LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOUNSLOW

January 1999
This report sets out the Commission’s draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London borough of Hounslow.

Members of the Commission are:

- Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)
- Helen Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)
- Peter Joknshire
- Professor Michael Clarke
- Pamela Gordon
- Robin Gray
- Robert Hughes
- Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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

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

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

In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review of Hounslow is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor on the Borough Council is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names, and propose the creation or abolition of wards. We cannot recommend changes to the external administrative boundary of the borough as part of this review.

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

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


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

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

- in eight of the 21 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and one ward varies by more than 20 per cent from the average;
- by 2003 electoral equality is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in nine wards, and by more than 20 per cent in one ward.

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraphs 143-144) are that:

- Hounslow Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors, as at present;
- there should be 20 wards, one less than at present, and changes should be made to the boundaries of all the existing wards.

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

- In 19 of the 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average, with Syon ward varying by 11 per cent.
- This electoral equality is forecast to improve even further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003, with no ward varying by more than 3 per cent from the average.

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

- We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 26 January 1999. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. It is important, therefore, that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.

- After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

- It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations.

- The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 22 March 1999:

Director of Reviews
Hounslow Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphins Court
10/11 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7JU

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

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

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

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

4. The review is in four stages (Figure 2).

The London Boroughs

5. Our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all 368 local authorities in England started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

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

6. Most London boroughs have not been reviewed since 1977. Having discussed the appropriate timing of London borough reviews with local authority interests, we therefore decided to start as soon as possible after the May 1998 London local government elections so that all reviews could be completed, and the necessary orders implementing our recommendations made by the Secretary of State, in time for the next London elections scheduled for May 2003. Our reviews of the 32 London boroughs started on a phased basis in June 1998 and the last group will begin in February 1999, with completion planned for June 1999 to February 2000.

7. We have sought to ensure that all concerned are aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our Guidance have been sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we have welcomed the opportunity to meet with chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the great majority of individual authorities. This has enabled us to brief authorities about our policies and procedures, our objective of electoral equality having regard to local circumstances, and the approach taken by the Commission in previous reviews.
Before we started our work in London, the Government published for consultation a Green Paper, Modernising Local Government—Local Democracy and Community Leadership (February 1998) which, in our view, promised the possibility of London boroughs having annual elections with three-member wards so that one councillor in each ward would stand for election each year. In view of this, we decided that the order in which the London reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, Hounslow is in the first phase of reviews.

The Review of Hounslow

11 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Hounslow. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in April 1977 (Report No. 193).

12 Stage One began on 23 June 1998, when we wrote to Hounslow Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 28 September 1998.

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

14 Stage Three began on 26 January 1999 and will end on 22 March 1999. This stage involves publication of the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them. We take this consultation seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.

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

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 The borough of Hounslow is located approximately 11 miles west of central London and has a total population of 204,400 (Municipal Year Book 1998). The borough, while predominantly urban in character, includes a number of historic homes and gardens including Osterley Park, Syon House and Gunnersbury Park. The eastern boundary of Hounslow borough follows the northern path of the River Thames at Chiswick, and with the river also forming approximately half the southern boundary of the borough. The remaining southern boundary extends in a south-westerly direction enclosing the Feltham area. Heathrow Airport is located just beyond the borough's western boundary and the majority of the northern boundary runs a short distance beyond the M4.

17 Within the borough, there are several distinct local areas including Chiswick and Brentford, both in the north-east of the borough; Bedfont, Hanworth and Feltham in the south-west; and Isleworth, Heston and Hounslow itself forming the centre. The borough includes a number of major roads, including the M4, A4 and A315 and a number of railway lines and above ground sections of the London Underground.

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

21 The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 156,338. The Council currently has 60 councillors who are elected from 21 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Eighteen of the 21 wards are each represented by three councillors, and three wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

22 Since the last electoral review, there has been an increase in electorate in the Hounslow borough area, with over 3 per cent more electors than two decades ago.
### Figure 3: Existing Electoral Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2,737</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,563</td>
<td>2,782</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Chiswick Riverside</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,547</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>7,779</td>
<td>2,593</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Cranford</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,414</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>7,276</td>
<td>2,425</td>
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<td>5 East Bedfont</td>
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<td>8,835</td>
<td>2,945</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-3</td>
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<td>2,563</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>9,028</td>
<td>3,009</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>8 Feltham South</td>
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<td>9 Gunnersbury</td>
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<td>11 Heston Central</td>
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<td>5,311</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 Heston East</td>
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<td>5,231</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Heston West</td>
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<td>17 Hounslow West</td>
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<td>3,043</td>
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<td>7,095</td>
<td>2,365</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Spring Grove</td>
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<td>2,920</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8,953</td>
<td>2,984</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

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

25. During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers and members from the Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their cooperation and assistance. We received six representations during Stage One. Borough-wide schemes were submitted by the Borough Council, the Conservative Group on the Council jointly with the Conservative Associations of Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston; and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council jointly with the executive committees of Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston Liberal Democrats. These, with accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission by appointment, along with copies of the other representations received.

Hounslow Borough Council

26. The Borough Council proposed the retention of a council of 60 members serving 20 three-member wards. The Council proposed amendments to the boundaries of all 21 existing wards, resulting in a net loss of one ward in the central area. In formulating its proposals, the Council stated that it made minimal change to the existing arrangements while seeking to achieve a solution based on equality of representation.

27. The Council’s proposals divided the borough into three discrete areas: Chiswick; the Central wards; and Bedfont, Feltham and Hanworth wards. Within these areas, one of the Council’s objectives was “to maintain existing community identities and to respect community ties and physical boundaries.” The Council stated that where its proposals moved away from this objective, it tried to create new ward boundaries which followed identifiable boundaries, such as estate perimeters or roads. The Council’s proposals are summarised in Appendix A.

The Conservatives

28. The Conservative Group on Hounslow Borough Council and the Conservative Associations of Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston submitted a joint proposal. The Conservatives proposed retaining a council size of 60, as it "provides for adequate representation of the interests of local residents". They proposed a pattern of 20 three-member wards in light of the Government’s intention to legislate to introduce elections by thirds in 2000.

29. In developing their proposals, the Conservatives argued that they sought to retain existing boundaries wherever it was practical and sensible, utilising permanent features such as roads or railways to form ward boundaries. However, they noted in some cases “the requirement to create wards of approximately equal size has necessitated drawing boundaries through residential areas.” The Conservatives also divided the borough into discrete areas: Chiswick, Brentford and Isleworth (including Osterley); Hounslow; Heston and Cranford; Bedfont and Hanworth.

30. The Conservatives’ scheme proposed amendments to the boundaries of all the existing wards. In a number of areas their proposed ward boundaries were similar to, but not the same as, the Borough Council’s. The Conservatives’ proposals are summarised in Appendix A.

The Liberal Democrats

31. The Liberal Democrat Group on Hounslow Borough Council submitted a joint proposal, with the support of the executive committees of Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston Liberal Democrats. The Liberal Democrats resolved to support an officers’ scheme which had been presented to members in a report to the Council on 25 August 1998, but was not adopted by the Council. However, this report formed the basis of the Liberal Democrats’ submission.
32 The Liberal Democrats proposed that there should be 20 three-member wards, and by using the River Crane, Gunnersbury Avenue (North Circular Road A406) and Chiswick High Road divided the borough into three areas in the same way as the Borough Council. The Liberal Democrats' scheme would improve electoral equality and, they argued, would follow existing and natural boundaries where possible and create wards which reflect existing communities or ward arrangements. They proposed "the minimal [change] solution consistent with a reduction to twenty wards". The Liberal Democrats' proposals are summarised in Appendix A.

**Other Representations**

33 We received a further three representations from two local political groups and a local residents' association. Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) proposed a reduction in the number of wards from 21 to 20 with each ward represented by three councillors. The Committee stated that its proposals sought to take account of geographical and historical natural boundaries and "local people's perception of what is their neighbourhood". Its proposals were based on 1998 electorate figures only.

34 Hounslow Central branch of the Brentford & Isleworth Labour Party submitted comments on the central Hounslow area of the borough. It stated that residents within the current Hounslow Central ward identify with central Hounslow and therefore "it would be logical to extend the ward into an area or areas where residents also consider themselves to be part of central Hounslow." To address the degree of over-representation in the ward, the local Labour Party proposed extending Hounslow Central ward to include Hounslow West (North East) polling district, currently in Hounslow West ward. The local Labour Party opposed other proposals for Hounslow Central as they would extend the ward into areas that identify with Isleworth rather than Hounslow.

35 The Heston Residents' Association proposed retaining the current council size of 60 with three wards each returning four councillors and 16 wards each being represented by three councillors. The Association's proposals were based on 2003 electorate figures only and it did not supply detailed information on ward boundaries. The Association argued that the name of Heston should be preserved.

**4. ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

37 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the coming five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

38 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

39 Our Guidance states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. In reviews of predominantly urban areas such as the London boroughs, our experience suggests that we would expect to achieve a high degree of electoral equality in all wards.

**Electore Forecasts**

40 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 2.5 per cent from 156,338 to 160,220 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. The Council has estimated rates of growth for each ward on the basis of the development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

41 The Liberal Democrats' scheme was based on slightly different electorate forecasts, with 1,022 fewer electors. The Liberal Democrats had based their submission on an initial set of figures supplied by the Council. The Borough Council subsequently provided revised figures to include residential development at the British Waterways Board site in Brentford, the Spring Grove Centre and West Middlessex Hospital in Isleworth, and Grove Road in Hounslow. It made available the revised electorate forecasts to interested groups during Stage One.

42 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science, and having given consideration to the Borough Council's forecast electorates as included in its submission, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. We would welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during Stage Three.

**Council Size**

43 We indicated in our Guidance that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80.
Hounslow Borough Council currently has 60 members. The Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, together with the other respondents submitting borough-wide proposals, all proposed retaining the current council size. Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by retaining a council of 60 members.

**Electoral Arrangements**

46 We have carefully considered all the representations received during Stage One of the review. From these representations, some considerations have emerged which have informed us when preparing our draft recommendations.

47 Fourth, each submission identified several specific areas within the borough, and there was also some recognition of specific boundaries in the borough, such as motorways and railways. The Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats broadly agreed that the warded pattern for the Chiswick area in the case of the borough is bounded to its west by the Chiswick High Road (A205) and Gunnersbury Avenue (A406). Based on a council size of 60, the electorate in Chiswick merits a total of nine councillors. The area west of the River Crane comprising Bedfont, Feltham and Hanworth merits a total of 15 councillors. The large central area of the borough forms a single block in the Liberal Democrat and Borough Council schemes, with an entitlement of 36 councillors. The Conservatives further divided the central area of the borough between Brentford & Isleworth (15 councillors), Hounslow (15 councillors) and Heston & Cranford (nine councillors), also totalling 36. The consensus between proposals on the three broad areas and some prominent features that provide clearly understood boundaries have assisted us in identifying ‘building blocks’ upon which we have based our recommendations.

48 Finally, we noted that respondents submitted proposals which would secure a considerable improvement in electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. At present, eight of the 21 wards have an electorate in excess of 10 per cent, and one over 20 per cent. The three comprehensive borough-wide proposals, based on both current and projected electorates, would all significantly improve the present level of electoral inequality. Initially, the Borough Council’s proposal would reduce the number of wards with an electoral variance over 10 per cent to one (zero in 2003) and both the Conservatives’ and the Liberal Democrats’ proposals would reduce it to zero in all wards being over 10 per cent (unchanged in 2003).

51 However, despite some similarities between schemes, most notably in the Chiswick area, there is less agreement on the most appropriate ward boundaries across the borough. The greatest divergence in proposals was in the central area.

52 We have sought to build on the proposals we have received in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve significant improvements in electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. Where it exists, we have sought to reflect any broad consensus among submissions for ward boundaries. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all respondents in our draft recommendations. Of the five submissions we received which made proposals for the whole borough, only the submission from the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats made comprehensive proposals based on both current and forecast electorates with detailed boundaries. While the other submissions restricted their proposals to one set of electorate data, we have considered all the proposals we received. We hope that our proposals will engender further agreement on the detail during Stage Three.

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

- **The Chiswick Area**
  - Chiswick Homefields, Chiswick Riverside and Turnham Green wards;

- **The Central Area**
  - Brentford Childen and Gunnersbury wards
  - Isleworth North, Isleworth South and Spring Grove wards
  - Hounslow Central, Hounslow Heath, Hounslow South and Hounslow West wards
  - Cranford ward
  - Heston Central, Heston East and Heston West wards;

- **The Bedford, Feltham and Hanworth Area**
  - East Bedfont and Feltham North wards
  - Feltham Central, Feltham South and Hanworth wards.

54 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

55 The Chiswick area currently has two three-member wards, Chiswick Riverside and Turnham Green wards, and one two-member ward, Chiswick Homefields. All three wards are bounded, in part, by the borough boundary. There was agreement in the representations we received that the proposed western boundary of the Chiswick area should be formed by Cranford Green (North Circular Road) and Chiswick High Road, further west than the existing boundary which broadly follows the London Underground District line.

**Chiswick Homefields, Chiswick Riverside and Turnham Green wards**

56 The three wards of Chiswick Homefields, Chiswick Riverside and Turnham Green are situated in the east of the borough. Chiswick Riverside and Turnham Green wards are each represented by three councillors and Chiswick Homefields is represented by two councillors. The number of electors per councillor in the wards is 2 per cent below, 14 per cent below and 5 per cent above the borough average respectively (3 per cent below, 13 per cent below and 4 per cent above in 2003).

57 There were a number of similarities between the three schemes from the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. Firstly, each scheme proposed three wards each represented by three councillors. Secondly, they all proposed using Gunnersbury Avenue (A406) and part of the Chiswick High Road (A205) as the boundary between this area and the rest of the borough. Finally, the Conservative and Liberal Democrats proposed using the Great West Road as the boundary between Turnham Green and Chiswick Riverside wards and the Borough Council proposed using it for the majority of its proposed boundary, except in the Strand on the Green area where it used the Chiswick mainline railway.

58 The three schemes proposed different western boundaries for Chiswick Homefields ward. The Borough Council proposed enlarging the existing Chiswick Homefields ward (which is currently served by two councillors) to include an area which lies east of, and including, Duke’s Road, as far as the existing boundary of Brookly Road, Bradley Terrace and Devonshire Road, and is currently in Turnham Green ward. The Council proposed broadly to retain the remainder of the existing boundary between Chiswick Homefields and Turnham Green wards, but proposed an alternative boundary between Chiswick Homefields and Chiswick Riverside wards. To the south of the Hogarth roundabout, the Liberal Democrats’ proposed
boundary would follow Burling Lane as far as the Chiswick mainline station, going east along the railway line and south along the Great Chertsey Road (A316). The Conservatives' proposed boundary would lie to the west of Paxton Road, turning southwards generally along the Great Chertsey Road to the borough boundary at Chiswick Bridge. Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) broadly agreed with the Borough Council's warding proposals in the Chiswick area.

59 The Liberal Democrats proposed renaming Chiswick Homefields ward as Chiswick East, Chiswick Riverside ward as Chiswick South and Turnham Green ward as Chiswick North. The Borough Council proposed to rename Chiswick Riverside ward as simply Riverside, otherwise keeping the existing ward names. The Conservatives proposed no change to the existing ward names in this area.

60 All three schemes would improve on the current electoral imbalance. In each ward, the number of electors per councillor would be no more than 4 per cent and no less than 2 per cent of the population. The schemes agreed with the proposals, and no more than 3 per cent under both the Conservatives' and Liberal Democrats' proposals. By 2003, the electoral variance in all three wards is expected to be within 2 per cent of the average under each of the three schemes.

61 We have carefully considered the alternative proposals for the three wards in this area. There is a degree of consensus between the proposals, notably the use of Gunnersbury Avenue and Chiswick High Road as ward boundaries. There is also broad agreement in using the Great West Road as the boundary between Chiswick Homefields and Chiswick Riverside ward. The main differences between the three schemes in this area concern the western boundary of Chiswick Homefields ward.

62 We note that the Borough Council's and Liberal Democrats' proposals included a forecast of 109 electors in an anticipated new housing development, Parson's House on Kew Bridge Road, in their proposed ward covering the Brentford area, west of Chiswick. The Conservatives had included these additional electors in their revised Chiswick Riverside ward. All three schemes broadly used the same western boundary along the centre of Chiswick High Road (south of Chiswick roundabout) and Kew Road to the borough boundary. We sought advice from the Borough Council on the precise location of the development, which confirmed to us that the development of 68 dwellings with a projected electorate of 109 would intersect the boundary proposed by all three schemes and was therefore correctly allocated under the Conservatives' submission. Each scheme would result in comparable levels of electoral equality in the area, although the re-allocation of the Parson's House development would adversely affect the electoral equality forecast for 2003 under the Liberal Democrats' and Borough Council's proposals.

63 We recognise that the Great West Road would continue to form a suitable ward boundary between Turnham Green and Chiswick Riverside, facilitating good electoral equality and reflecting local ties. Furthermore, we consider that the Conservatives' proposal to utilise the Great Chertsey Road (A316) as the boundary between Chiswick Homefields and Chiswick Riverside wards would provide a more easily identifiable boundary and better electoral equality. We therefore propose adopting both these boundaries as part of our draft recommendations, although we propose to consider further modifications to Gunnersbury Avenue, whereas the Conservatives proposed to follow the western side of Gunnersbury Avenue for part of its length. We are also consulting on the boundary between Chiswick Homefields and Turnham Green, proposed by the Conservatives, along Devonshire Road and Turnham Green Terrace.

64 We note that the proposed modifications to ward boundaries may impact on the appropriateness of the existing ward names. However, we consider that these names would continue to broadly reflect the nature of the area and welcome further evidence during Stage Three.

65 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent above the average in Chiswick Homefields (2 per cent above in 2003), 1 per cent above in Chiswick Riverside (unchanged in 2003) and 2 per cent above in Turnham Green (unchanged in 2003).

The Central Area

66 The central area comprises 12 wards covering the communities of Brentford, Cranford, Ealing, Staines, Chiswick, Gunnersbury, Isleworth and Kew. All three schemes broadly used the same central boundary along the centre of Gunnersbury Avenue and Chiswick High Road. In formulating our draft proposals for the central 12 wards, we were guided by the same principles as elsewhere in the borough, namely achieving electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. The three schemes we received from the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives all proposed ward patterns in the central area which would achieve good, and comparable, levels of electoral equality. There was, however, greater divergence between the three schemes on the most appropriate ward boundaries for the central area than in either the Chiswick or the Feltham, Bedfont and Hanworth areas of the borough. Nevertheless, in broad terms, each scheme proposed ward boundaries along major roads, railways or natural features.

67 In the central area, we considered that each scheme had its merits. We therefore sought to formulate a scheme which would achieve the best electoral equality across the 12 wards, having regard to local communities. In considering the different proposals that we received, we recognised that the dense urban character of the central area meant it was difficult to adopt part of a scheme for one area and adopt alternative proposals in adjacent wards, as the warding patterns proposed under each scheme were not compatible across the whole area. We also considered further modifications to ward boundaries where we believed that better electoral arrangements could be achieved. Our draft recommendations for the central area are detailed below and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Brentford Clifton and Gunnersbury wards

68 The two wards of Brentford Clifton and Gunnersbury are situated to the west of the Chiswick area and each is currently represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is currently 17 per cent below and 3 per cent below the borough average respectively (12 per cent below and 1 per cent below in 2003).

69 The three borough-wide schemes we received from the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats all proposed transferring part of the current Gunnersbury ward into the Chiswick area for warding purposes, using Gunnersbury Avenue and Chiswick High Road as a boundary. Each of the three schemes also proposed transferring a part of Brentford Clifton ward into a revised ward covering the Isleworth New area, with that part of Gunnersbury and Brentford Clifton wards forming a new three-member ward under each of the three schemes. The Borough Council and the Conservatives proposed that the new ward should be called Brentford and the Liberal Democrats suggested Brentford East.

70 The Borough Council proposed that the western boundary of the new Brentford ward should generally follow the Grand Union Canal from the north of the borough, running east along the Great West Road, south along Windmill Road and Half Acre Road, and eastwards again generally along St Paul's Road and Albany Road, before turning south to the borough boundary near the island of Lions in the River Thames. Alternatively, the Conservatives proposed that the western ward boundary of Brentford should run to the west of Windmill Road then generally west through the trading estate, going south along Boston Manor Road, and then following an alternative route through the dock area to the borough boundary at the River Thames. The Liberal Democrats proposed using Enfield Road as the western boundary of the ward, before generally following Windmill Road and Half Acre Road as in the Borough Council's proposals, then broadly following the existing ward boundary along properties to the west of The Ham, then along Augustus Close to the Chiswick boundary. Under each scheme, the northern and southern boundaries of the proposed ward would be the borough boundary.

71 Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) proposed a revised Brentford ward following similar boundaries as proposed by the Borough Council, with only minor modifications.

72 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Brentford ward would be 1 per cent above the average (3 per cent above in 2003); under the Conservatives' proposals 7 per cent below (1 per cent above in 2003); and under the Liberal Democrats' proposals Brentford East ward would be 10 per cent below the borough average (equal to the average in 2005).

73 We have carefully considered the alternative proposals received for this area. We note that there is general consensus that parts of the existing wards of Gunnersbury and Brentford Clifton should be combined to form a new ward. There is general agreement that the eastern boundary of the proposed new ward would follow the clear boundary of Gunnersbury Avenue and Chiswick High Road, although there is less agreement on the western boundary.
We have concluded that the Borough Council's proposals for this area would achieve a high degree of electoral equality and that their boundary along the Grand Union Canal forms an easily identifiable boundary and would best reflect existing community ties in the area. We propose consulting on the ward name of Brenchford, as submitted by the Borough Council and the Conservatives. Under our recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Brenchford would be 1 per cent above the borough average (unchanged in 2003).

Iseworth North, Iseworth South and Spring Grove wards

75 The three wards of Iseworth North, Iseworth South and Spring Grove are located in the centre of the borough and each ward is currently represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor in Iseworth North is 7 per cent above the borough average (14 per cent above in 2003), in Iseworth South 11 per cent below (unchanged in 2003) and in Spring Grove 12 per cent above (unchanged in 2003).

76 All three comprehensive borough-wide schemes proposed changing the existing ward boundaries in this area. The Borough Council proposed that the existing Iseworth North ward be divided broadly into two parts, with the area generally north of the Chiswick mainline railway forming part of a new Osterley ward, and the area south of the railway line forming part of a new Syon ward.

77 Alternatively, the Liberal Democrats proposed the Iseworth North ward should continue to stretch from the north to the south of the borough, although the ward’s eastern boundary with the existing Brenchford Cippenham boundary would be modified to include the area west of Windmill Road and south of South Road (including the West Middlesex Hospital) from the existing Iseworth North ward into a revised Spring Grove ward. The Conservatives’ proposal had some similarities to the Liberal Democrats’, although the Conservatives’ proposal transferred the area east of Wood Lane and west of Spur Road (bounded in the south by the Chiswick mainline railway and in the north by the Great West Road) from Iseworth North into a modified Spring Grove ward, but not the area around the West

Middlesex Hospital, as under the Liberal Democrats’ proposals. The Conservatives’ proposed boundary between Iseworth North and Brenchford wards would broadly follow Brenchford Road as far as the M4 flyover, then follow an eastern line to the borough boundary.

78 In the area covered by the existing Iseworth South ward, there was a greater degree of consensus between the three schemes. All three proposed maintaining the existing western boundary, which generally follows the Duke of Northumberland’s River and route through the Magden Sewage Purification Works to the borough boundary. The southern and eastern boundaries of the ward are formed by the borough boundary. Therefore, the difference of views was on the ward’s northern boundary.

79 The Borough Council proposed that the northern boundary of Iseworth South ward should be extended to include an area between Linfield Road and St John’s Road, west of St John’s Gardens, then follow part of St John’s Road and Mill Flat. Its proposals would retain the existing boundary along St John’s Road from Granger Road to Twickenham Road only. The Conservative proposals broadly reflected the Borough Council’s for Iseworth South ward. However, the Liberal Democrats proposed utilising the existing ward boundary along St John’s Road to the junction with Twickenham Road, but then to follow a boundary to the rear of Heploe Close and Park Road to the borough boundary.

80 The Council proposed enlarging the existing Spring Grove ward to the east, to include the northern part of the existing Iseworth North ward (north of Chiswick mainline railway as far as the Grand Union Canal). It proposed utilising the existing boundary along this railway line as the entire southern boundary for the revised Spring Grove ward. The Council proposed modifying the western boundary of Spring Grove ward: in the north it would follow the existing boundary along the edge of Osterley Park, turning east along the park boundary, southwards between Penwerris Avenue and Cranmore Avenue, along the London Underground Piccadilly line south from the Great West Road, east along Spring Grove Road and south on Thornbury Road.

81 In comparison, the Conservatives’ proposals for Spring Grove ward would include the industrial developments around the West Cross Centre (which would form part of a revised Iseworth North ward), and would follow Spring Grove Road and Glenham Road in the south. North of the Great West Road, their proposed boundary would lie to the west of Lulworth Avenue.

82 The Liberal Democrat submitted proposals which substantially differed from both the Borough Council’s and the Conservatives’. They proposed utilising the Great West Road as a northern boundary for a revised Spring Grove ward, thereby transferring the Osterley area (including the park) into an enlarged Heston East ward. The area to the south of the Great West Road would be combined with the area around the West Middlesex Hospital, south of the railway line (currently in Iseworth North ward), to form a reconfigured Spring Grove ward.

83 Responsible ministers different proposals for ward names in the area. The ward comprising Syon Park and Brenchford End would be renamed Syon by the Borough Council, and the reconfigured ward, similarly oriented to the existing Iseworth North ward, would be named Brentford West by the Liberal Democrats and Syon Park by the Conservatives. The area covered by the existing Iseworth South ward, whose boundaries would remain largely unchanged under each scheme, would be renamed Iseworth under all three schemes. The ward comprising the Spring Grove and Osterley areas would be renamed Osterley by the Borough Council, and Spring Grove & Osterley under the Conservatives’ proposals. The Liberal Democrats’ proposed ward, including part of the existing Spring Grove ward south of the Great West Road, would continue to be called Spring Grove (as modified ward north of the Great West Road would be called Heston & Osterley).

84 The number of electors per councillor in the Borough Council’s proposed Syon ward would be 13 per cent below the borough average, in the Conservatives’ proposed Syon Park ward 6 per cent below, and in the Liberal Democrats’ proposed Brentford West ward, equal to the borough average (no ward is expected to vary by more than 2 per cent from the borough average under all three schemes by 2003 as a result of expected housing development). The electoral variances in the proposed Iseworth ward would be no more than 3 per cent (south of London Road) under each of the three schemes. In the Borough Council’s proposed Osterley ward, the Conservatives’ proposed Spring Grove & Osterley ward and the Liberal Democrats’ proposed Spring Grove ward, the number of electors per councillor would be no more than 3 per cent from the borough average (1 per cent in 2003).

85 As detailed earlier, the Liberal Democrats’ electorate forecasts did not include an additional 1,022 electors expected to fall within the borough under the five-year electorate forecasts. When included in the Liberal Democrats’ model, the majority of the expected development would in fact fall within the proposed Brentford West and Spring Grove wards, thereby worsening the electoral equality in the area by 2003. Furthermore, the Borough Council submission included an additional 86 electors in its current electorate data as its proposed Osterley ward, although this would have a marginal effect on the electoral variances in the ward.

86 We have carefully considered the alternative warding arrangements submitted to us for these three wards. We note that there was general consensus regarding the existing Iseworth South ward which would be subject to modifications along its northern boundary only. Only Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) proposed substantially different ward boundaries in this area, suggesting a transfer of the southern part of the existing ward into a modified Hounslow South ward. There was also a degree of agreement between the Borough Council’s and the Conservatives’ proposals for the area covered by the existing Iseworth North and Spring Grove wards, particularly in proposing the utilisation of the Chiswick mainline railway as an identifiable boundary. We note that the Great West Road is not used as a ward boundary under existing arrangements in this area and only the Liberal Democrats proposed using it significantly under future arrangements.

87 We conclude that the Borough Council’s proposed Osterley ward would achieve a high degree of electoral equality and would be an easily identifiable boundary, which reflect community links in the area.

88 We welcome the consensus view that the existing Iseworth South ward should remain largely unchanged, except for its northern boundary, where we propose adopting most of the Liberal Democrats’ northern ward boundary along Heploe Close, running north of Park Road to the borough boundary, as it would provide a clear boundary for the ward. We propose, however, that the boundary should follow the centre of these
roads, apart from the rear of 'The Ferry House on Park Road. All three schemes utilised St John's Road as part of their proposed ward boundaries for the Conservatives or reconstituting the Liberal Democrats' approach to this boundary, which would be easily identifiable, although we propose extending the boundary west along St John's Road towards the Hounslow mainline railway. The Borough Council's proposed Syon ward would similarly meet the criteria of the review and was based on the revised electorate data.

39. We propose adopting the ward names submitted by the Borough Council for Syon and Isleworth as we consider they reflect identities in the area. However, we propose to rename Osterley ward as Osterley & Spring Grove in order to better reflect community identities in the area. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 11 per cent below the borough average in Syon (3 per cent above in 2003), equal to the average in Osterley & Spring Grove (1 per cent below in 2003) and 1 per cent above the average in Isleworth (unchanged in 2003). We welcome further views during Stage Three, particularly regarding ward names.

Hounslow Central, Hounslow Heath, Hounslow South and Hounslow West wards

40. The four wards of Hounslow Central, Hounslow Heath, Hounslow South and Hounslow West are situated in the centre of the borough. Each ward is currently represented by three councillors and the number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent below the borough average in 2003, 6 per cent below in 2003 (3 per cent below in 2003) and 24 per cent above (27 per cent above in 2003) respectively. Hounslow West ward closely resembles the worst electoral imbalance in the borough.

41. There was a degree of consensus among the Borough Council, Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in a number of areas. Each proposed broadly similar ward boundaries in the Hounslow Central area. The Borough Council and Conservatives proposed substantially similar ward boundaries for Hounslow South, and there was a measure of comparability between the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives for the existing Hounslow West ward. There was less agreement among the three schemes on the proposed ward boundaries in the area of the existing Hounslow Heath ward.

42. In the area of the existing Hounslow Central ward, the Borough Council proposed including an area east of the existing ward boundary on Worton Way, as far as 'Thrushbury Road, and including the Spring Grove Road, currently in Spring Grove ward, in a revised ward. For the rest of the ward, the Council proposed broadly retaining the existing boundaries, although it proposed utilizing Spring Grove Road for much of the northern ward boundary, thereby transferring electors in the Spring Grove Crescent area into a revised Heston East ward. Similarly, the Liberal Democrats' proposals were broadly similar, with the exception of the proposed alternative boundary east of Worton Way and Bridge Road. The Conservatives proposed extending the existing Hounslow Central ward further east as far as St John's Road, utilizing Spring Grove Road as a boundary to a greater extent. The Conservatives also moved away from the existing western ward boundary of Hounslow Central ward along Lampton Road, instead following an alternative boundary along Alexandra Road and Douglas Road.

43. In Hounslow South ward, both the Borough Council and the Conservatives proposed transferring an area of Woodlands, between the Hounslow mainline railway and the Duke of Northumberland's River (currently in Spring Grove ward), into a modified ward. Both schemes proposed retaining the existing ward boundary in the east at the Mogden Sewage Purification Works and broadly extending the western ward boundary along the Chiswick mainline railway to the borough boundary. The Council's proposal included the south-western part of the existing Hounslow Central ward at Hounslow East but retaining the current ward name in Hounslow South. The Liberal Democrats alternatively proposed transferring the existing northern ward boundary along Bridge Road and the existing western ward boundary along Hanworth Road, as opposed to utilising the Hounslow mainline railway as proposed by the Council and the Conservatives. The Borough Council and Liberal Democrats proposed retaining the existing ward names of Hounslow Central and Hounslow South.

44. Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) also proposed maintaining the existing northern ward boundary of Hounslow South ward, but proposed extending the existing ward to the east and following, broadly, the existing Hounslow mainline railway along the western ward boundary.

45. Hounslow West ward is significantly under-represented under the current arrangements. Broadly, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed creating a new Hounslow West ward on a north-south line. The Liberal Democrats proposed dividing the ward along Sutton Lane and Wellington Road (North and South), transferring the western portion of the ward into a modified ward which would be called Hounslow Heath. The remaining (eastern) part would form a modified three-member ward, to be called Hampton under the Liberal Democrats' proposals. The Conservatives proposed broadly following a similar division of the ward along Sutton Lane, but then generally following Cranwell Road to the borough boundary rather than Wellington Road South. The Conservatives' modified ward, containing the western part of the current Hounslow West ward, would be renamed Hounslow Central. The Conservatives' modified ward containing the eastern part of the existing Hounslow West ward, would be renamed Hounslow South. The Borough Council proposed dividing the existing Hounslow West ward on an east-west line along the south side of Staines Road to form a revised ward pattern for the current Hounslow Heath, Heston Central and Hounslow West wards. The Hounslow Labour Party (Local Government Committee) also proposed an east-west split to form revised Hounslow West and Heston Central wards.

46. In Hounslow Heath, the Borough Council proposed transferring an area from the existing Hounslow West ward, north of the Staines Road and south of the London Underground Piccadilly line (which runs overground in this area) into the existing Hounslow Heath ward, and to call this ward Hounslow Heath. Broadly, the area south of the Staines Road would form a revised ward which the Council proposed calling Hounslow West. It also proposed transferring an area from the existing Hounslow Heath ward (north of Bath Road, west of Lampton Park and south of the Great West Road) to a revised Heston Central ward.

47. The Liberal Democrats proposed an alternative warding pattern for the area of the existing Hounslow Heath ward. Their proposals utilised Beavers Lane as a southern boundary, an alternative western and northern boundary to include areas of the existing Heston Central and Heston West wards; and generally maintained the existing eastern boundary of Hounslow Heath ward between the Great West Road and Bath Road. This modified ward would be called Hounslow West under the Liberal Democrats' proposals. The Conservatives also proposed using Beavers Lane as a southern boundary, then proposing a boundary west along Salisbury Road and then generally westwards to a point at the River Crane. The Conservatives generally maintained the existing eastern part of the northern boundary of Hounslow Heath ward along Sutton Lane and the Great West Road respectively. For the remaining northern boundary, the Conservatives proposed following the Great South-West Road to the River Crane, thereby transferring an area of the existing Cranwell ward to a modified three-member ward. The Conservatives proposed naming this modified ward, containing part of the existing Cranwell ward together with part of the existing Hounslow Heath ward, as Hounslow West.

48. We received a submission from Hounslow Central Branch of the Brentford & Isleworth Labour Party which limited their comments to the Hounslow Central area of the borough. The Branch stated that regard should be had to community identities in the area when revising ward boundaries and that if the ward boundaries are to be modified, the ward should be extended westwards to include areas around the Civic Centre, to the east of Lampton Park and west of Lampton Road.

49. The number of electors per councillor in the four wards that lie wholly within the area proposed by the Borough Council or under the five wards proposed by the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives would be no greater than 4 per cent from the borough average of 4 per cent of the Council's proposed Hounslow Central ward at 6 per cent. By 2003, no ward would vary by more than 2 per cent from the borough average under each of the three schemes. The Council's proposed four wards would provide an appropriate level of representation in the area as would the five wards proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats as the Council also proposed parts of this area would form part of wards elsewhere.

Under the Borough Council's proposals, parts of the current Hounslow Heath, Hounslow West and Hounslow Central wards would form part of reconstituted wards in the Heston area.

50. We have carefully considered the representations we received for this area. We note that in Hounslow Central ward, the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats each proposed schemes extending the eastern ward
boundary to include areas currently in Spring Grove ward, while only the Hounslow Central Branch of Brentford & Isleworth Labour Party proposed the new Hounslow Central ward.

In Hounslow South ward, there was greater consensus among the three schemes, with only the Liberal Democrats differing substantially in their proposals. The scheme of Bridge Road as the northern boundary of the ward achieved widespread support.

We propose adopting the Borough Council's proposals in Hounslow South ward, with a minor boundary modification in order to follow the Hounslow mainline railway for its whole western boundary, as proposed by the Conservatives. In Hounslow Central ward, we conclude that the Council's proposals would ensure good electoral equality and use clear ward boundaries. As a consequence of our proposed revision to Hounslow South ward, the Council's proposed southern boundary for Hounslow Central ward would follow the Chiwick mainline railway. We propose retaining the existing ward names in Hounslow Central and Hounslow South in order to reflect the majority of views we received.

Under our proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Hounslow Heath ward would be 1 per cent below (2 per cent above in 2003) and in Hounslow West ward, 1 per cent below (3 per cent below in 2003).

Cranford ward

Cranford ward is located in the west of the central area of the borough and its western boundary is also the borough boundary. The number of electors represented by each of the three councillors in Cranford ward is 7 per cent below the borough average (9 per cent below in 2003).

The three comprehensive borough-wide schemes all proposed alternative ward boundaries for a revised Cranford ward, in order to address the relative over-representation. The Council broadly proposed maintaining the existing ward boundaries, only substantially departing from the existing boundary to the south of Bath Road, where it proposed that it should follow Basildene Road, thereby incorporating 739 electors from the existing Hounslow Heath ward. The Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats proposed that part of the existing Cranford ward south of the Great South-West Road should form part of a modified Hounslow Heath ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed including areas around the Western International Motorway, Parkway Trading Estate and the Heston Service area (south of the M4 motorway) in a modified Cranford ward.

We considered that a north-south split of the ward as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats would achieve a comparable level of electoral equality, however, these proposals would not be compatible with our proposals for adjacent wards. We are therefore consulting on the Borough Council's proposed boundaries in this area subject to three minor boundary modifications: to utilise the centre of Staines Road as noted above; to follow a line to the rear of properties along the western side of Sutton Lane between the London Underground Piccadilly line and Bath Road; and to follow the centre of Basildene Road for its entire length. We also propose to transpose the ward names so that the ward covering the area north of Staines Road would be called Hounslow West and the ward south of Staines Road, including the Heath itself, would be called Hounslow Heath. We consider this would better reflect the respective areas.

Under our proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Hounslow Heath ward would be 1 per cent below (2 per cent above in 2003) and in Hounslow West ward, 1 per cent below (3 per cent below in 2003).

Both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed extending Cranford ward to the north-east, moving away from the existing boundary of The Parkway and Bath Road, to include part of the existing Heston West ward. The Conservatives' proposals transferred properties generally to the south of Cranford Lane while the Liberal Democrats proposed an alternative transfer of broadly half those properties south of the Cranford Lane and a number of properties, including the Western International Market, to the north.

Under the Borough Council's and Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Cranford ward would be no more than 2 per cent from the borough average, and no more than 4 per cent from the average under the Conservatives' proposals (no more than 2 per cent from the borough average in 2003 under each scheme).

We conclude that the existing boundary along The Parkway and Bath Road provides a clear, easily identifiable boundary which would be retained under the Borough Council's proposals. The Council's proposed Cranford ward would also provide a high degree of electoral equality, without substantially moving away from the existing ward structure in this area. We are therefore consulting on the Borough Council's proposed Cranford ward as part of our draft recommendations, subject to minor boundary modifications to follow the centre of Basildene Road for its whole length, and the centre of Staines Road.

Under our proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the average (1 per cent below in 2003).

Heston Central, Heston East and Heston West wards

The three wards of Heston Central, Heston East and Heston West are situated to the north-west of the central area of the borough. Heston West is currently represented by three councillors, and Heston Central and Heston East are each represented by two councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 1 per cent above (1 per cent below in 2003), equal to the borough average (2 per cent below in 2003) and 5 per cent above (3 per cent above in 2003) respectively.

The Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats all proposed different warding patterns for the Heston area. However, each scheme proposed that the current two-member wards in Heston Central and Heston East should be revised to enable a three-member ward pattern to be achieved across the whole borough.

The Borough Council proposed, broadly, retaining the existing Heston Central ward in the far north of the borough where it proposed transferring the Raleigh Estate into a revised Heston East ward. Heston Central ward would also retain many of its existing ward boundaries under the Council's proposals, with the only major revision being the extension of the southern boundary as far as Bath Road and east of Sutton Lane, thereby incorporating part of the current Hounslow Heath ward. In Heston East, the Borough Council proposed a more substantial revision to the existing boundaries. It proposed enlarging the existing ward in three directions: to include the Raleigh Estate in the far north, as noted above; an area south of the Great West Road, bounded by Lamptron Road and Lamptron Park, and including the Civic Centre (currently in Hounslow West ward); and an area to the east bounded by Spring Grove Road, the London Underground Piccadilly line and Parkway Avenue, and the southern boundary of Osterley Park (currently parts of Spring Grove and Hounslow Central wards). The Council proposed maintaining the existing ward names in the area.

The Liberal Democrats proposed transferring part of the existing Heston West ward into an enlarged Cranford ward and part into a reconfigured Hounslow Heath ward. The remaining part of Heston West ward, together with the majority of the existing Heston Central ward, would form part of a reconfigured, three-member ward to be named Heston West. They proposed maintaining the existing western boundary of Heston East ward, but extending the eastern boundary to include the whole of Osterley Park, using Windmill Lane and part of Syon Lane as a new boundary. The southern boundary of the ward would follow the Great West Road to the junction with Syon Lane. This reconfigured ward would be called Heston & Osterley.

The Conservatives proposed including part of the current Heston West ward (south of Cranford Lane and west of Springwell Road) in a modified Cranford ward. Furthermore, the southern boundary of the North ward would comprise the rest of Heston West ward (north of Cranford Lane), a small part of the current Heston Central ward (north of New Heston Road) and part of Heston East ward.
(generally north-west of Church Road from the junction with New Heston Road). The Conservatives proposed a new Heston South ward centring on existing Heston Central and Heston East wards north of the Great West Road and south of the proposed southern boundary of Heston North, together with electors on Aldensey Avenue, Lime Tree Road and the southerly section of Jersey Road.

110 The Heston Residents’ Association commented that the Heston name should be preserved in the ward and that it reflects the history of the area. They also stated that the area has a strong “community spirit”.

111 The number of electors per councillor in the three wards that lie wholly within the area proposed by the Borough Council and under the two wards proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats would be no more than 2 per cent from the average by 2003. The Council’s proposed three wards would provide an appropriate level of representation in the area when compared to the two wards proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

112 We have carefully considered the alternative proposals for this area which substantially differed from one another. Since the Heston area currently comprises three-member wards, we recognised that in order to achieve a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough, the ward boundaries in the area would be subject to significant change. We noted that the current Heston West ward is located in the north-west corner of the borough with its northern and western boundaries formed by the borough boundary. In addition, the ward includes some relatively large open spaces, which together restrict the possibilities for change. In seeking the best electoral scheme for the area, we considered numerous configurations of wards, including formulating our own proposals, in order to achieve the best electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. However, we concluded that we were not able to improve substantially upon the electoral equality which would result under any of the three-member ward boundary, although we received, without adversely affecting the proposed pattern of wards elsewhere in neighbouring areas.

113 In the current Heston West ward, we considered that the Borough Council’s proposals would ensure good electoral equality, having regard to existing local ties in the area. As detailed earlier, we judged that The Parkway and part of Bath Road provide a sensible and clearly defined boundary between Cranford and Heston West. We consider that proposals to move away from this boundary would not better reflect community ties in this area.

114 In the Heston Central area, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed using the Great West Road as a ward boundary, although it does not form a boundary under the Borough Council’s scheme. We cannot consider one area in isolation and, in looking for the best scheme for the borough as a whole, we consider adopting the Borough Council’s Heston Central and Heston East wards, but with two minor modifications to the western boundary in Heston East ward to include the whole of Walnut Tree Road and to follow a line to the east of properties on Sutton Lane. These proposals would achieve improved electoral equality both in the Heston area and as part of the integrated ward pattern across the central 12 wards. We also propose adopting the Borough Council’s suggested ward names in this area which we consider reflect both the existing ward names and community ties.

115 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the borough average in Heston Central (2 per cent below in 2003), 3 per cent above in Heston East (2 per cent above in 2003) and equal to the average in Heston West ward (2 per cent below in 2003).

The Bedfont, Feltham and Hanworth Area

116 There are currently five three-member wards in this area: two wards broadly lie north of the Southern Region railway line; and three to the south. The two most northern wards, East Bedfont and Feltham North, are currently under-represented while the three wards south of the railway, Feltham Central, Feltham South and Hanworth, are over-represented. In order to address this imbalance, respondents proposed that one ward should straddle the railway line in the area around central Feltham, although the proposals differed in the detailed boundaries.

117 Between the proposed wards of Feltham North and Feltham Central, the Borough Council’s and the Conservatives’ revised boundary would continue along Bedfont Lane, while the Liberal Democrats proposed a slightly different boundary; moving away from Bedfont Lane and going through Blakeham Park and Longford River.

118 Between the proposed wards of East Bedfont and Feltham Central, the Council, Liberal Democrats and Conservatives all proposed a similar ward boundary along part of the existing boundary between East Bedfont and Feltham North wards. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed renaming East Bedfont ward as Bedfont.

119 Under the Borough Council’s proposed East Bedfont ward, the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the borough average (2 per cent below in 2003); under the Conservatives’ and Liberal Democrats’ Bedfont ward 2 per cent above (equal to the average in 2003). In the proposed Feltham North ward, the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the average under all three schemes (no more than 2 per cent from the average in 2003).

120 We considered carefully the alternative proposals for these two wards. We noted that they would all significantly improve electoral equality in the area, and that each scheme proposed a similar Feltham Central ward, straddling the railway line. We noted that the Liberal Democrats’ calculation for the electorate in their revised Feltham North ward did not appear to accurately reflect their described boundary. Their calculations appeared to include 338 electors from part of polling district BC in Feltham North ward (an eastern portion of Bedfont Lane including Shore Close, Manor Place and Gleneblands Road) which their boundary description indicated would form part of a revised Feltham Central ward. By modifying the Liberal Democrats’ figures to account for this discrepancy, we calculated that the electoral equality for Feltham North ward under the Liberal Democrats’ proposals would not be as good.

121 We have decided to endorse the Conservatives’ proposals for both Feltham North and Bedfont wards as they secure the best electoral equality and better reflect community ties in the Bedfont area.

Feltham Central, Feltham South and Hanworth wards

122 All three wards of Feltham Central, Feltham South and Hanworth currently lie south of the Southern Region railway line and west of the River Crane. In Feltham Central, the number of electors per councillor is 3 per cent below the borough average (4 per cent below in 2003), in Feltham South 10 per cent below (12 per cent below in 2003) and in Hanworth 11 per cent below (unchanged in 2003). Each ward is currently represented by three councillors.

123 The Borough Council, Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed alternative warding patterns for the central Feltham Central and Feltham South wards in this area, although there was some consensus for the Hanworth ward area.

124 Each of the three schemes proposed a broadly similar northern boundary for Hanworth ward, using Hounslow Road and part of the AS16 Twickenham Road. The Borough Council’s proposals differed in two main areas: it followed an alternative boundary to the north of Hounslow College, including Park Road in Hanworth ward, and proposed an alternative boundary west of Twickenham Road. The Heston Residents’ Association proposed that Hanworth ward should remain unaltered in order to reflect community ties in the area.
We have carefully considered all the proposals for change in this area. The three schemes proposed by the Borough Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats differed in the detailed location of ward boundaries. The Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats agreed in their proposals to transfer part of central Feltham into a revised Feltham Central ward, but differed significantly in other areas, particularly around Greater Park and Hanworth Park. The Conservatives proposed to transfer a similar part of Feltham north of the railway line, however, it proposed including the area, together with part of the existing Feltham South ward, in a ward to be named Feltham West. There was a broad level of agreement between the three schemes on the Hanworth ward, where the proposals are for minimal change to the existing boundaries, with each respondent in agreement over the use of Hounslow Road as a boundary.

While the Borough Council argued that a degree of electoral inequality could be justified in Feltham South ward, the proposals from both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats would achieve better electoral equality in this area. We do not consider that Feltham South ward is sufficiently different in character to warrant special consideration. In seeking to achieve the best electoral equality for the whole borough, having regard to the statutory criteria, we note that the Conservatives' proposals would provide marginally better electoral equality than the Liberal Democrats', although both schemes would provide similar electoral equality by 2003. However, the Liberal Democrats' scheme is likely to contain a discrepancy whereby 338 electors were included in Feltham North ward, as noted above, instead of in Feltham Central ward, which would adversely affect the balance of representation.

We are therefore proposing to adopt the Conservatives' proposals for the three wards of Feltham West, Hanworth and Hanworth Park, which would achieve the best electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We welcome further views on these proposals, including ward names, during Stage Three.

Conclusions

We have considered carefully all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review. Together with the proposals we have received, we have examined alternative configurations of wards in looking at whether we could improve on the electoral schemes submitted to us. As detailed earlier in the chapter, we have concluded that the Conservatives' proposals in the Chiswick area and Bedfont, Feltham and Hanworth area of the borough would secure improved electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. Furthermore, we conclude that the Borough Council's proposals would achieve a significant improvement to the electoral balance for the central 12 wards, subject to several minor boundary modifications using proposals submitted by the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and our own views. Consequently, we propose that:

- there should be no change to the council size of 60 members; and
- there should be 20 wards, one less than at present, involving changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.

In looking at the three broad areas of the borough, our conclusions for each area are summarised below.

The Chiswick area: there was broad consensus between the three comprehensive borough-wide proposals for the three wards in this area. We concluded that the Conservatives' proposed boundaries would provide the best electoral equality, while preserving existing community links in the area and utilising easily identifiable ward boundaries.

The Central area: this was the area where there was the greatest variation of views regarding appropriate ward boundaries. We conclude that, in broad terms, the Borough Council's proposals for the central 12 wards would achieve the best electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. However, we proposed a number of minor boundary modifications in order to improve further the quality of the schemes:

- the northern boundary of the proposed Islesworth ward would follow St John's Road, from the Chiswick mainline railway, and also up Hepple Close and Park Road as far as the borough boundary (similar to the Liberal Democrats' proposal in this area); and
- the proposed western boundary of Hounslow South ward would follow the Chiswick mainline railway for its duration (as proposed by the Conservatives);

- the western boundary of Heston East ward would be modified in two areas so that it would generally follow the rear of the properties on the eastern side of Sutton Lane, and the rear of the properties on the western side of Walnut Tree Road;
- the ward names of the Council's proposed Hounslow West and Hounslow Heath wards would be transposed as we consider this would reflect better the areas covered by these wards;
- the southern boundary of the proposed Hounslow West ward would be modified to follow the rear of properties along Sutton Lane (between the London Underground Piccadilly line and Bath Road) and the western boundary would follow the centre of Bastide Road for its entire length;
- the Borough Council's proposed Osterley ward would be called Osterley & Spring Grove;
- the northern boundary of the proposed Hounslow Heath ward would follow the centre of Staines Road for its whole length.

The Bedfont, Feltham and Hanworth area: each of the three comprehensive borough-wide schemes proposed including a similar area around central Feltham, north of the railway line, in a ward with an area to the south of the railway line. There was also some consensus on the proposed boundaries north of the railway line, covered by two wards, but less agreement in the southern three wards. We propose adopting the Conservatives' proposed ward pattern for the five wards in this area as it would provide the best electoral equality, using identifiable ward boundaries.

Figure 4 (overleaf) shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2003.

As shown in Figure 4, our draft recommendations for Hounslow Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from eight to one. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue in 2003. Our draft recommendations are set out in more
**Figure 4:**
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998 electorate</th>
<th>2003 forecast electorate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Current arrangements</td>
<td>Draft recommendations</td>
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<td>Number of councillors</td>
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<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wards</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2,606</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average</td>
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</table>

detail in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map inserted in the back of this report.

**Draft Recommendation**

Hounslow Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 5, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map in the back of the report.

10. We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Hounslow and welcome comments from the Borough Council and others on the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors and ward names. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.
### Figure 5:
The Commission’s Draft Recommendations for Hounslow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (1998)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor (2003)</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hounslow Borough Council’s submission, less 86 electors which were incorrectly included to the Osterley area.

Notes:
1. The ‘Variance from average’ column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. The total electorates for 1998 and 2003 are non-geographically different to the electorates shown in Figure 5, but this would have a negligible effect on the electoral variances.
5. NEXT STEPS

The Commission is putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Hounslow. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 22 March 1999. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Director of Reviews
Hounslow Review
Local Government Commission for England
Dolphins Court
10/11 Great Turrasile
London WC1V 7JU

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

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

Proposed Electoral Arrangements

The following tables illustrate the electoral variances under the schemes submitted by the Borough Council, the Conservatives (the Group on the Council jointly with the Conservative Associations of Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston) and the Liberal Democrats (the Group on the Council jointly with the executive committees of the Brentford & Isleworth and Feltham & Heston Liberal Democrats). Full details of each submission, including accompanying mapping, may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

Hounslow Borough Council’s Proposals

Figure A1: Hounslow Borough Council’s Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2005)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
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*continued overleaf*
### The Conservatives' Proposals

#### Figure A2:
The Conservatives' Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Electorate (2003)</th>
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<td>-6</td>
<td>8,176</td>
<td>2,725</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Notes:
1. The 'variance from average' column shows the percentage difference from the average number of electors per councillor. The symbol '+' denotes a higher than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. The total electorate figures for Hounslow Borough Council's submission differ from those in Figure 3 by 66 electors. This has a negligible impact on the variances.

continued overleaf
**The Liberal Democrats' Proposals**

**Figure A2:** The Liberal Democrats' Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Torrington</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,659</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8,208</td>
<td>2,736</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>156,338</td>
<td></td>
<td>160,229</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>2,606</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,670</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electorate figures are based on the Conservative submission.

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

**Figure A3:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward name</th>
<th>Number of councillors (1998)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
<th>Number of councillors (2003)</th>
<th>Number of electors per councillor</th>
<th>Variance from average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Ealing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,980</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,982</td>
<td>2,661</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Brentford East</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,037</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>7,927</td>
<td>2,642</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Brentford West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,794</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,821</td>
<td>2,607</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Chiswick East</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,952</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8,104</td>
<td>2,701</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Chiswick North</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,925</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,154</td>
<td>2,718</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Chiswick South</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8,024</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8,131</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Cranford</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,795</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,803</td>
<td>2,601</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Feltham Central</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,878</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,006</td>
<td>2,669</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Feltham North</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,838</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,873</td>
<td>2,624</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10  Feltham South</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,958</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,974</td>
<td>2,658</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11  Hanworth</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,704</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>7,864</td>
<td>2,621</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12  Heron &amp; Osterley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,958</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8,003</td>
<td>2,668</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13  Hounslow West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,928</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,936</td>
<td>2,645</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14  Hounslow Central</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,748</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>8,002</td>
<td>2,667</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15  Hounslow Heath</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,510</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>7,790</td>
<td>2,597</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16  Hounslow South</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8,005</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8,016</td>
<td>2,672</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17  Hounslow West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,859</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,888</td>
<td>2,629</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18  Idenworth</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,905</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,063</td>
<td>2,688</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19  Lampton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,650</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>7,858</td>
<td>2,619</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued overleaf
APPENDIX B

The Statutory Provisions

The Local Government Act 1992: the Commission’s Role

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

2. Under section 13(5) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

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

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

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

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

4. By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

5. In relation to London boroughs:

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

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

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

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

\[\text{\textsuperscript{6} The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.}\]