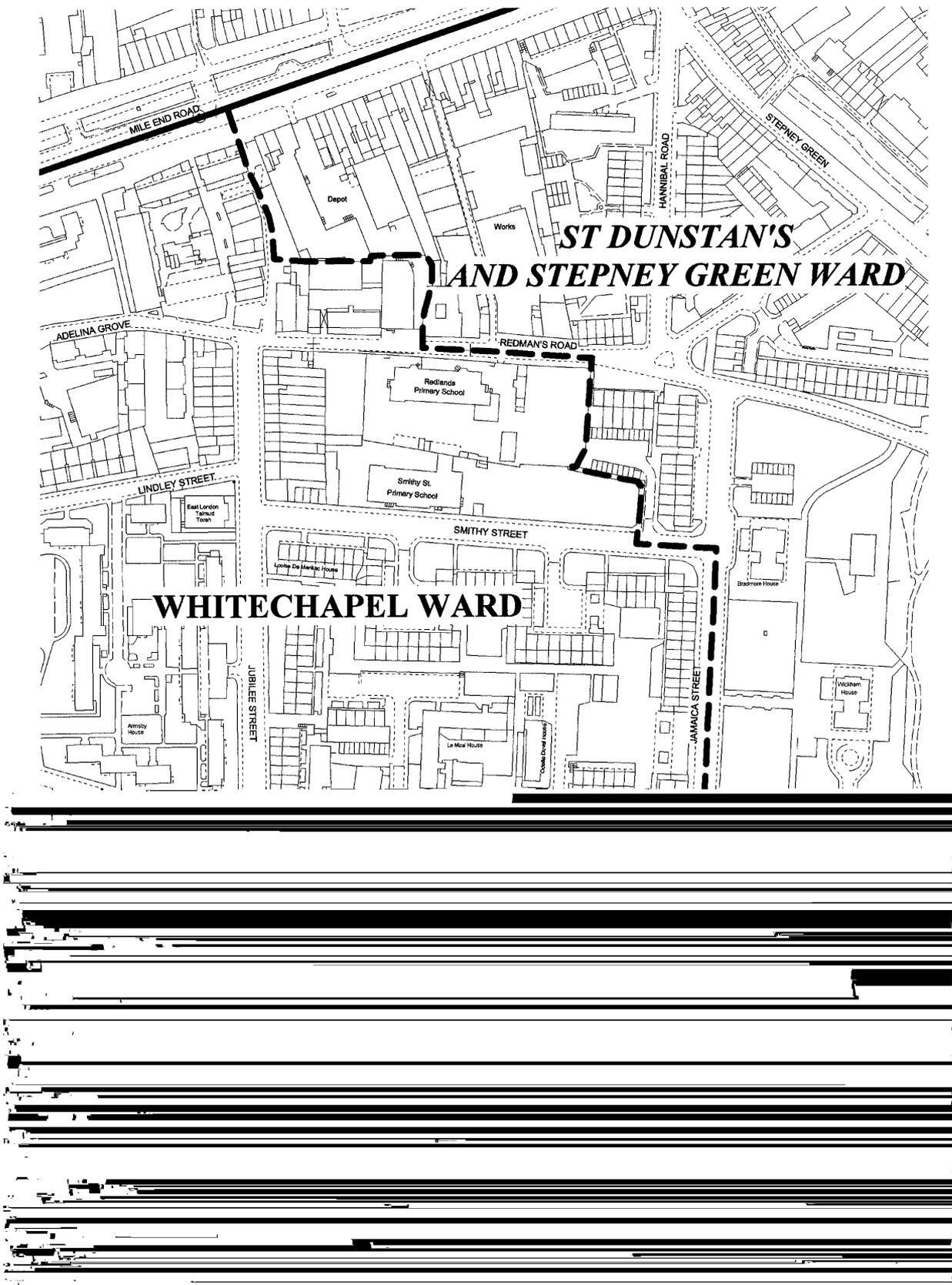


Map A4:  
 Proposed Boundary Between St Dunstan's & Stepney Green and Mile End & Globe Town wards



© Crown Copyright 1999

Map A5:  
*Proposed Boundary Between Whitechapel and St Dunstan's & Stepney Green wards*



# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Tower Hamlets

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 B1, is that we propose to rename Bromely ward as Bromley-by-Bow, East India ward as East India & Lansbury, Stepney ward as St Dunstan's & Stepney Green, Spitalfields as Spitalfields & Banglatown, and Wapping ward as St Katharine's & Wapping.

*Figure B1:*

*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 %
4 Bow East	3	7,254	2,418	0	7,835	2,612	2
5 Bow West	3	7,506	2,502	3	8,159	2,720	6
8 Limehouse	3	7,152	2,384	-2	7,527	2,509	-2
9 Mile End & Globe Town	3	8,059	2,686	11	7,673	2,558	0
10 Mile End East	3	7,167	2,389	-2	7,893	2,631	-3
14 Stepney	3	8,397	2,799	15	7,618	2,539	-1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>123,847</b>	—	—	<b>130,669</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,428</b>	—	—	<b>2,562</b>	—

*Source: Electorate figures are based on Tower Hamlets Borough Council's Stage One submission.*

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





