Our Finsbury area consists of the part of the borough south of the A501 (Pentonville Road and City Road). The A501 is acknowledged as a major dividing line through the south of the borough. It is the present northern boundary of Bunhill and Clerkenwell wards and before the introduction of new wards at the 2002 election, it was the northern boundary of the Bunhill and Clerkenwell wards that existed from 1978 to 2002.

The A501 was described by Islington Council at the 1999 review as a “pronounced physical barrier” and this continues to be true today.

Being roughly coterminous with the old metropolitan borough of Finsbury, the area south of the A501 has a distinct identity. A large number of street signs bearing the legend ‘Borough of Finsbury’ have been retained around the streets of Finsbury. This is also reinforced by the A501 being the boundary between the EC1 and EC2 postcode areas (Finsbury) and the N1 postcode area (Angel and the surrounding area).

Finsbury being the earliest-developed part of the borough, it represents an astonishing mix of properties. In addition to the various types of housing stock, which we mention above, from Georgian townhouses via high-rise post-war council estates and converted warehouses to new high-rise blocks of luxury apartments, it also contains the campus of City University London and a large amount of student accommodation, the Wolfson Institute of Preventative Medicine, and any number of shops and businesses on the City fringe. Even a three-minute walk through almost any part of Finsbury would present a bewildering mix of housing styles and property uses.
The forecast electorate for Finsbury in 2024 is 24,054 which entitles it to 7.28 councillors. If the area were divided into a number of wards with a combined allocation of seven councillors, those wards would on average be 4.1% above the borough average. We feel that this is an acceptable variance and it would not benefit community identity to try to find, say, around 900 voters to remove from Finsbury to add to a ward north of the A501 just to improve electoral equality.

Nor do we consider going with an all three-member ward model, and removing around 4,000 voters from Finsbury to combine with around 5,500 voters from north of the A501 to be an acceptable solution. This would act as a straitjacket, forcing two large areas either side of the A501 into a ward which would lack cohesion just to satisfy an artificial number.

We therefore consider Finsbury should be divided into wards with a combined allocation of seven councillors. We do not consider any part of Finsbury so distinct that it would justify a one-member ward, so therefore must consider a pattern of two two-member wards and one three-member ward.

The current boundary between Bunhill and Clerkenwell is such that three members could be allocated to Clerkenwell and four to Bunhill while remaining within 10% variance. However, Bunhill would be 9.5% above the borough average. In addition, the present boundary between the two wards is unsatisfactory. Rather than following one of the principal north-south roads through Finsbury, it instead starts southwards from the Angel along St John Street before deviating eastwards through Friend Street, Hermit Street and Rawstorne Street, splitting the eastern part of the New River conservation area and a small cohesive residential community of terraced houses and converted warehouses, picking up the A1 to the east only to come back along Percival Street to pick up St John Street again to the borough boundary. We consider this boundary makes little sense on the ground and do not therefore propose to leave Clerkenwell alone.

Instead we will transfer two areas between Clerkenwell and Bunhill which will improve community ties and electoral equality and provide for clearer boundaries. Rawstorne Street, Spencer Street and the area around Northampton Square will be transferred to Bunhill; whereas the area south of Percival Street and west of the A1, including the historic Charterhouse Square, will be transferred to Clerkenwell.

Consequently practically the entirety of the Clerkenwell-Smithfield Area of Special Character (See below) would be united in the Clerkenwell ward rather than being divided between two wards as at present.
This will increase the electorate of Clerkenwell, reducing that of Bunhill which, as noted above, would have an electorate 9.5% above the borough average if four councillors were allocated. Clerkenwell would retain the Finsbury Estate while gaining the Percival Estate and the Triangle, but losing Brunswick Close and the Earlstoke Estate. As at present, no estate in Finsbury would be divided between wards.

We note that the proposed growth of the electorate in Finsbury means that SBUA and SBUC are two of the largest polling districts, in terms of electorate, in the borough, with both being entitled to over one-and-a-half councillors on their own. This makes it difficult to calculate the electorate, if either polling district is divided, with a great degree of accuracy.

We have decided to divide the remaining eastern part of Finsbury along the recognisable boundary of Percival Street and Lever Street. We recognise however that this may leave the northern of the two wards undersized, and therefore encourage the Commission to consider an alternative boundary of (eastwards from the A1) Lever Street eastwards, Central Street southwards, and Old Street eastwards to the Old Street Roundabout.

We propose to retain the name Bunhill for the southern of the two wards, which reflects Bunhill Fields and Bunhill Row. We propose the name St Luke’s for the northern ward, which reflects the deconsecrated church of St Luke’s Old Street, along with St Luke’s Community Centre on Central Street, St Luke’s School on Radnor Street and St Luke’s Garden off Mitchell Street. For these to be appropriate it may be necessary for the Commission to take the second of the two boundaries mentioned in the last paragraph; otherwise, a more appropriate name for the ward might be King Square.
2) CENTRAL-SOUTH (Islington/Canonbury)

Our Central-South area consists of the part of the borough north of the A501 and south of the North London line to Highbury Corner and eastwards along the A104 (St Paul’s Road) thereafter. Presently two wards (Caledonian and St Mary’s) cross the North London line, using Caledonian Road and Liverpool Road, respectively, as the principal routes linking the two halves of each ward over the railway line.

The forecast electorate for the Central-South area in 2024 is approximately 45,590 which entitles it to 13.81 councillors (presently SSMA polling district is split between our Central-South area and our Lower Holloway area). We have decided to allocate 14 councillors here. As noted above it would be disruptive to community ties to include electors from our Finsbury area here just in order to achieve an artificial degree of electoral equality.

Caledonian

Caledonian Road, where it begins close to King’s Cross, is an almost entirely commercial district with an extremely vibrant nightlife scene. Along with Euston Road and York Way it forms an extremely busy traffic junction at this point.

Running north the commercial and entertainment district ends before we get to the Regent’s Canal and the road continues as a busy residential road albeit with another shopping district running north from the Regent’s Canal north to the North London line. Caledonian Road is therefore a very busy road throughout this area.
We propose to use Caledonian Road as a boundary throughout this area, creating a two-member ward with a clear eastern boundary. The ward would contain the Bemerton, Naish Court, Outram and York Way estates which constitute most of the housing north of the Regent’s Canal, along with an area south of the canal that combines three-storey terraced houses and a large amount of very new-build houses and apartments.

The proposed Thornhill ward is practically coterminous with the council’s King’s Cross Central Activity Zone Fringe Area. 

Barnsbury and Pentonville

Setting the boundary of our Caledonian ward at Caledonian Road leaves us with an area bounded to the north by the North London line, to the south by Pentonville Road and to the east by Liverpool Road. We estimate this area would be entitled to four councillors but only if the wards had electorates an unacceptable degree below the borough average. To remedy this we also include the area around the Angel to the west of Upper Street and south of Barford Street and Berners Road into this area.

We consider that, although it falls outside the Angel town centre area, the area around White Lion Street and Chapel Market is a commercial and shopping district, particularly dominated by restaurants, pubs, cafes and eateries. The streets south of Copenhagen Street are densely packed with both housing and shops.

Although Copenhagen Street and Cloudesley Place are not major roads, we would suggest that the communities either side of those roads have a very different ‘feel’. North of here, the original Georgian and Victorian housing is almost entirely intact and there is almost a village feel. There are a number of small gardens such as Thornhill Square, Barnsbury Square, Thornhill Road Gardens, Lonsdale Square Gardens and Barnsbury Wood Nature Reserve, along with Barnard Park.

To the south, housing is a lot more densely packed and it jostles side-by-side with shops, pubs, cafes, etc. To the west of Penton Street the area is dominated by the Barnsbury, Priory Green and Half Moon Crescent estates.

As we have divided the area, we would suggest the residents of the Barnsbury ward have a focus towards the northern end of Upper Street, and to Highbury Corner for its transport links, whereas the residents of the Pentonville ward have a focus towards the Angel.

The centre of the Barnsbury ward would be Barnsbury Square, which has its own residents association covering the square and four neighbouring streets⁹. Barnsbury is also home to the Barnsbury Housing Association, which has its headquarters on Cloudesley Street and which provides 299 homes in Islington. 216 of these homes are in our proposed Barnsbury ward with a further 28 lying just to the east around Liverpool Road and Upper Street¹⁰.

Consequently almost the entirety of the proposed Barnsbury ward falls into the Barnsbury conservation area, although the latter does include an area east of Liverpool Road.

We further note that our proposed Pentonville ward would fall entirely into the council’s King’s Cross and Upper Street/Angel Cumulative Impact Areas¹¹ ¹² (i.e. areas where the combined effects of a significant number of licenced premises concentrated in one area contribute to crime and disorder, public nuisance and threats to public safety), whereas those areas end at Copenhagen Street and Liverpool Road and therefore none of the proposed Barnsbury ward falls into a Cumulative Impact Area (except the properties on Caledonian Road and Liverpool Road).

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⁹ http://www.bsquare.org.uk/about-bsra/constitution/
¹⁰ https://s25697.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/MAP-2108-ONLINE.png
St Mary’s

Although above we noted that the town centres defined by Islington Council are not really in the nature of compact shopping districts but are instead long shopping ‘strips’ along the borough’s A-roads, it should be noted that this is less true of Upper Street than it is of Holloway Road, Seven Sisters Road or Blackstock Road. It is only a two-lane highway for much of its length and its shops are often more of a ‘boutique’ nature. Indeed we would suggest Upper Street has a far more village feel than any of the other town centres in the borough.

We would therefore retain most of the current St Mary’s ward except to remove the area north of Highbury Corner to leave a ward very much focussed on Upper Street.

The ward would be named (as it has been for over a century) after the church of St Mary’s, Islington on Upper Street, which is the historic parish church of Islington.

St Peter’s and Canonbury

We propose very little change to either of these wards which have generally strong boundaries. We would improve electoral equality, and provide for clearer boundaries, by moving the northern boundary of St Peter’s up to the A1200 (New North Road) and continuing to use the A1200, when it becomes Canonbury Road, as the southern boundary of Canonbury. This causes a minor problem in that it divides Canonbury Square Gardens between wards and the Commission might consider a minor adjustment here.

St Peter’s north-western boundary would therefore be, as it is now, Essex Road. This ward is set back from the Angel town centre and consists mostly of two large estates (Packington and Popham estates) along with a large number of closely-packed streets full of Georgian three-storey terraced houses running down to the Regent’s Canal.

Canonbury ward, per contra, would instead straddle Essex Road but electoral equality would not permit us to divide it along Essex Road as it was before 2002.
We consider that the Holloway Road is a clear dividing line between communities in Islington and propose to retain it as a ward boundary for almost its entire length within the borough. As noted above it is a shopping district for almost its entire length but is not a single cohesive shopping district or compact High Street, but rather a shopping ‘drag’ running for over two miles. Although there are pockets of housing the length of Holloway Road we consider that communities tend to lie back away from Holloway Road.

We calculate there are 23 pedestrian crossings of Holloway Road in the two-and-a-quarter miles between Archway and Highbury Corner. This is not very frequent given the highly urbanised nature of the borough.

To the south we consider the North London Line to be a clear boundary between communities and do not support the way the current Caledonian and St Mary’s wards cross the line with only a couple of road crossings linking the two parts of each ward, and propose to use the line as a ward boundary.

To the north the present boundary is the eastbound A503, i.e. Camden Road and Parkhurst Road. In the interests of electoral equality we have used the westbound A503, i.e. Camden Road all the way from Holloway Road. This transfers the City of London’s Holloway Estate and Islington’s Williamson Street estate into a more northerly ward.

If this were not done, Lower Holloway would have a forecast electorate in 2024 of approximately 17,315 (presently SSMA polling district is split between our Central-South area and our Lower Holloway area) which would entitle it to 5.24 councillors. If the area were divided into a number of
wards with a combined allocation of five councillors, those wards would on average be 4.9% above the borough average. Consequently moving the area north of Camden Road out of the area improves electoral equality.

This leaves us with a Lower Holloway area with clear boundaries.

Apart from buses along the Holloway Road, most buses through the Lower Holloway area run along Caledonian Road which, although a principal route through the borough, is not in this area a shopping district only having a few newsagents, etc.

We therefore sought to divide the ward into a three-member ward and a two-member ward. Caledonian Road, and the Thameslink line past Caledonian Road and Holloway Road stations, are the clearest boundaries in the area and we propose to use both and divide the area into a Hillmarton ward to the west and a Lower Holloway ward to the east.

This would end the present situation where the contiguous Westbourne and Ringcross Estates are divided between wards.

We note the Lower Holloway ward would stretch west across Caledonian Road and the Thameslink line, but note that apart from the Nailour Street Estate and Bunning Way, most of the area south of Market Road (i.e. Brewery Road, Brandon Road, Vale Royal) is industrial, not residential. Indeed, it is the only Locally Significant Industrial Site in the borough as per the Local Plan\(^{13}\). Also, the Thameslink line is mainly in tunnel at this point.

Our Holloway area is bounded to the west by the A1 (Holloway Road), to the south by the A1199 (St Paul’s Road) and to the north by the A503 (Seven Sisters Road), all providing for clear boundaries by busy roads with limited crossing points.

We consider the current Finsbury Park and Highbury West wards are perhaps the most unsatisfactory in the borough, with the former crossing over both branches of the A503, and the latter containing a residential area to the west of the Emirates Stadium which is divided from the rest of the ward by the stadium and by railway lines. We consider this review affords an opportunity to create a more satisfactory pattern.

We note the present Finsbury Park ward crosses both Hornsey Rise and Seven Sisters Road but we feel these, particularly the latter, are more in the nature of barriers between communities than focal points. We particularly use the Nag’s Head town centre as both a northern and a western boundary of the Highbury area.

**Highbury West**

We propose a two-member ward bounded on the north by Seven Sisters Road, the west by Holloway Road and to the south by the Northern City line as far as Drayton Park, and thence to Holloway Road.

This therefore places all of Highbury west of the Emirates Stadium and Gillespie Park into one ward and recognises how those two places, along with the rail lines, divide this part of Highbury from the
rest of Highbury. There are no bus routes running from this part of Highbury to any other part of Highbury. The proposed ward contains the Harvist and Ringcross Estates but is otherwise defined by rows of two- and three-storey terraced houses, except for the area south of the railway line which is almost exclusively student accommodation associated with London Metropolitan University; in defining this ward we have sought to keep all that student accommodation together.

**Gillespie and Highbury East**

The rest of Highbury to the east of the railway lines and the Emirates Stadium is almost exclusively residential and there are few clear lines or boundaries of a similar nature which plainly divide communities. We therefore have had to use judgment in dividing Highbury into wards.

The one road in the area which we would suggest could clearly be used as a strong ward boundary is the A1201 (Highbury Grove and Highbury Park) through the shopping area at Highbury Barn. Although this is not a major A-road, we consider any alternative boundary would unnecessarily divide communities.

We would deviate from the A1201 in two places. To the south-east we have used Highbury Fields as the boundary. Highbury Fields is the largest park in the borough although as we note above it is only 29 acres in area. Highbury Fields forms a rough ‘figure of 8’ with its narrowest point where it is bisected by Highbury Crescent, which can be walked in two minutes. The park runs for roughly half a mile from Christ Church Highbury on Highbury Grove in the north to Highbury Corner in the south. It marks a clear divide in architectural style from the four-storey Georgian houses on Highbury Crescent in the west to the red brick terraces of Liberia Road and Calabria Road to the east.

Excluding the Calabria Road area from our Highbury East ward impacts electoral equality. To compensate we would therefore include the area immediately north of the Quadrant estate (Riversdale Road and the roads running north off it).

This leaves us with an area roughly to the west of the A1201 entitled to four councillors and an area to the east entitled to five.

We have divided the western area along the boundary of the properties on the northern side of Aubert Park, leaving Aubert Court, Drakeley Court and Tawney Court in the southern ward, and then along Avenell Road and Conewood Street. We consider this allows for a good degree of electoral equality while not dividing the estates in the area.

**Mildmay and Quadrant**

This then leaves us with the area east of the A1201 (with the two exceptions noted above) and north of the A1199. Presently this area is divided between Mildmay ward, and the part of Highbury East ward east of Highbury Fields.

We do not consider major change to either of these wards necessary. We indeed consider the Highbury East ward has a greater community focus with the area west of Highbury Fields omitted. As we have already named the ward around Drayton Park and Highbury Hill as Highbury East, we would rename the ward Quadrant which was the name prior to 2002.
We have made a minor adjustment to the current boundary between Highbury East and Mildmay, moving the boundary to the centre of Highbury New Park, thereby moving the Park View estate into Mildmay. This puts the properties on the western side of Green Lane immediately north of Petherton Green into the same ward (Mildmay) as Petherton Road, rather than leaving them marooned as an isolated park of Highbury East/Quadrant ward, as they are at present.
This leaves the northern part of the borough, an area bounded to the south by the A503.

The forecast electorate for the North area in 2024 is approximately 46,991 which entitles it to 14.23 councillors (presently SHYA polling district is split between our North area and our Lower Holloway area). We have decided to allocate 14 councillors here.

Within this area the A1 and A103 run north-south. We have noted above that the A1 forms a three- and four-lane highway barrier through the borough and this remains the case (in fact more so) as it
becomes Archway Road north of Archway. The A103 is nothing like this, being a two-lane highway and a lot more residential, but it still constitutes a clear boundary between the communities to its east and west.

Our northern area is also effectively bisected by the Gospel Oak to Barking railway line which runs east-west here. Only the A1, A103, A1201, and two side streets (Nugent Road and Ormond Road) cross this line within the borough.

We have therefore sought to respect these clear barriers between communities in creating new wards, although the needs of electoral equality have forced us to deviate from them in some areas.

It is through coincidence, rather than design, that the natural boundaries in this area divide the area into parts entitled to even numbers of councillors and that therefore all the wards proposed here are two-member wards.

**Tollington and Highview**

The five current polling districts north of Seven Sisters Road, and east of Hornsey Rise and Sunnyside Road (NHRC, NTOB, NTOC, NFPC, and NFPD) have a forecast electorate in 2024 of 14,341 which entitles it to 4.34 councillors. If the area were divided into a number of wards with a combined allocation of four councillors, those wards would on average be 8.6% above the borough average.

We would therefore remove the area between Hornsey Rise and Sunnyside Road (i.e. New Orleans Walk) which improves electoral equality and makes use of the more significant A103 as a ward boundary.

The present boundary between Finsbury Park and Tollington wards runs along the boundary of the properties on the southern side of Tollington Park. This essentially divides a residential community. We will have to continue to divide the community around Tollington Park, but we will have to move the boundary northwards to achieve electoral equality. We consider that Wray Crescent Open Space and, to the east, the grounds of Christ the King Primary School and the Arts and Media School Islington, form a more satisfactory boundary between the residential areas to the north and south, although to the east of this we have to continue the ward boundary along the boundary of the properties to the north of Tollington Park.

This divides the area east of Hornsey Rise into two wards which have reasonable electoral equality and a clearer boundary. The southern ward (Tollington) contains the large Andover and Six Acres estates; the northern ward (Highview) contains the Holly Park estate but is principally composed of terraced housing.

**St George’s and Tufnell Park**

The four current polling districts north of Camden Road and Pankhurst Road, west of Holloway Road and south of the Gospel Oak to Barking line (NJUB, NSGA, NSGB, and NSGC) have a forecast electorate in 2024 of 12,292 which entitles it to 3.72 councillors. If the area were divided into a number of wards with a combined allocation of four councillors, those wards would on average be 6.9% below the borough average.
We note however that we transferred the triangle formed by Camden Road, Pankhurst Road and Holloway Road, which includes the Holloway and Williamson Street estates, out of Lower Holloway and into our northern area and therefore those electors must be included in this area. This improves electoral equality.

**Sussex**

Our proposals for wards east of Hornsey Rise and west of Holloway Road in this area leaves a narrow strip between those two A-roads. We note that the two polling districts here south of the Gospel Oak to Barking line (NFPB, and NTOA) have a forecast electorate in 2024 of 6,959 which entitles it to 2.11 councillors. This area is therefore the right size to constitute a ward while having strong boundaries.

**Hillrise and Junction**

Within the remaining area of the borough we should have sought to retain the A1 as a boundary but this is not possible compatible with electoral equality. We have continued to include the Grovedale Estate and the streets south-west of Ashbrook Road in the Junction ward but this creates other problems with electoral equality. To compensate for this we have moved the northern boundary of Junction ward from the A1 to the B519 (Highgate Hill) thereby moving Waterlow Road, Despard Road etc. into Hillrise.
List of wards

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