LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

REVIEW OF GREATER LONDON, THE LONDON BOROUGHS AND THE CITY OF LONDON

LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH
Boundaries with: HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM LB
ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
LAMBETH LB
MERTON LB
CITY OF WESTMINSTER

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
Boundary with: LAMBETH LB

REPORT NO. 669
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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INTRODUCTION

1. This report contains our final proposals for the London Borough of Wandsworth's boundaries with the London Boroughs of Merton and Lambeth and its river boundaries with Hammersmith and Fulham, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster; and for the London Borough of Merton's boundary with the London Borough of Lambeth.

2. As part of this review, we considered a number of radical suggestions to transfer Streatham and Clapham to Wandsworth (or Croydon or Merton), or to create new boroughs in this area of South London. We were left in no doubt that the many residents of South and West Lambeth, particularly in the Streatham area, who wrote to us and submitted petitions, wanted to transfer to another borough. Nor do we have reason to doubt the evidence they provided of perceived shortcomings in the quality and delivery of local government services. However, we concluded that there was insufficient evidence that Lambeth had clearly failed to provide effective and convenient local government; services are still being provided, though in many local people's eyes erratically and incompetently.

3. For the reasons explained further in this report, we have decided against recommending any radical or intermediate-scale
changes, such as transferring Streatham to Wandsworth. However, we wish to record our view that the longer term future of any authority which seems, to considerable numbers of its residents, to fail to provide an acceptable level or quality of services, or to attract a sense of loyalty, must inevitably be in jeopardy.

4. We are nevertheless proposing a number of changes, for example, that the trading area of the New Covent Garden Market at Nine Elms should be united in Wandsworth. We are also proposing that Clapham Common should be united in Lambeth, Tooting Bec Common should be united in Wandsworth and Wimbledon Park should be united in Merton. We are also making a number of minor proposals to remove anomalies, for example, where the existing local authority boundary is undefined or where it divides properties.

5. We consider it important to place on record that our current review of Greater London has been, and is being, conducted under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972; and in accordance with our guidelines from the Secretary of State (contained in Department of the Environment Circular 20/86) which inter alia restrict us from proposing the abolition or creation of a principal area of local government unless we consider that the present arrangements clearly fail to provide effective and convenient local government. This review is not affected by the provisions of the Local Government Act 1992.

BACKGROUND

6. On 1 April 1987 we announced the start of a review of Greater London, the London boroughs and the City of London as part of the programme of reviews we are required to undertake by virtue of section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. We wrote to each of the local authorities concerned.

7. Copies of our letter were sent to the adjoining London boroughs; the appropriate county, district and parish councils bordering Greater London; the local authority associations; Members of Parliament with constituency interests; and the headquarters of the main political parties. In addition, copies
were sent to the Metropolitan Police and to those government departments, regional health authorities, electricity, gas and water undertakings which might have an interest, as well as to local television and radio stations serving the Greater London area and to a number of other interested persons and organisations.

8. The London Boroughs and the City of London were requested to assist us in publicising the start of the review by inserting a notice for two successive weeks in local newspapers, so as to give a wide coverage in the areas concerned.

9. A period of seven months from the date of our letter was allowed for all local authorities and any person or body interested in the review to send us their views on whether changes to the boundaries of Greater London authorities were desirable and, if so, what those changes should be and how they would serve the interests of effective and convenient local government, the criterion laid down in the 1972 Act.

OUR APPROACH TO THE REVIEW OF GREATER LONDON

10. We took the opportunity in our Report No 550, "People and Places" (April 1988), to explain in some detail the approach we take to our work and the factors which we take into consideration when conducting reviews, including the guidelines given to us by the Secretary of State (set out in Department of the Environment Circular 20/86 in the case of the reviews of London).

11. Subsequently, in July 1988, we issued a press notice, copies of which were sent to London boroughs, explaining the manner in which we proposed to conduct the review of London boundaries. In the notice we said that, from the evidence seen so far, this was unlikely to be the right time to advocate comprehensive change in the pattern of London government - although the notice listed a number of submissions for major changes to particular boundaries which had been made to the Commission, some of which the Commission had itself foreseen in "People and Places". These and other major changes to particular boundaries are being considered by the Commission as it makes proposals for changes
12. More recently, we have felt it appropriate to explain our approach to this, the first major review of London since London government reorganisation in 1965, and to offer our thoughts on the issues which have been raised by the representations made to us, and by our consideration of them. We therefore published a general report in May 1992, entitled "The Boundaries of Greater London and the London Boroughs" (Report No 627), which discusses a number of the wider London issues which have arisen during the course of this review.

THE BOUNDARIES COVERED BY THIS REPORT

13. This report concerns Wandsworth's boundaries with Merton and Lambeth, and its river boundaries with Hammersmith and Fulham, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster. In the vicinity of Streatham Vale, the boundaries of Lambeth, Merton and Wandsworth all meet. We have therefore found it appropriate to consider all the local authority boundaries in this area as part of the same review. Accordingly, this report also details our final proposals for Merton's boundary with Lambeth.

14. Our final proposals for Wandsworth's boundary with Richmond upon Thames have already been submitted to you in our Report No 647. Similarly, our final proposals for Wandsworth's and Merton's boundaries with Kingston have already been submitted to you (Report No 667) as have our final proposals for Merton's remaining boundaries with Sutton and Croydon (Report No 658).

THE INITIAL SUBMISSIONS MADE TO US

15. In response to our letter of 1 April 1987, we received submissions from the London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton and Lambeth. We also received representations from Sir William Shelton (then Member of Parliament for Streatham), two Lambeth councillors, four interested organisations and 689 members of the public. We also received eight petitions containing a total of 8,409 signatures.
16. The Councils suggested only minor change to their common boundaries. However, the majority of the other representations recommended major or intermediate-scale change to the Wandsworth/Lambeth and Merton/Lambeth boundaries. Our conclusions in respect of these suggestions for major or intermediate change are set out in paragraphs 19 to 73 below, prior to our recommendations for changes to individual boundaries.

OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS LETTER AND THE RESPONSE RECEIVED

17. In addition to our letter of 1 April 1987, we published a further consultation letter in connection with this review. This announced our draft proposals and interim decisions to make no proposals, and was published on 10 January 1992. Copies were sent to all the local authorities concerned and to all those who had submitted representations to us. We arranged for a notice to be published announcing our draft proposals and interim decisions. In addition, they were requested to post copies of the notice at places where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our letter on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 9 March 1992.

18. We received a total of 348 individual representations in response to our draft proposals and interim decisions, the majority being in response to our interim decision to make no proposals for radical change to Wandsworth's boundary with Lambeth. They included comments from Wandsworth, Merton, Lambeth, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the City of Westminster, Mr John Bowis OBE MP, Dr Charles Goodson-Wickes MP, the Rt Hon David Mellor QC MP and Sir William Shelton MP. The remainder were from local councillors, residents and organisations. Several of those who responded submitted suggestions for further boundary changes. We also received six petitions containing a total of 1166 signatures.
19. Although, in response to our initial consultation letter of 1 April 1987, the Councils suggested only minor change to their common boundaries, we received 677 letters and eight petitions containing a total of 8,409 signatures suggesting wider change.

20. Of these, 573 letters, and five petitions containing a total of 6,291 signatures, suggested that Streatham be split from the rest of Lambeth. Several methods of achieving this objective were suggested, including the amalgamation of Streatham with adjoining areas, such as Norbury and West Norwood, to create a new borough. It was also suggested that a new borough of Streatham should be created, or that the area be absorbed into either Croydon or Merton.

21. However, the majority of representations argued that Streatham should be transferred to Wandsworth, either by a return to the pre-1965 boundary between the former Metropolitan Boroughs of Wandsworth and Lambeth or, less radically, by realigning the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary along the A205 South Circular Road and Leigham Court Road. The return of Streatham to Wandsworth was supported by Sir William Shelton and by the Streatham Association. It was opposed by six respondents, on the grounds that Lambeth would become unviable if significantly reduced in size.

22. The case for the transfer of Streatham to Wandsworth appeared to us to rest on two basic assertions in the representations submitted to us. First, that Streatham has close links with Wandsworth, with residents travelling to that Borough to use health, leisure, education and shopping facilities. Second, that social and economic differences between the northern and southern parts of Lambeth militate against the effective Borough-wide provision of services.

23. A number of respondents expressed the view that the existing boundary between Wandsworth and Lambeth failed to take account of community ties, and that fundamental restructuring (involving
at least the absorption of Streatham into Wandsworth) was necessary in order to rectify this anomaly. Many provided examples of their everyday links with centres in Wandsworth. They appeared to regard Tooting as more conveniently located than Brixton, and suggested that the pattern of public transport tended to reinforce these east-west links.

24. The Streatham Association expressed doubts over Lambeth’s ability and willingness to provide an acceptable level of services in Streatham. It commented that the quality of life in Streatham had deteriorated markedly as a direct consequence of the policies and priorities of the Council. Indeed, there appeared to be a widespread perception among those who wrote to us that Lambeth was ill-disposed towards Streatham, and had deliberately neglected the area.

25. Many respondents felt that the Council had channelled resources disproportionately into areas north of the South Circular Road, to the detriment of the southern parts of the Borough. A frequent complaint was that Streatham had been allowed to decline as a shopping centre. This disenchantment with Lambeth was matched by a strong sense that Streatham would be more effectively administered by Wandsworth, which was seen as being more sympathetic to the area’s needs.

26. The Vauxhall Conservative Association submitted a major suggestion which would have the effect of uniting Clapham in Wandsworth and Nine Elms in Lambeth. The Association expressed the view that Nine Elms would benefit from being united in a single planning authority, and suggested that a realignment to the Brixton-Victoria railway line, between Grosvenor Bridge and Heathbrook Park, would utilise a significant physical feature to create a clearer and more durable boundary.

27. The Metropolitan Police also submitted a suggestion for the Nine Elms area. Noting that the existing boundary to the west of Wandsworth Road is ill-defined, they suggested a realignment that would have the effect of transferring an area of Lambeth, north of the Wandsworth Road, to Wandsworth. They proposed that the boundary should follow Wandsworth Road between Nine Elms Lane and
Cedars Road, on the grounds that the arbitrary nature of the existing alignment causes confusion and impedes police efficiency.

28. The Vauxhall Conservative Association proposed to unite Clapham in Wandsworth, by realigning the existing boundary to the northern perimeter of Clapham Common, the southern curtilage of Clapham High Street and the Victoria-Brixton railway line. The Association claimed that both Clapham High Street and the railway line were barriers which defined communities.

29. We also received 64 letters, and a petition containing 189 signatures, supporting the transfer of Clapham to Wandsworth. A number of the respondents also suggested that Clapham Park and the western part of Balham should be transferred to that Borough. Many of them argued that the existing boundary cuts arbitrarily through cohesive communities, and that Clapham, in particular, would benefit from being administered by a single local authority. It was also claimed that Clapham had more affinity with similar areas in Wandsworth, such as Battersea, than with central Lambeth.

30. The Streatham Vale Property Owners' Association proposed the transfer of Streatham Vale to Wandsworth, Merton or Croydon, and submitted a petition containing 1,491 signatures from local residents. In its submission, the Association argued that Streatham Vale was cut off from Lambeth by the Streatham to Norbury railway line, and that its remoteness from the administrative centre of Lambeth compounded this sense of separation. We also received letters from 40 residents of Streatham Vale, expressing similar views.

31. From the representations received, it appeared that many residents of Streatham Vale were dissatisfied with the quality and level of services provided by Lambeth. It was suggested that this perceived shortfall in service provision resulted in part from Streatham Vale's geographical location, in the extreme south of the Borough. The Property Owners' Association argued that the transfer of Streatham Vale to Wandsworth would result in more effective and convenient local government in the area, and would
accord with the wishes of local residents. However, the Association also invited us to consider whether Streatham Vale could be more effectively administered as part of a new borough, centred on Streatham.

32. We also received a petition of 438 signatures from residents in the vicinity of Thirlmere Road, to the south-east of Tooting Bec Common, suggesting the transfer of this area to Wandsworth on the grounds of its proximity to Wandsworth facilities and community links with that Borough.

**Our initial conclusions and interim decision**

**Radical change**

33. We have a duty to make proposals to the Secretary of State for boundary changes which appear to us desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We have also received guidelines from the Secretary of State (contained in Department of the Environment Circular 20/86) which advise us that, in conducting boundary reviews, we should have regard to three criteria: "whether or not an area or boundary accords to the wishes of the people, reflects the pattern of community life, and is conducive to the effective operation of local government and associated services". In the conduct of this review, we have also had to have regard to the constraints of paragraph 7 of the Circular, that "...the abolition or creation of a principal area would be appropriate only where the Commission consider that the present arrangements clearly fail to provide effective and convenient local government...".

34. From the substantial number of representations we received from residents in the Clapham, Streatham and Streatham Vale areas of Lambeth, it was clear to us that a significant body of opinion sought radical change to Lambeth's boundary with Wandsworth. Nearly thirty years after London local government reorganisation, many Streatham residents still seemed to identify more with Wandsworth than with Lambeth, and there appeared to be a common perception that Streatham had been ill-served in 1965 by being
amalgamated into a borough as socially and economically diverse as Lambeth.

35. We observed the strength and sincerity of the feelings expressed by a considerable number of Lambeth residents against their inclusion in the Borough, their dissatisfaction with the services provided by Lambeth, and their desire for a return to the pre-1965 pattern of boundaries in the area. The wishes of the people are an important factor in any review we undertake. However, it is not the only, or necessarily the decisive, factor in determining whether a boundary change should be proposed.

36. In considering suggestions for radical change, we need to take into account the extent to which the underlying reasons for such proposals are a consequence of the size, shape or boundaries of a borough, rather than the result of the particular policies and priorities of its present council. We take the view that it is not our function to make changes to local authority boundaries for the purpose of influencing levels of service in any authority. That is the responsibility of the council, which is accountable to its electorate.

37. Having considered the representations received from residents in the western part of Lambeth, proposing the transfer of various areas from Lambeth to Wandsworth, we felt bound to conclude that, in large measure, they had been prompted by a general dissatisfaction over the level and quality of services provided by Lambeth Council. However, while sympathising with residents' views, we found no evidence to suggest that the shortcomings of service delivery identified by residents were a direct consequence of the size, shape or boundaries of Lambeth.

38. We also observed that many Clapham, Streatham and Streatham Vale residents felt that their areas had a separate identity from the rest of the Borough. This would seem to arise, in the main, from differences in social and economic composition. These residents felt that they had much closer ties and affinities with Wandsworth, which is perceived as a more efficient authority.
39. As indicated in paragraph 33 above, our guidelines from the Secretary of State ask us to consider the community of interest in an area. We are aware of the feelings of separation and alienation which can sometimes exist between parts of the same borough. Such feelings can serve to indicate the extent to which residents view their local authority as a single unit with which they can identify.

40. Taken together, Clapham, Streatham and Streatham Vale account for 32% of Lambeth's population, and some 40% of its land area. We took the view that change on the scale suggested by many local residents would result in major upheaval for both Lambeth and Wandsworth across a whole range of local authority services, including finance, housing, planning and social services. It would also bring into question the continuing viability of Lambeth as a London borough, with the implications this would have for the pattern and structure of local authorities in this part of London.

41. We also recognised that any attempt to restructure Lambeth in the manner suggested should only be made in the context of the impact on other boroughs, some of which are also large and diverse. Such restructuring should, in our view, be considered only in the context of a comprehensive reappraisal of local authorities within London as a whole, which we do not regard as being the purpose of this review.

**Intermediate-scale change**

42. In considering the suggestions made to us for the Nine Elms area, we agreed with the Vauxhall Conservative Association that the Brixton to Victoria railway line presents a physical barrier in the area, and that the concentration of commercial and light industrial premises in Nine Elms could be said to create a sense of separation from surrounding residential areas. However, a realignment along the Victoria to Brixton railway line would divide schools from their catchment areas, and split British Rail marshalling yards. Furthermore, we considered that residents in the west of Nine Elms (particularly those residents to the north
of the Clapham to Waterloo railway line) were likely to have significant links with Battersea, in Wandsworth.

43. In considering the suggestion from the Metropolitan Police, we observed that Wandsworth Road is a major shopping street which acts as a focus for the surrounding communities. We also felt that, in the east, New Covent Garden Market creates a barrier to the rear of Crimsworth Road and the Hemans Estate, so that the area between Wandsworth Road and the existing boundary inevitably looks east to Lambeth. Moreover, this area contains several Lambeth-funded facilities. Accordingly, we did not consider that the adoption of the Wandsworth Road as a boundary would either reflect community ties or improve the effectiveness and convenience of local government in the locality.

44. We agreed that the existing boundary is unsatisfactory but, for the above reasons, we did not consider that the suggestions submitted by the Metropolitan Police and the Vauxhall Conservative Association would enhance the provision of effective and convenient local government in the Nine Elms area. Nor were we persuaded that major change in this area was necessary in order to rectify the existing boundary anomalies.

Our interim decision

45. In the light of the above, mindful of our guidelines from the Secretary of State, and in the absence of conclusive evidence that effective and convenient local government within Lambeth had broken down or failed, we took an interim decision to make no proposals for radical or intermediate-scale change to the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary.

Response to our interim decision

46. We received no comments on our interim decision to propose no major or intermediate-scale changes in the Nine Elms and Wandsworth Road areas. However, we received a substantial response in respect of our interim decision not to propose similar scale change in the Clapham, Streatham and Streatham Vale areas. Although the overall number of responses was
substantially less than that which we had received at the previous stage of this review, this was more than compensated for by the quality of the letters and submissions, which set out cogent arguments and reasons why we should reconsider our interim decision. We also received a number of new suggestions for change.

47. We received representations from Wandsworth, Sir William Shelton, MP, fifteen Lambeth Councillors, 3 local organisations and 129 members of the public, together with five petitions containing a total of 969 signatures.

48. The responses emanated from a wide area of western and southern Lambeth, encompassing Streatham, Streatham Vale, Clapham Park, North Clapham and West Norwood. The respondents restated their desire for parts of Lambeth, particularly Streatham, to be returned to Wandsworth, or for a new borough of Streatham, or for a new borough of different compositions, to be created.

49. Lambeth did not comment on our interim decision, which was supported by four members of the public.

50. Wandsworth considered that we had underestimated the strength of local feeling and disillusionment over the manner in which Lambeth discharges its responsibilities, and had not recognised "the degree to which this widespread lack of confidence in the integrity of the administration of services by that Council undermines the ability of the present arrangements to provide effective and convenient local government". Wandsworth considered the problem to be largely of a structural and organisational nature and urged us to take an imaginative approach to provide a solution for the residents of the Streatham, Streatham Vale and Clapham areas.

51. Many of the representations sought to demonstrate to us that effective and convenient local government had broken down in Lambeth and that, for this reason, it was our duty to make proposals to the Secretary of State for radical change to the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary. With this objective in mind, a number of South Lambeth respondents provided details of their
adverse experiences across almost the entire range of local government services, and submitted examples of critical media reports. Some respondents also suggested that we had failed to give a full impression of the strength of local feeling in this part of Lambeth, and residents' desire for a return to the pre-1965 pattern of boundaries in the area.

52. Sir William Shelton resubmitted his suggestion for the restoration of the pre-1965 Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary. In association with the Streatham Association, he provided substantial documentation, including copies of Lambeth financial and housing statistics, Local Government Ombudsman Reports and District Auditor Reports, with the intention of proving to us that effective and convenient local government had broken down in Lambeth. Noting that we had previously received substantial evidence of the wishes of the people of Streatham, and the community of interest between Wandsworth and Streatham, Sir William urged us to conclude that the criteria for radical change, as given in our guidelines from the Secretary of State, had been met. He maintained that this purported breakdown must take precedence over any consideration as to whether service deficiencies are a result of the size or shape of the borough.

53. The Streatham Association and the Streatham Vale Property Owners' Association expressed similar views. In addition, the Streatham Vale Property Owners' Association urged us to recognise the separate character and geographical isolation of the smaller area of Streatham Vale, and its belief that this area is a particularly neglected part of Lambeth, with stronger affinities with other, surrounding boroughs, such as Wandsworth and Merton.

54. In a joint submission, fourteen Lambeth councillors, representing wards in the Streatham constituency, commented that, in their experience, Lambeth does not provide an adequate or acceptable level of service and, that the southern part of Lambeth has consistently been neglected in favour of the north. One of these councillors also wrote separately, reinforcing these comments.
New suggestions for radical and intermediate change

55. We received a number of new suggestions for major change. One Lambeth councillor suggested the entire area south of the South Circular Road should be transferred to either Wandsworth, or Croydon, on the grounds that South Lambeth is isolated, having a different style, character, history and community from the rest of the Borough. He also expressed the view that residents believe their area to be more compatible, geographically and historically, with areas to the south and west. A member of the public submitted a similar suggestion, to transfer south Lambeth to Wandsworth, on the grounds that Lambeth had failed to service and maintain the southern half of the Borough, and that a smaller Lambeth could be run more efficiently.

56. We also received a number of suggestions for the abolition of Lambeth, and its division between neighbouring authorities, or the creation of new boroughs. The Streatham Vale Property Owners' Association suggested that, if we were not minded to return Streatham to Wandsworth, we should consider the creation of a new borough comprising Streatham, Norbury, Mitcham, Thornton Heath, and possibly Tooting and Clapham. One member of the public suggested the creation of a new borough of Clapham and Battersea; another suggested an amalgamation of the areas of Dulwich, Clapham and Streatham.

57. A number of respondents suggested that, if we were not minded to propose radical change to the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary, we should consider, or reconsider, proposing the transfer of specific, smaller residential areas adjacent to the boundary, on the grounds of their particular affinities with Wandsworth or Croydon.

58. One member of the public requested us to reconsider transferring the residential area in the vicinity of Thirlmere Road, between Tooting Bec Road and Mitcham Lane, to Wandsworth. Two further suggestions from residents concerning Hazelbourne Road and Wix's Lane related to areas for which we had previously taken an interim decision to make no minor proposals. These are discussed in paragraphs 81 to 91 below.
59. Lambeth residents in Fern Lodge Estate, Crown Lane, and three roads in West Norwood, forwarded petitions containing 143 and 120 signatures respectively, suggesting that their immediate localities should be transferred to either Wandsworth or Croydon, on the grounds that their areas have more in common with those boroughs.

60. Similarly, a resident of Covington Road, which is adjacent to the existing Lambeth/Croydon boundary, suggested that, if we were not minded to return Streatham to Wandsworth, an unspecified area south of Streatham Common should be transferred to Croydon.

Our conclusions

61. We were grateful for the many responses we received commenting on our interim decision, and for the range and depth of the reasons given in support of major change along Wandsworth's boundary with Lambeth.

62. From the start of this review, we have been made aware that there is a general and serious dissatisfaction among many Lambeth residents over the level and quality of services provided by the Borough. This was particularly evident among residents along Lambeth's boundary with Wandsworth, stretching from Clapham in the north to Streatham Vale in the south, who felt they had little affinity with the rest of the Borough and, indeed, that their areas had been neglected in terms of service provision and local authority resources. Residents considered that they had far greater affinity with Wandsworth, which was regarded as a more efficient local authority.

63. In response to our interim decision to propose no major change along Wandsworth's boundary with Lambeth, we received a considerable amount of new information from Sir William Shelton and others, who sought to demonstrate to us that local government had effectively broken down in Lambeth and that, as a consequence, we should propose a return to the pre-1965 Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary. Having completed a considerable number of local authority boundary reviews, some of which have been highly contentious, we are accustomed to the claims that
are, on occasion, levelled against authorities that their services are inadequate. Nevertheless, we found these responses highly disturbing since we were presented with a lengthy catalogue of inadequacies and administrative and service failings (which a number of respondents regarded as incompetence) on the part of Lambeth.

Nevertheless, we felt unable to conclude that the failings identified constituted a failure to provide effective and convenient local government in Lambeth within the terms of our guidelines from the Secretary of State. We took the view that, services continued to be provided by the Council even though large numbers of residents considered them to be inadequate. While residents may be dissatisfied with the level and quality of the services provided and may consider that another borough could provide them more effectively that does not in itself demonstrate a breakdown in local government. Nor, more importantly, had it been demonstrated that any poor performance on the part of Lambeth was necessarily a direct consequence of the shape and size of the Borough, and thus of its present boundaries.

In our view, most of the arguments advanced in support of radical change were based largely on disaffection with Lambeth as a local authority, rather than as a consequence of its boundaries or structure. A common ground of objection was that Lambeth concentrated its efforts and resources in the north of the borough, at the expense of the southern part. However, it is not our role to seek to influence the performance of individual councils through proposing boundary adjustments. The policies and priorities of a council are matters for its elected councillors. It is not uncommon for local authorities to direct effort and resources on those parts of their areas which they deem in greatest need, although of course a council has a duty to provide services throughout its area. As we have said above, services are still being provided in South Lambeth, although these clearly fall well short of local residents' expectations.

In addition, we considered that the suggestions for major change would, if adopted, have a considerable impact on the size
and shape of adjoining boroughs and, in some cases, leave a residual portion of Lambeth. A number of respondents had suggested that, as Lambeth had apparently been viable prior to 1965, there should be no doubts as to its viability should the former boundaries be restored. In the light of the many changes in local government financing, administration and responsibilities since that time, we do not consider that contention to be self-evident.

67. We did not doubt the sincerity or strength of residents' views on this issue. From the representations received, we gained a clear impression of long-standing resentment among residents, particularly among those of Streatham and Streatham Vale, over the 1965 boundary changes, the present level and quality of local government services, and a sense of desperation as to how their grievances might be addressed. We therefore found it understandable, in the light of the evidence provided, that they should endeavour to use the occasion of this review to seek to remedy their situation.

68. However, dismemberment of the borough is not necessarily the appropriate remedy. We have had to consider the consequences of major change on the remainder of Lambeth and on adjoining boroughs, and the fact that a return to the pre-1965 pattern of boundaries in this area would constitute a major restructuring of a large part of South London.

69. We therefore reaffirmed our view that such restructuring should only be considered in the context of a comprehensive re-appraisal of London authorities as a whole, which we do not regard as the purpose of this review. In any future review this kind of evidence we have received of community links and service provision would no doubt suggest the need for some fundamental changes in the south London area. As we have reported in Report No. 627, questions also remain over the pattern of London boroughs in the central area of London, which would also be a relevant consideration in any examination of the future of north Lambeth. In our view, the geographical extent of any investigation would be very wide.
70. We gave careful consideration to the suggestions made to us by residents for the transfer of less extensive areas of Lambeth, particularly Streatham Vale, to other boroughs. Although Streatham Vale is geographically separated from the centre of Streatham by a complex of railway lines and junctions, we remained unconvinced that the local community related more to Mitcham and Tooting (in Merton and Wandsworth respectively) than to Streatham itself, which is a significant centre for shopping and other purposes. We were also concerned that a limited proposal to detach Streatham Vale or, indeed, other smaller areas from Lambeth could prejudice a more fundamental future consideration of Lambeth's boundaries as part of a wider restructuring of the area. We have therefore decided not to propose the transfer of Streatham Vale.

71. In considering the suggestions to transfer the residential area in the vicinity of Thirlmere Road, between Tooting Bec Road and Mitcham Lane, to Wandsworth, we observed that the existing boundary is well defined, passing along the railway line to the west. We considered that, although residents may have community links with Wandsworth, the area essentially formed an integral part of Streatham. We have therefore decided not to propose the transfer of the area in the vicinity of Thirlmere Road.

72. We had also received suggestions for the transfer to Croydon of that part of Lambeth south of the South Circular Road, or various communities and streets within that area. Our final proposals for changes to the Lambeth/Croydon boundary have already been submitted to you (Report No 623). We are not aware what representations may have been made to the Secretary of State following the submission of that report. Certainly, at no time during the course of our review of that boundary did we receive any suggestions for the transfer of significant areas of Lambeth south of the South Circular Road to Croydon. Nor, in the context of our review of Lambeth's boundary with Southwark (Report No 624), was any public support received for a suggestion for the creation of a new borough comprising the southern parts of Lambeth, Southwark and two wards of Lewisham. Accordingly, we found it questionable whether these late suggestions for change to the Lambeth/Croydon boundary accurately reflected residents'
links and affinities with Croydon, or whether they had been inspired by the possibility that we might accept the case for the transfer of large parts of Lambeth, for example, Streatham, to other boroughs.

73. In all the circumstances, we concluded that no new and incontrovertible evidence of a failure of effective and convenient local government had been received. Having given due consideration to respondents' suggestions for changes to both the Wandsworth/Lambeth and Lambeth/Croydon boundaries, and to our view that the current review is not the appropriate occasion for major structural alterations, we have decided to confirm as final our interim decision to propose no radical or intermediate-scale change to the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary or to the Lambeth/Croydon boundary, but instead to deal with minor boundary anomalies.

THE USE OF ROADS AS BOUNDARIES IN URBAN AREAS

74. In the course of our review of boundaries in Greater London, we have found no general consensus among local authorities over the relative merits of side and centre-of-road alignments. On occasions, this has led authorities to accept the principle of a draft proposal we have made, but to oppose the precise alignment; this report contains a number of examples. We have therefore felt it appropriate to set out our general views on the use of roads as boundaries in urban areas.

75. Some authorities favour centre-of-road alignments, on the grounds that these facilitate access to side roads which adjoin the proposed new boundary, and reduce the need for each authority's service vehicles to travel through the other's area. They are also said to facilitate the exercise of planning and other controls where, for example, buildings overhang the highway, or building works extend into it.

76. Other authorities prefer side-of-road (back edge of pavement) alignments. They take the view that such alignments facilitate traffic management and highway maintenance, reducing
the need for liaison and agency agreements between authorities over highway matters.

77. In general, we support the view that centre-of-road alignments are preferable in circumstances where there is a need for local authorities to provide day-to-day services to properties on both sides of a road, for example, in residential areas. In addition to reducing the need for service vehicles to travel outside each authority's area, such alignments also facilitate any necessary liaison between residents and their own local authority over street works, and planning and other controls. However, we take the view that each case must be considered on its merits, having regard to the nature and geography of the area in question, any particular issues that are drawn to our attention, and to the preferences of the local authorities concerned.

MINOR CHANGE: OUR PROPOSALS AND DECISIONS

WANDSWORTH'S BOUNDARY WITH LAMBETH

i) Queenstown Road/Robertson Street

78. Wandsworth suggested that, to obviate the need for inter-borough road maintenance agreements, the boundary along Robertson Street and Queenstown Road should be changed from a centre to side-of-road alignment.

79. The existing boundary is well-defined in this area, and we could see no significant benefits, in terms of effective and convenient local government, to be derived from a change in road alignment. Accordingly, in the absence of any additional justification for the suggested change, we took an interim decision to make no proposals.

80. We received no comments on our interim decision, and have decided to confirm it as final.
ii) Wix's Lane

81. Lambeth suggested realigning the boundary to the centre of Wix's Lane, between Garfield Road and Clapham Common North Side, on the grounds that this would allow direct service access from the Borough to those Lambeth properties fronting the east side of Wix's Lane. One member of the public suggested that these same properties should be transferred to Wandsworth, on the grounds that the whole of Wix's Lane could then be administered by a single local authority. Another local resident suggested that the boundary be realigned eastwards to Cedars Road, as this would provide a clearer and more definable feature.

82. We carefully considered all the suggestions made to us for boundary changes in this area. We did not, on the evidence before us, consider that a centre of road alignment in Wix's Lane would enhance service delivery in the area. We also observed that rear access to part of a Lambeth housing estate is via Lyncott Crescent, off Wix's Lane; we therefore took the view that even if all properties fronting the east side of Wix's Lane were transferred to Wandsworth, as suggested by a member of the public, the road would still be used by Lambeth for the provision of services to the estate. Similarly, we did not accept that Cedars Road would provide a suitable boundary, as it passes through the substantial housing estate owned by Lambeth, and could not therefore be said to delimit communities. We therefore concluded that the existing boundary in Wix's Lane was the best available, and took an interim decision to make no proposal in this area.

83. Wandsworth opposed our interim decision, and submitted a new suggestion to transfer the grass verges adjacent to Garsfield Road and Freke Road, and the properties on the eastern side of Wix's Lane, to its authority. Lambeth did not comment on our interim decision.

84. We also received a petition signed by 183 residents of four roads to the east of Wix's Lane, seeking the transfer of their area to Wandsworth. The petition commented that this area is notably closer and has better access to the shopping centre and
transport links at Clapham Junction, in Wandsworth, as opposed to Brixton, in Lambeth. It also argued that many children in the area attend Wix's Lane School, in Wandsworth, and that, traditionally, residents' interests are with that Borough.

85. We agreed that Clapham Junction probably exerts a significant influence on the communities along this part of the Wandsworth/Lambeth boundary. However, we considered that there was no reason to believe that it exerts a stronger influence on the Wix's Lane area than any other. We also observed that there is another primary school which serves Wix's Lane, in Victoria Rise in Lambeth. In any event, the rights of parents to send their children to the school of their choice have been strengthened by recent court judgements which have established that local authorities cannot give priority to their own residents in allocating school places.

86. Wandsworth's suggestion, to transfer the grass verges and properties on the east side of Wix's Lane to its authority, was broadly similar to a suggestion which we had considered at an earlier stage of this review. We therefore reaffirmed our view that such a realignment would not facilitate improved service provision in the area, and that the existing boundary in Wix's Lane is the best available. Accordingly, we have decided to confirm as final our interim decision to propose no change in the vicinity of Wix's Lane.

iii) Cavendish Road/Hazelbourne Road/Balham Hill

87. The existing boundary is aligned to the centres of Hazelbourne Road and Cavendish Road. Wandsworth suggested a realignment to the north side of Hazelbourne Road and to the east side of Cavendish Road.

88. We considered the existing boundary in this area to be well-defined and, in the absence of clear evidence that it hindered the provision of effective and convenient local government, took an interim decision to make no proposal.
89. Neither Wandsworth nor Lambeth commented on our interim decision. However, the Neighbourhood Watch Committee for Cavendish, Hazelbourne and Englewood Roads, together with twenty residents, suggested that these roads should be transferred to Wandsworth. The Committee commented that a realignment would facilitate traffic management and street maintenance in the area, and eliminate the duplication of local authority services. It also maintained that residents of the area primarily use Wandsworth amenities, shops and libraries.

90. The Neighbourhood Watch Committee had not suggested a specific boundary realignment. However, we observed that the northern part of Cavendish Road comprises a short stretch of the A205 South Circular Road. Taken together with Clapham Common, this has the effect of giving Englewood Road and the north side of Hazelbourne Road a sense of separation from the rest of Lambeth. We therefore considered a number of possible boundary realignments which might meet residents' objective of transferring these roads to Wandsworth.

91. However, we concluded that they all had significant drawbacks, in that they would have an adverse effect on traffic management in the area. In our view, it would be undesirable to divide responsibility for the busy road junction to the east of Clapham Common, and the adjacent stretch of the South Circular Road, between Wandsworth and Lambeth, and would not be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. Accordingly, while recognising that residents may share a community of interest with adjacent areas in Wandsworth, we have decided to confirm our interim decision as final.

iv) New Covent Garden Market

Draft Proposal

92. The existing boundary in this area is undefined, and divides several properties, including the Nine Elms Cold Store, the Flower Market and Market Towers. Both Wandsworth and Lambeth submitted suggestions intended to rectify these defacements.
93. Wandsworth suggested realigning the boundary eastwards, to the rear of the Sainsbury supermarket, and then along Wandsworth Road and Nine Elms Lane, thereby uniting the Flower Market, Market Towers and the Wandsworth Road service station in its authority. Lambeth suggested a realignment to the west of the Flower Market.

94. The Covent Garden Market Authority informed us that the railway arches to the south of the Flower Market are used for market-connected purposes, and that the service station adjacent to Wandsworth Road serves the market site. The Authority submitted two, alternative, suggestions for boundary changes in the area. Its preferred alignment would unite the railway arches, the service station and Covent House (the Authority's administrative headquarters in Pascal Street), with the main part of the market in Wandsworth. The Authority expressed the view that the administration of the market, and the implementation of planning and public health regulations, would be facilitated if the market and associated buildings were in one authority. The Authority's second, more limited, suggestion sought to rectify the most serious anomalies, by uniting only the market site in Wandsworth.

95. We took the view that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite the market trading areas and its access roads in one authority. However, Lambeth's suggestion failed to achieve this objective, and would perpetuate the division of the trading area.

96. While the Market Authority's preferred realignment would unite the entire market site in Wandsworth, it would create a severely contorted boundary in the vicinity of Covent House, which we considered undesirable. We concluded that it was not essential for the effective management and administration of the market for Covent House to be united with the rest of the site. We therefore decided to adopt Wandsworth's suggestion as our draft proposal, subject to a modification to use a centre of road alignment in Wandsworth Road and Nine Elms Lane.
97. Our draft proposal was opposed by Wandsworth, Lambeth and the Covent Garden Market Authority.

98. Wandsworth expressed concern that we had not united Covent House, the boiler house, and an adjacent access road, with the rest of the Market site in its authority, and suggested that our draft proposal should be modified to this effect. It also suggested the adoption of a side-of-road alignment in Wandsworth Road.

99. The Market Authority also requested that our draft proposal be modified to transfer its administrative properties and access road, as it considered them to be integral to the functioning of the Market.

100. Lambeth expressed regret at our rejection of its suggestion for a westerly realignment of the boundary, and asked for this to be reconsidered. However, in the absence of any additional justification for its suggestion, we reaffirmed our view that it would be the interests of effective and convenient local government for the entire trading area to be united in one authority, which should be Wandsworth.

101. We accepted that Covent House and the boiler house form part of the Market site, and are part of the Market Authority's landholding. However, we observed that, in addition to creating a contorted boundary, the suggested realignment would create a potential further boundary anomaly by being tied to the party wall between two buildings. In any event, we were not persuaded that uniting Covent House and the boiler house with the rest of the site in Wandsworth was essential to the effective management of the market. While it is often sensible for local authority boundaries to respect patterns of ownership, there are bound to be occasions where this is not the case. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
v) Crimsworth Road/Hemans Estate  
Maps 2 and 3

Draft Proposal

102. Wandsworth and Lambeth both suggested a minor realignment of the boundary to the western curtilage of the Hemans Estate and properties in Crimsworth Road. We agreed that these realignments would improve the definition of the boundary in the Hemans Estate area, and eliminate defacements in Crimsworth Road. We therefore decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

103. We received no comments on our draft proposal, and have decided to confirm it as final.

vi) Brooklands Passage  
Map 3

Draft proposal

104. Lambeth suggested that Brooklands Passage, which is divided by the existing boundary, should be united in its authority by an eastwards extension of its suggestion for Crimsworth Road. It commented that the footpath is used principally by Lambeth residents.

105. We agreed that it would be desirable for the footpath to be within the same authority as the adjacent residential roads to the north. We therefore decided to adopt Lambeth's suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

106. Wandsworth indicated that it did not oppose our draft proposal. We received no other representations, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
Draft Proposal

107. Wandsworth and Lambeth suggested minor realignments to rectify the division of properties on the Patmore Estate.

108. The Patmore Estate is owned and managed by Wandsworth, and we considered whether it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite the entire estate in that authority. However, neither Wandsworth nor Lambeth had advocated such a solution, and we had received no evidence to suggest that the division of the estate between the two authorities causes administrative difficulties, or inconvenience to residents. Moreover, the estate appeared to us to be fairly disparate; there was no evidence to suggest that, on the basis of community ties, it should be united in one authority. Accordingly, we decided to adopt as our draft proposal the minor boundary realignments suggested by Wandsworth and Lambeth.

Final Proposal

109. We received no comments on our draft proposal, and have decided to confirm it as final.

Draft Proposal

110. Wandsworth suggested uniting the Carey Gardens Estate in Lambeth, subject to its authority retaining ownership and management responsibilities for the estate. Lambeth suggested that, as the estate is owned and administered by Wandsworth, it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite it in that Borough. We received one representation from a resident, who supported Lambeth's suggestion.

111. We agreed that the existing boundary is unsatisfactory, as it bisects the estate. Moreover, the estate appeared to us to
be a single, cohesive entity, whose division between two authorities caused confusion to residents. We concluded that uniting the estate in Wandsworth would clarify responsibility for the provision of local government services, and decided to adopt Lambeth's suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

112. Our draft proposal was supported by Wandsworth and by 110 residents of the Carey Gardens Estate. However, Wandsworth suggested that our draft proposal be modified to transfer additionally the adjacent residents' car park to its authority. Lambeth did not comment on our draft proposal.

113. We observed that the car park, which comprises lock-up garages and open parking areas, is freely accessible both from the Carey Gardens Estate and from the Wandsworth Road, in Lambeth, where there are adjacent blocks of local authority housing. As the car park does not appear to be used exclusively by Carey Gardens Estate residents, we considered that there was no significant benefit to effective and convenient local government to be derived from uniting it with the estate in Wandsworth.

114. Mr John Bowis MP observed that access to the Carey Gardens Estate is possible only from Wandsworth Road, through Lambeth, and suggested that we may wish to reconsider our draft proposal in the light of this information.

115. We observed that a large area of Wandsworth, between Nine Elms Lane and Wandsworth Road, is similarly accessible only from the south. However, we had received no representations from either Wandsworth or Lambeth proposing major change in this area, or suggesting that the general line of the current boundary causes difficulties in the provision of local government services. Accordingly, we have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
ix) **Pensbury Street/Pensbury Place**  

**Map 5**

**Draft Proposal**

116. Both Wandsworth and Lambeth suggested uniting in the latter authority the cul-de-sac formed by Pensbury Place and Pensbury Street, by realigning the boundary to the south side of an adjoining scrap yard.

117. The only access to Pensbury Street and Pensbury Place is from Lambeth, and the existing boundary arbitrarily divides commercial premises in the cul-de-sac from neighbouring properties. We therefore decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal for this area.

**Final Proposal**

118. We received no comments on our draft proposal, and have decided to confirm it as final.

x) **Heathbrook Park**  

**Map 6**

**Draft Proposal**

119. The existing boundary passes arbitrarily through Heathbrook Park and the Westbury Estate. Both Wandsworth and Lambeth suggested a realignment to the southern curtilage of the park.

120. We agreed that the Councils' suggestion would satisfactorily resolve the boundary anomalies, and decided to adopt it as our draft proposal.

**Final Proposal**

121. We received no comments on our draft proposal, and have decided to confirm it as final.
xi) **Lavender Hill**

**Draft Proposal**

122. Wandsworth and Lambeth both suggested a realignment to the rear curtilages of Nos 1-13 Lavender Hill, to transfer these properties to Wandsworth and thereby unite Lavender Hill in one authority.

123. The properties form part of the Lavender Hill shopping parade, and we agreed that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government for the entire parade to be united in Wandsworth. We therefore decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal.

**Final Proposal**

124. Our draft proposal was supported by Mr John Bowis MP. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm it as final.

xii) **Clapham Common**

**Draft Proposal**

125. The existing boundary is undefined as it passes arbitrarily across Clapham Common. Wandsworth suggested clarifying the boundary by realigning it to the north-south path which bisects the Common. Lambeth considered that the Common should be united in its area, on the grounds that its Council is already wholly responsible for the Common's management, and suggested a realignment to the centres of Clapham Common North Side, Clapham Common West Side and Nightingale Lane. The Metropolitan Police indicated that it favoured uniting the Common in Lambeth, as it would improve operational efficiency.

126. We agreed that to unite the Common in Lambeth would reflect that Council's management responsibilities, as well as creating a clear and durable boundary. We therefore decided to adopt Lambeth's suggestion as our draft proposal, subject to a
modification to use the perimeter of the Common, rather than the centres of the adjacent roads.

Final Proposal

127. Our draft proposal was supported by Lambeth and by a member of the Clapham Society. Lambeth said that, in the past, operational and administrative difficulties had arisen with the current arrangements, most notably in regard to applications for public entertainment licences.

128. Our draft proposal was opposed by Wandsworth, Mr John Bowis MP and by one member of the public.

129. Wandsworth commented that it would suffer a significant loss of planning and entertainments licensing controls over the Common, and would retain only a consultative role. The Council therefore resubmitted its original suggestion for a realignment to the north-south path which bisects the Common. However, it said that, if we were minded to proceed with our draft proposal, we should modify it to transfer additionally to Lambeth an area of grass verge to the west of Clapham Common West Side, on the grounds that it forms part of the Common.

130. Mr Bowis said that a significant number of Wandsworth residents live adjacent to the Common, and that it would be in their interests for Wandsworth to have a positive input into issues affecting them.

131. Our general views on the desirability of uniting areas of open space which are divided by borough boundaries are set out in our Report No 627, "The Boundaries of Greater London and the London Boroughs." However, as we make clear in that report, we treat each such issue on its merits. In this case, we considered that any alignment to retain the current division, such as Wandsworth's suggestion to adopt a pathway, would produce a less durable and well-defined boundary than could be achieved by uniting the Common in one authority. We also reaffirmed our view that the management of Clapham Common would be facilitated
by uniting it in the authority, Lambeth, which is responsible for its administration.

132. We considered Wandsworth's suggestion for the transfer to Lambeth of an additional area on the west side of the Common. However, this land is divided from the main part of the Common by Clapham Common West Side. We considered that the adoption of the Council's suggestion would have the consequence of dividing between the two authorities highway maintenance responsibility for this road, which forms part of the South Circular Road. We took the view that such division would not be in the interests of effective and convenient local government, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

xiii) Tooting Bec Common
Maps 9 and 10

Draft Proposal

133. Lambeth suggested aligning the boundary to the eastern perimeter of Tooting Bec Common, thereby uniting the Common in Wandsworth, on the grounds that Wandsworth is responsible for its management. Wandsworth did not comment on the suggestion.

134. We observed that the existing boundary is well-defined; in running along the Balhama-Norbury railway line, it follows a clearly identifiable feature which has few crossing points. However, we agreed that, in view of Wandsworth's role in managing the Common, it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite it in that Borough. We therefore decided to adopt Lambeth's suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

135. Our draft proposal was supported by Lambeth. However, it was opposed by Wandsworth, on the grounds that the existing boundary is well defined along the Balham to Streatham Common railway line, and that it would be in the interests of Wandsworth and Lambeth residents for both Boroughs to retain an influence over planning and licensing controls.
However, Wandsworth also said that if we were minded to confirm our draft proposal there were three additional areas which, in its view, formed part of the Common, and which should be transferred to its authority. These areas were Woodfield Recreation Ground, a grass verge on Tooting Bec Road and a triangular shaped area of land adjacent to Rastell Avenue.

We agreed that the present boundary is tied to firm ground detail, but we also reaffirmed our view that it would facilitate the maintenance and administration of the Common if it were to be united in one authority.

We gave careful consideration to the three additional areas identified by Wandsworth and concluded that:

a. while Woodfield Recreation Ground might form part of Tooting Bec Common, it is fenced off from the Common, and its primary access appears to be from Abbotswood Road, in Lambeth;

b. the grass verge on Tooting Bec Road is totally isolated from the Common by the highway. Although we accepted that the verge might, technically, form part of the Common, we considered that there would be little benefit to be gained, in terms of effective and convenient local government, by transferring this area to Wandsworth; and

c. the land adjacent to Rastell Avenue clearly formed part of the Common, and should be included in the area to be transferred to Wandsworth.

We therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final, subject to a minor modification to align the boundary to the Common perimeter, to the south of Rastell Avenue.
THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN MERTON AND LAMBETH

i) National Westminster Sports Ground

Draft Proposal

140. To the south of Woodmansterne Road, the existing boundary arbitrarily divides the National Westminster Sports Ground between Merton, Lambeth and Croydon. Merton suggested that part of the sports ground currently in Lambeth should be transferred to its authority. Taken together with our final proposal for Merton's boundary with Croydon (Report No 658), this would have the effect of uniting the entire sports ground in Merton.

141. We observed that the sports ground is solely owned and managed by the National Westminster Bank, rather than by a local authority. Nevertheless, we took the view that uniting it in one authority would facilitate planning control in the area and rectify a stretch of defaced boundary. As the greater part of the sports ground is currently in Merton, we decided to adopt Merton's suggestion, to realign the boundary to the northern and western perimeter of the ground, as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

142. Our draft proposal was supported by Merton. However, it was opposed by Lambeth, on the grounds that the current boundary had presented no administrative difficulties in the past. No other representations were received.

143. Given the arbitrary nature of the boundary in this area, we reaffirmed our view that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite the sports ground in one authority, Merton. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
ii) Greyhound Terrace

Draft Proposal

144. Lambeth suggested a realignment to the centre of Greyhound Terrace, in order to rectify minor defacements in the existing boundary.

145. We considered that a centre of road realignment in Greyhound Terrace, between Leonard Road and Rowan Road, would produce a clearer boundary and would unite split properties. We therefore decided to adopt Lambeth's suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

146. Merton supported our draft proposal. No other comments were received, and we have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

iii) Eardley Road Sidings and Lonesome Depot

Draft Proposal

147. Both Merton and Lambeth submitted a suggestion to take account of a forthcoming redevelopment scheme in the vicinity of the Eardley Road Sidings and the Lonesome Depot site. We were informed that Merton and Lambeth were negotiating land exchanges in this area, and that their suggested boundary marked the edge of land to be transferred by mutual agreement to Merton. That authority maintained that planning procedures would be simplified if the redevelopment site were wholly within its area.

148. In order to unite the site in Merton, both Councils suggested that the boundary should be realigned to the eastern edge of the railway embankment at Eardley Road Sidings and, further south, to the rear curtilages of properties in Abercairn Road and the north-western perimeter of Streatham Vale Park. To the south of the Lonesome Depot, the Councils suggested that the boundary be realigned northwards from the southern perimeter of
the depot site, so as to follow the northern edge of a proposed access road.

149. We agreed that the existing boundary is ill-defined, in that it cuts arbitrarily across the disused sidings, and that uniting the site in one local authority would simplify planning procedures and be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore decided to adopt the local authorities' suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

150. Merton advised us that the land exchanges between its authority and Lambeth, envisaged when the authorities submitted their original joint suggestion for this area, were now almost complete. Lambeth did not comment. No other representations were received, and we have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN WANDSWORTH AND MERTON

i) Railway Embankment east of Besley Street

Draft proposal

151. To the east of Besley Street, Wandsworth and Merton suggested that the boundary should be realigned along the centre of the Streatham-Tooting railway line, thereby transferring a stretch of railway embankment, which is inaccessible from Wandsworth, to Merton.

152. The area in question is isolated between two railway lines. Whilst access is difficult from both boroughs, it is more easily obtained from Merton. Accordingly, we agreed that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to unite the embankment in Merton. However, we considered the exact alignment suggested by Wandsworth and Merton to be unsatisfactory, as it omitted to transfer a strip of embankment to the north of the railway line. This would have the effect of splitting British Rail's operational landholding between the two
authorities. In order to unite the entire embankment in Merton, we decided to adopt as our draft proposal an alignment along the north-western edge of the embankment, as far as the northern curtilage of No 56 Besley Street.

Final Proposal

153. Merton restated its preference for a centre of railway alignment in this area, rather than a side of embankment alignment.

154. We reaffirmed our view that it would be undesirable to split the railway land between the two authorities. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

ii) River Graveney

Draft Proposal

155. Both Wandsworth and Merton suggested realigning the boundary to the centre of the River Graveney in those areas where the existing boundary departs markedly from the mid-course of the river.

156. We agreed that the existing boundary is anomalous where it departs from the river and divides properties in Fallsbrook Road and Southcroft Road. We also agreed that the local authorities' suggested alignment would provide a well-defined boundary, and decided to adopt it as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

157. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
iii) Seely Road

Draft Proposal

158. Both Wandsworth and Merton suggested that, in order to unite Seely Road in one authority, Nos 1a-1e, 2a and 17a should be transferred to Merton.

159. We agreed that the arbitrary division of Seely Road between the two authorities was not conducive to effective and convenient local government. We therefore decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

160. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

iv) Longley Road/London Road/Mitcham Road

Draft Proposal

161. Wandsworth and Merton submitted identical suggestions to clarify stretches of undefined boundary in this area. They suggested that the boundary should follow the centre of the Wimbledon-Streatham railway line between the western curtilage of the Baptist Church in Longley Road and Tooting Station, and then proceed along the eastern curtilages of London Road and Mitcham Road as far as the police station. Both authorities considered that, as access to the Baptist Church is from Wandsworth, it would be logical for it to be transferred to that authority.

162. The existing boundary is unsatisfactory between the Baptist Church in Longley Road and the Police Station in Mitcham Road. We agreed that the transfer of the Baptist Church to Wandsworth would reflect community ties in the area. However, we considered a realignment to the northern side of the railway line, rather than the centre, to be more appropriate, as it would avoid
splitting British Rail's operational landholding. We also noted that the Councils' suggested realignment along London Road and Mitcham Road, in crossing the highway adjacent to the forecourt, would divide the access to Tooting Station. The suggested realignment would also leave the boundary defaced in the vicinity of the police station. We therefore decided to adopt as our draft proposal a realignment to the northern side of the railway line; to the western side of London Road as far as its junction with Longley Road; and to the centre of Mitcham Road as far as the northern curtilage of the police station.

Final Proposal

163. Merton opposed our draft proposal, on the grounds that it created a needlessly contorted boundary, and resubmitted its original suggestion which included centre-of-railway and side-of-road alignments.

164. We reconsidered Merton's suggestion but reaffirmed our view that our draft proposal offered the clearest boundary available in this area. We therefore decided to confirm it as final, subject to a modification to adopt a centre of road alignment in London Road and Mitcham Road.

v) Kenlor Road

Draft Proposal

165. Both Wandsworth and Merton suggested that the electricity sub-station in Kenlor Road should be transferred to Wandsworth. We observed that the sub-station was accessible only from Wandsworth, and decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

166. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.
vi) **Lambeth Cemetery/Wandle Valley Sewage Disposal Works**  Map 17

**Draft Proposal**

167. Wandsworth and Merton suggested realigning the boundary to the eastern side of Mead Path for its entire length between Plough Lane and the Wimbledon-Streatham railway line, in order to provide a clearly defined boundary and to unite No 80 Plough Lane in Merton.

168. The present boundary passes arbitrarily across the sewage disposal works and divides No 80 Plough Lane. We considered that the suggested alignment would satisfactorily rectify these anomalies and would tie the boundary to identifiable ground features. We therefore decided to adopt it as our draft proposal.

**Final Proposal**

169. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

vii) **Wimbledon Stadium/Summerstown**  Map 17

**Draft Proposal**

170. Wandsworth and Merton suggested a realignment to the west side of Summerstown and to the south side of Riverside Road, in order to rectify the current division of the Wimbledon Stadium site and adjoining properties.

171. We agreed that the authorities' suggestion would resolve the anomalies along this stretch of boundary, and decided to adopt it as our draft proposal.

**Final Proposal**

172. Wandsworth regretted its loss of planning control over the Stadium but commented that, on balance, it supported our draft
proposal in view of the tortuous and ill-defined nature of the existing boundary. Merton also supported our draft proposal.

173. However, our draft proposal was opposed by two residents, on the grounds that they considered Wandsworth exercised better planning control over the Stadium, and did not wish to be transferred to Merton.

174. While noting the concerns of the residents, their own properties are not within the area proposed for transfer from Wandsworth to Merton. In view of the local authorities' support for our draft proposal, we have decided to confirm it as final.

viii) Riverside Road/Rosemary Road

Draft Proposal

175. Wandsworth suggested realigning the boundary along the eastern and southern curtilage of a carton factory in Riverside Road, and north along the centre of the River Wandle, on the grounds that it would be logical to transfer the factory to Wandsworth, as its access is from that Borough. Merton suggested that an alignment to the southern curtilage of Riverside Road, and north through the Rosemary Road industrial estate to the River Wandle, would be preferable, as it would not involve the transfer of industrial premises to Wandsworth.

176. We agreed that some realignment of the existing boundary was necessary, as it divides properties in Rosemary Road. It appeared to us that Riverside Road has links to centres in Wandsworth, particularly Summerstown, and that uniting in Wandsworth all the premises adjoining Riverside Road would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We considered that Wandsworth's suggestion to realign the boundary to the curtilages of the carton factory and the centre of the River Wandle would provide a clearly defined boundary and also reflect community ties in the area. We therefore decided to adopt Wandsworth's suggestion as our draft proposal.
Final Proposal

177. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

ix) The River Wandle/Haslemere Avenue

Draft Proposal

178. Both Wandsworth and Merton suggested realigning the boundary along the River Wandle between the southern curtilage of Wandsworth's Garrett Park Depot and Groton Road, with a deviation to the west of the river at Trewint Street in order to retain a travellers' site and Garratt Mills in Wandsworth.

179. We agreed that the suggestion would provide a clearer and more rational boundary, and unite divided properties in Haslemere Avenue and Ravensbury Terrace. We also recognised the desirability of retaining the travellers' site in its managing authority. We therefore decided to adopt the Councils' suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

180. Merton supported our draft proposal. We received no other comments, and have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

x) Revelstoke Road/Ravensbury Road

Draft Proposal

181. Both Wandsworth and Merton suggested a realignment to the southern side of Ravensbury Road and the north side of Revelstoke Road, in order to unite divided properties and provide a clearly defined boundary.

182. The present boundary is generally ill-defined and is defaced in Ravensbury Road. We agreed that the Councils'
suggestion would eliminate these anomalies, but considered that two different road alignments in adjoining roads would perpetuate confusion. Accordingly, in order to create a clearly defined boundary, we decided to adopt as our draft proposal a centre-of-road alignment in both Revelstoke Road and Ravensbury Road.

**Final Proposal**

183. Our draft proposal was supported by both Merton and Wandsworth. The latter resubmitted its suggestion for side-of-road alignments, but provided no additional justification for its request.

184. We reaffirmed our view that centre-of-road realignments would provide the clearest boundary in this area. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

**xi) Wimbledon Park**

**Draft Proposal**

185. Merton informed us that it owns and administers Wimbledon Park, and suggested that the Park should be united in its area in order to simplify planning procedures. The Hercules Wimbledon Athletics Club supported Merton's suggestion.

186. The existing boundary is unsatisfactory, as it arbitrarily bisects the park and divides an athletics ground. We took the view that it was undesirable for planning controls over the park to be duplicated in the two local authorities, and agreed with Merton that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government for the park to be united in a single local authority, Merton. We therefore decided to adopt as our draft proposal Merton's suggestion for a realignment to the perimeter of the northern part of Wimbledon Park, between Bathgate Road and Revelstoke Road.
Final Proposal

187. Our draft proposal was supported by Merton and by one member of the public. However, it was opposed by Wandsworth, the Rt Hon David Mellor QC MP, two Wandsworth councillors, the Wimbledon Park Residents' Association, the Victoria Drive Conservation Area Residents' Association and by 80 members of the public. It was also opposed by a petition containing 197 signatures.

188. In the main, residents' opposition to our draft proposal reflected a widespread concern that, in the event of our draft proposal being implemented, Merton would pursue its long-standing intention to erect floodlights within the park to enable night-time use of the facilities.

189. Wandsworth considered the existing division of the park to have advantages, in that it allowed both its Council and Merton to share in the exercise of planning and licensing controls. Mr David Mellor took a similar view, and drew our attention to a perception among his constituents that Merton had in the past shown insensitivity towards Wandsworth residents over its development proposals for the park. A Wandsworth councillor was particularly concerned that, in the event of floodlighting being erected, a considerable number of people would be attracted to the park at night, and the safety of nearby residents and properties would be compromised.

190. Other respondents expressed satisfaction with the existing arrangements, whereby Wandsworth is responsible for development control on its side of the park. They also argued that Wandsworth had a restraining influence in respect of Merton's plans to develop the park; they feared that the termination of that arrangement could result in the park's over-development; and were concerned that they would lose the right to be consulted over planning applications.

191. Merton, in its response, assured us that, should the park be united in its authority, it would undertake proper consultation procedures in relation to any development proposals,
including the holding of local meetings to allow residents the opportunity to participate in the formulation of planning recommendations.

192. We understand that there are currently no planning applications outstanding in relation to Wimbledon Park. However, it was clear to us that the park has had a chequered and contentious planning history, and that a number of Wandsworth residents were understandably concerned that our draft proposal would, if confirmed, facilitate proposals for the erection of floodlights.

193. The subject of development control can be a sensitive issue in boundary reviews. It is often suggested to us that changes should (or, more often, should not) be made to boundaries because of the different planning policies of individual authorities. However, we do not believe that, in considering where boundaries should lie, we should be influenced by perceived differences in the way in which authorities might exercise development control. To do so might well be regarded as intervening in the planning process. We are also well aware that planning policies can (and do) change.

194. In addition to expressing concern over the possible erection of floodlights in Wimbledon Park, many respondents opposed our draft proposal on the grounds that it would deny them a right to be consulted over future planning applications for development in the park. Until recently, the extent of any consultation over planning applications has been at the discretion of the local authority concerned; there has been no general right of consultation as such. However, recent changes to the General Development Order 1988 now make it a statutory requirement for all local authorities to publicise planning applications, even if they affect residents in a different borough, and the Department of the Environment has published guidance and advice on good practice. As a result of these changes, we see no reason why local residents should be disadvantaged as a result of the boundary change we have proposed.
195. Wandsworth commented that there were benefits to be derived from maintaining the current split in responsibility for planning and licensing controls over the park. However, this is effectively a duplication of local authority service provision and costs, which we do not believe can be in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

196. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

xii) Queensmere Road

Draft Proposal

197. Wandsworth and Merton suggested a realignment along the northern curtilage of Bathgate Road and the southern curtilage of Queensmere Road, in order to clarify the boundary and unite No 64 Parkside in Merton.

198. The existing boundary divides properties and passes arbitrarily through the grounds of Southlands College, parts of which lie on each side of Queensmere Road. We considered the desirability of uniting the College in Wandsworth, but concluded that any realignment to achieve this would create a severely contorted boundary. In any event, we had received no evidence to suggest that its division causes significant administrative difficulties.

199. Accordingly, we concluded that the anomalies in the present boundary could be satisfactorily resolved by the minor realignments suggested by the local authorities. We therefore decided to adopt their suggestion as our draft proposal.

Final Proposal

200. Wandsworth supported our draft proposal for a realignment along the north side of Bathgate Road and the south side of Queensmere Road. However, Merton submitted a new suggestion for a north side of road alignment in Queensmere Road, on the grounds that the traffic and parking problems arising from activities at
Southlands College primarily affect Merton residents on the south side of Queensmere Road.

201. We considered that a centre of road alignment in both Queensmere and Bathgate Roads would address Merton's traffic concerns and be in accordance with our general view on the use of roads as boundaries in urban areas. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal as final, subject to a modification to adopt a centre of road alignment in both Bathgate Road and Queensmere Road.

WANDSWORTH'S RIVER BOUNDARIES WITH HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM, KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA AND WESTMINSTER

202. We received no proposals for changes to Wandsworth's river boundaries with Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. We therefore took an interim decision to make no proposals for these boundaries.

203. Our interim decision was supported by Westminster. Kensington and Chelsea indicated that it had no comments. We have therefore decided to confirm our interim decision as final.

ELECTORAL CONSEQUENCES

204. Our final proposals have some limited electoral consequences for the local authorities affected by this review. The details of our proposals for changes in electoral arrangements are described in Annex B to this report.

CONCLUSION

205. We believe that our final proposals, which are summarised in Annex C to this report, are in the interests of effective and convenient local government and we commend them to you accordingly.
206. A separate letter is being sent to the London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton, Lambeth, Hammersmith and Fulham, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster asking them to deposit copies of this report at their main offices for inspection for a period of six months. They are also being asked to put notices to that effect on public notice boards. Arrangements have been made for similar notices to be inserted in the local press. The text of the notice will explain that we have fulfilled our statutory role in this matter and that it now falls to you to make an Order implementing the proposals, if you think fit, though not earlier than six weeks from the date our final proposals are submitted to you. Copies of this report, with the attached maps illustrating the proposed changes, are being sent to all those who received our draft proposal letter of 10 January 1992 and to those who made written representations to us.
Signed

K F J ENNALS (Chairman)

G R PRENTICE

HELEN SARKANY

C W SMITH

K YOUNG

R D COMPTON
Secretary
30 July 1992
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

REVIEWS OF GREATER LONDON, THE LONDON BOROUGHS AND THE CITY OF LONDON

WANDSWORTH LB

AFFECTING LAMBETH AND MERTON LB

FINAL PROPOSALS

Produced by Ordnance Survey for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England
## CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES

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### Consequential Changes

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### Boundary between Merton and Lambeth

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<td>National Westminster Sports Ground</td>
<td>Realignment to unite the sports ground in Merton</td>
<td>140-143, Map 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greyhound Terrace</td>
<td>Realignment to clarify the boundary and to unite divided properties</td>
<td>144-146, Map 12</td>
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<td>Eardley Road and Sidings and Lonesome Depot</td>
<td>Realignment to unite a site of forthcoming redevelopment in Merton</td>
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### Boundary between Wandsworth and Merton

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<td>Realignment to unite the embankment in Merton</td>
<td>151-154, Map 14</td>
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<td>River Graveney</td>
<td>Realignment to the mid-course of the river</td>
<td>155-157, Map 14</td>
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<td>Seely Road</td>
<td>Realignment to unite Seely Road in Merton</td>
<td>158-160, Map 15</td>
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<td>Longley Road/London Road/Mitcham Road</td>
<td>Realignment to clarify stretches of undefined boundary</td>
<td>161-164, Map 15</td>
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<td>Kenlor Road</td>
<td>Realignment to transfer an electricity substation to Wandsworth</td>
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<td>Lambeth Cemetery/Wandle Valley Sewage Disposal Works</td>
<td>Realignment to clarify the boundary and unite No 80 Plough Lane in Merton</td>
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<td>Wimbledon Stadium/Summerstown</td>
<td>Realignment to unite the stadium and adjoining properties in Merton</td>
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## SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES

### Boundary between Wandsworth and Lambeth

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<td>Realignment to unite the trading areas of the market in Wandsworth</td>
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<td>Realignment to clarify the boundary and eliminate defacements</td>
<td>Paragraphs 102-103, Maps 2 and 3</td>
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<td><strong>Brooklands Passage</strong></td>
<td>Realignment to unite a footpath in Lambeth</td>
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<td><strong>Patmore Estate</strong></td>
<td>Minor realignments to unite divided properties</td>
<td>Paragraphs 107-109, Map 4</td>
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<td>Realignment to unite Carey Gardens Estate in Wandsworth</td>
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<td>Realignment to unite this cul-de-sac in Lambeth</td>
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<td>Realignment to unite Heathbrook Park and the Westbury Estate in Lambeth</td>
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<td>Realignment to transfer Nos.1-13 Lavender Hill to Wandsworth</td>
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<td>Realignment to unite the Common in Lambeth</td>
<td>Paragraphs 125-132, Map 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>The River Wandle / Haslemere Avenue</td>
<td>Realignment to the River Wandle between Garrett Park Depot and Groton Road with a deviation to retain a travellers' site and Garrett Mills in Wandsworth</td>
<td>Paragraphs 178-180, Map 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelstoke Road / Ravensbury Road</td>
<td>Realignment to the centres of Revelstoke Road and Ravensbury Road</td>
<td>Paragraphs 181-184, Map 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimbledon Park</td>
<td>Realignment to unite the park in Merton</td>
<td>Paragraphs 185-196, Map 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensmere Road</td>
<td>Realignment to the centre of Queensmere Road and Bathgate Road</td>
<td>Paragraphs 197-201, Map 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>