

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
LAMBETH

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

June 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

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



Local Government Commission for England

22 June 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 23 June 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Lambeth under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in January 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 104-105) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Lambeth.

We recommend that Lambeth Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors representing 21 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

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

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Lambeth on 23 June 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 26 January 1999, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

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

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

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

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 104-105) are that:

- **Lambeth Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors, compared to 64 at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, one fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.**

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

- **In 20 of the 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 8 per cent from the borough average, although Bishop's ward would initially vary by 31 per cent.**
- **This level of electoral equality is forecast to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 2 August 1999:

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

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)
1 Bishop's	3	Bishop's ward (part)
2 Brixton Hill	3	St Martin's ward (part); Town Hall ward (part); Tulse Hill ward (part)
3 Clapham Common	3	Clapham Park ward (part); Thornton ward (part)
4 Clapham Town	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
5 Coldharbour	3	Angell ward (part); Herne Hill ward (part); Tulse Hill ward (part)
6 Ferndale	3	Ferndale ward (part)
7 Gipsy Hill	3	Gipsy Hill ward; Knight's Hill ward (part)
8 Herne Hill	3	Angell ward (part); Herne Hill ward (part); Tulse Hill ward (part)
9 Knight's Hill	3	Knight's Hill ward (part); Thurlow Park ward (part)
10 Larkhall	3	Ferndale ward (part); Larkhall ward
11 Oval	3	Oval ward (part); Vassall ward (part)
12 Prince's	3	Bishop's ward (part); Prince's ward
13 St Leonard's	3	St Leonard's ward (part)
14 Stockwell	3	Stockwell ward; Vassall ward (part)
15 Streatham Hill	3	St Martin's ward (part); Streatham Hill ward (part)
16 Streatham South	3	St Leonard's ward (part); Streatham South ward
17 Streatham Wells	3	Streatham Wells ward (part)
18 Thornton	3	Clapham Park ward (part); Streatham Hill ward (part); Thornton ward (part); Town Hall ward (part)
19 Thurlow Park	3	St Martin's ward (part); Thurlow Park ward (part)
20 Tulse Hill	3	St Martin's ward (part); Town Hall ward (part); Tulse Hill ward (part)
21 Vassall	3	Oval ward (part); Vassall ward (part)

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

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lambeth

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Bishop's	3	6,039	2,013	-31	8,835	2,945	-3
2 Brixton Hill	3	8,840	2,947	1	9,446	3,149	3
3 Clapham Common	3	8,522	2,841	-3	8,817	2,939	-4
4 Clapham Town	3	8,870	2,957	1	9,022	3,007	-1
5 Coldharbour	3	9,288	3,096	6	9,517	3,172	4
6 Ferndale	3	8,842	2,947	1	9,226	3,075	1
7 Gypsy Hill	3	9,031	3,010	3	9,215	3,072	1
8 Herne Hill	3	9,460	3,153	8	9,495	3,165	4
9 Knight's Hill	3	8,980	2,993	3	9,100	3,033	-1
10 Larkhall	3	9,266	3,089	6	9,325	3,108	2
11 Oval	3	8,298	2,766	-5	8,884	2,961	-3
12 Prince's	3	8,119	2,706	-7	9,175	3,058	0
13 St Leonard's	3	8,967	2,989	3	9,192	3,064	0
14 Stockwell	3	8,981	2,994	3	9,053	3,018	-1
15 Streatham Hill	3	9,095	3,032	4	9,230	3,077	1
16 Streatham South	3	8,837	2,946	1	8,919	2,973	-3
17 Streatham Wells	3	8,899	2,966	2	9,298	3,099	2
18 Thornton	3	9,055	3,018	4	9,125	3,042	0
19 Thurlow Park	3	8,688	2,896	-1	8,859	2,953	-3
20 Tulse Hill	3	8,803	2,934	1	9,439	3,146	3
21 Vassall	3	8,815	2,938	1	8,931	2,977	-2
Totals	63	183,695	—	—	192,103	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,916	—	—	3,049	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Lambeth Borough Council.

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

1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

5 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the borough as a whole. Wherever possible we try to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

6 We are not prescriptive on council size but, as indicated in our *Guidance*, would expect the overall number of members on a London borough council usually to be between 40 and 80. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that borough but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a borough's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other boroughs.

The London Boroughs

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

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

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies

of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we welcomed the opportunity to meet with chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the 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.

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

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

12 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the London boroughs, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain the approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would no doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in

formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. Our general experience has been that proposals for three-member ward patterns emerged from most areas in London.

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

The Review of Lambeth

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Lambeth. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1977 (Report No. 257).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 23 June 1998, when we wrote to Lambeth Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 28 September 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 Stage Three began on 26 January 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lambeth*, and ended on 22 March 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

17 The borough of Lambeth came into being in 1965 as part of local government reorganisation in London. The borough stretches from Streatham in the south to Waterloo International Station and the river Thames in the north, and includes among others the settlements of Brixton and Clapham. Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, is located within the borough, as are the South Bank Centre, the Old Vic Theatre, the National Theatre, the Royal Festival Hall and the Oval Cricket Ground.

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

19 The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 183,695. The Council currently has 64 councillors who are elected from 22 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Twenty wards are each represented by three councillors and two wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

20 Since the last electoral review, there has been a slight decrease in electorate in the borough, although the electorate is now increasing again, partly as a result of extensive residential developments in the north of the borough. At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,870 electors, which the Council forecasts would increase to 3,002 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in four of the 22 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in one ward by

more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Prince's ward where each of the three councillors represent on average 27 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

*Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Angell	3	7,566	2,522	-12	7,664	2,555	-15
2 Bishop's	3	7,880	2,627	-8	11,104	3,701	23
3 Clapham Park	3	9,625	3,208	12	9,920	3,307	10
4 Clapham Town	3	8,870	2,957	3	9,022	3,007	0
5 Ferndale	3	9,443	3,148	10	9,827	3,276	9
6 Gipsy Hill	3	8,791	2,930	2	8,975	2,992	0
7 Herne Hill	3	8,401	2,800	-2	8,427	2,809	-6
8 Knight's Hill	3	9,220	3,073	7	9,340	3,113	4
9 Larkhall	3	8,665	2,888	1	8,724	2,908	-3
10 Oval	3	8,735	2,912	1	9,324	3,108	4
11 Prince's	3	6,278	2,093	-27	6,906	2,302	-23
12 St Leonard's	3	8,321	2,774	-3	8,546	2,849	-5
13 St Martin's	3	7,823	2,608	-9	8,359	2,786	-7
14 Stockwell	3	7,856	2,619	-9	7,916	2,639	-12
15 Streatham Hill	3	9,219	3,073	7	9,539	3,120	4
16 Streatham South	3	8,508	2,836	-1	8,590	2,863	-5
17 Streatham Wells	3	9,874	3,291	15	10,273	3,424	14
18 Thornton	2	6,109	3,055	6	6,174	3,087	3
19 Thurlow Park	2	5,588	2,794	-3	5,670	2,835	-6
20 Town Hall	3	9,082	3,027	5	9,282	3,094	3
21 Tulse Hill	3	8,338	2,779	-3	9,074	3,025	1

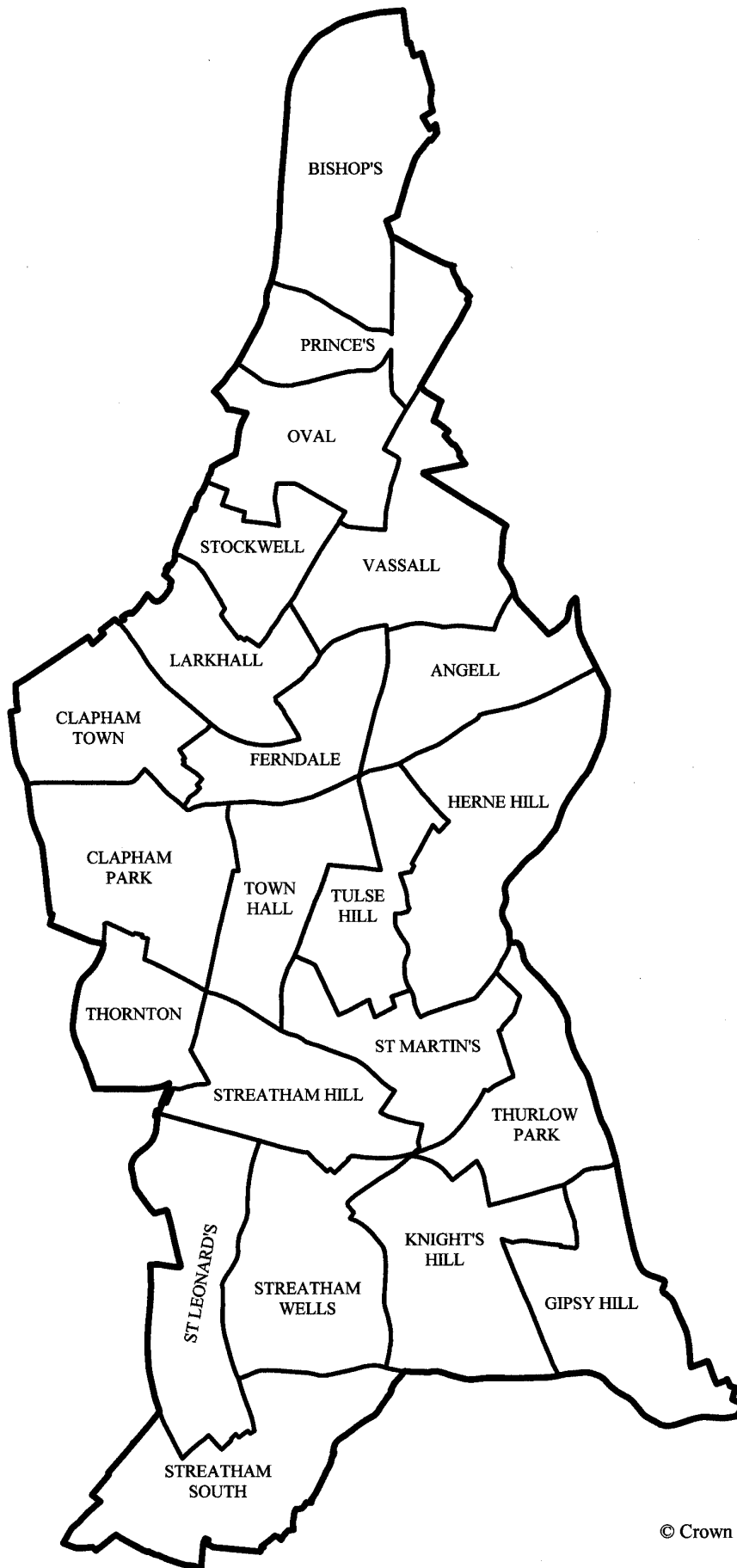
Figure 3 continued:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
22 Vassall	3	9,503	3,168	10	9,627	3,209	7
Totals	64	183,695	—	—	192,103	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,870	—	—	3,002	—

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Prince's ward were relatively over-represented by 27 per cent, while electors in Streatham Wells ward were relatively under-represented by 15 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Lambeth



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3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

21 During Stage One we received six representations, from the Borough Council, the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council and from four local political associations. The Council and the Liberal Democrat Group both submitted borough-wide schemes. In light of these representations and the evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lambeth*.

22 Our draft recommendations were based on the Liberal Democrat Group's scheme, which achieved improved electoral equality having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate, generally provided good boundaries and which proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. However, we moved away from the scheme in three areas, affecting six wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Lambeth Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors;
- (b) there should be 21 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.

Draft Recommendation

Lambeth Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards.

23 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 20 of the 21 wards varying by no more than 8 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the borough average in 2003.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

24 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 14 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Lambeth Borough Council and the Commission, by appointment.

Lambeth Borough Council

25 The Borough Council stated that, in general terms, it was “prepared to accept” our draft proposals for 21 three member wards. It also restated its support for the original electorate projections which were submitted at the start of the review, adding that the projections were endorsed by all three political groups on the Council. The Council suggested a few relatively minor modifications to the proposed ward boundaries and also put forward some alternative ward names.

Lambeth Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group

26 The Liberal Democrat Group endorsed the draft recommendations, and re-stated its support for the electorate projections. Like the Council, the Group proposed some relatively minor modifications to some ward boundaries and ward names.

Other Representations

27 Five representations were received from local political associations. The Vauxhall Constituency Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations within the Vauxhall constituency, including in relation to the electorate projections. The Streatham Liberal Democrats broadly supported the draft recommendations, but suggested a ward name change and two relatively minor boundary modifications.

28 The Angell Ward Labour Party argued that our draft proposals would lead to electors in the current Angell ward being represented in three different parliamentary constituencies. The Vauxhall

Constituency Labour Party (VCLP) was “disappointed” that the Council’s initial proposals had not been adopted, and proposed some alternative ward names. The Bishop’s ward branch of the VCLP was pleased that it was proposed to retain the Bishop’s ward name, but argued that the Ethelred Estate area should not be transferred to Prince’s ward. It also queried the electorate projections for Bishop’s ward.

29 Councillor Boodram, who represents Bishop’s ward, strongly opposed our draft recommendations in the northern part of the borough. He argued that the electorate projections were too high in this area, given the types of properties being constructed and the limited scope, in his view, for further development. He also stated that the draft recommendations would “split the very large and cohesive Ethelred Estate, which has a strong common identity” between Bishop’s and Prince’s wards. Councillor Boodram’s views were endorsed by another member for Bishop’s ward, Councillor Bourne, and by an individual.

30 A further four representations were received regarding the Lambeth review. Councillor Doven, who represents Clapham Park ward, suggested that the modified ward in that area should bear the name Clapham Common. The Camberwell Society agreed with the statement in our *Draft Recommendations* that the eastern part of the present Angell ward looks to Camberwell, but believed that the proposed ward name of Coldharbour could be misleading. A resident from Streatham broadly endorsed our draft recommendations for that area of the borough, while an individual generally agreed with our proposals for Lambeth but suggested some alternative ward names.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

33 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.

34 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will

require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance over 10 per cent in any ward. In reviews of predominantly urban areas such as the London boroughs, our experience suggests that we would expect to achieve a high degree of electoral equality in all wards.

Electorate Forecasts

35 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 4.6 per cent from 183,695 to 192,103 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. It expected much of the growth to be in the north of the borough, particularly in Bishop’s ward, which was expected to increase by more than 3,000 electors over the five-year period. Four other wards – two in the north and two in the centre of the borough – were projected to increase by more than 500 electors. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

36 In our draft recommendations report we explained that, in view of the particularly large electorate increase which was forecast for Bishop’s ward, we had examined the methodology used to calculate the electorate projections and the assumptions on which they were based. The Council had stated that it used an assumption of two electors per household for new developments and that this was broadly consistent with other London boroughs involved in the PER process. Although both the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group expressed some doubts over the accuracy of the figures as they related to Bishop’s ward, both formally supported the projections.

37 We expressed some concerns about the projections for Bishop's ward, but accepted that forecasting electorates is an inexact science. We were satisfied that the Council's figures were the best estimates available to us, but we invited further representations on this matter.

38 During Stage Three, the Council re-iterated its view that the electorate projections were the best available, and noted that this view was endorsed by all three political groups on the Council. The Liberal Democrat Group and the Vauxhall Constituency Liberal Democrats also formally supported the projections in their submissions.

39 However, the Bishop's ward branch of the Vauxhall Constituency Labour Party, Councillors Boodram and Bourne and an individual all opposed the projections in respect of the Bishop's ward area. Councillor Boodram stated that the projections were "grossly optimistic and to some extent incredible." He argued that "many office buildings have been converted to very luxurious top of the range units. However, this cycle is now almost complete and the potential for further quick development has almost reached its end... Therefore the rate of growth being suggested based upon prior trends cannot be used as an accurate indicator."

40 Councillor Boodram believed that the 'multiplier' of two residents per property which was used in the methodology of the electorate projections was on the high side. "Given the nature of the properties, the niche market is extremely limited and targeted to affluent individuals, [who] if the economic cycle swings downwards, may move out of Bishop's ward altogether." He concluded by stating that as most of the properties concerned were company lets or investments, the multiplier should be "much less than two."

41 The 1999 electoral roll was published during the consultation period. This enabled us to analyse the actual changes in electorate in Bishop's ward over one year. We noted that the 1998 electorate of 7,880 had increased by some 403 electors to 8,283 by this year. In our view this neither proves nor disproves the Council's projections. If this rate of increase continued until 2003, there would be approximately 10,000 electors in the present Bishop's ward by that time, against the 11,104 forecast by the Council.

42 However, the rate of increase may well change for a variety of reasons, such as the effect of the economic cycle on changes in the rate of completion of new units. We have some sympathy for the views expressed by Councillor Boodram and supported by Councillor Bourne. The types of new development in Bishop's ward do seem to us to be different from most other housing developments in the borough, as they comprise primarily the conversion of former office blocks, such as the Shell building. We also acknowledge that there are a number of reasons why the anticipated increase in electorate may not happen at exactly the rate predicted by the Council. However, none of the respondents felt able to provide alternative forecasts.

43 It is particularly difficult to forecast electorate growth in Bishop's ward. The type and size of housing unit that is being developed there makes it impossible, in our view, to use any multiplier with complete confidence. The Council is clear that its projections remain the best estimate, and that view is shared by all three political groups on the Council. We are content that the forecasts are within an acceptable range, and that it is appropriate that we should base our final recommendations upon them.

Council Size

44 We indicated in our *Guidance* that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80. As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government.

45 Lambeth Borough Council currently has 64 members. At Stage One the Council proposed a council size of 60 while the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council proposed a council size of 63. Both submissions supported a pattern of three-member wards across the borough. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 63 members.

46 At Stage Three, the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group both concurred with our draft

recommendation for a council size of 63. In view of this consensus and the lack of any alternative views, we are confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 63 as final.

Ward Names

47 Ward names have proved relatively uncontroversial during this review, although a number of comments were received on this issue during Stage Three. As part of our draft recommendations we proposed retaining the majority of existing ward names in Lambeth, with only two proposed wards – Coldharbour and Brixton Hill – being given new names. Having considered the comments received during Stage Three, we are proposing to endorse all but one of our draft recommendations in respect of ward names. We propose that the Clapham Park ward name should be changed to Clapham Common (see also later paragraphs).

Electoral Arrangements

48 As stated above, the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council agreed during Stage Three that there should in future be a council size of 63 for Lambeth, based on the Liberal Democrat Group's Stage One proposals. The Council stated that, broadly, it was "prepared to accept" the draft proposals. While a number of comments were received on issues such as electorate projections, ward names and boundaries, no respondent specifically opposed our proposals for an entire pattern of three-member wards or for an overall council size of 63.

49 Our *Draft Recommendations* report for Lambeth set out in some detail our reasons for broadly endorsing the Liberal Democrat Group's Stage One scheme as our draft recommendations. We have reviewed the draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. We judge that while relatively minor modifications should be made to a number of our proposed ward boundaries, and that there should be one ward name change, the general thrust of the proposals should be confirmed as final. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Bishop's and Prince's wards;
- (b) Oval, Stockwell and Vassall wards;

- (c) Clapham Town, Ferndale and Larkhall wards;
- (d) Angell, Herne Hill, St Martin's and Tulse Hill wards;
- (e) Clapham Park, Thornton and Town Hall wards;
- (f) Gipsy Hill, Knight's Hill and Thurlow Park wards;
- (g) St Leonard's, Streatham Hill, Streatham South and Streatham Wells wards.

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

Bishop's and Prince's wards

51 The three-member Bishop's ward is the most northerly in the borough, lies on the south bank of the river Thames and contains Waterloo Station. It is dominated by office buildings, many of which have been empty for several years and are in the process of being converted into residential use. The ward has an electorate of 7,880 and is slightly over-represented at present, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 8 per cent. However, as explained earlier in this chapter, there is substantial growth forecast for the ward with a projected electorate of 11,104 by 2003. This increase in electorate (of more than 40 per cent) would result in the ward being the most under-represented ward in the borough in five years time with an electoral variance of 23 per cent.

52 The three-member Prince's ward, which lies immediately to the south of Bishop's ward, has an electorate of 6,278 and is presently the most over-represented ward in the borough, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 27 per cent. A projected increase of 628 electors would result in this high level of over-representation being improved only slightly, with the ward continuing to be the most over-represented in the borough with an electoral variance of 23 per cent in 2003.

53 In order to take account of the large projected increase in electorate in the north of the borough, the Liberal Democrat Group proposed transferring the whole of the VAE polling district (which contains 1,804 electors) from Bishop's ward into Prince's ward. No other changes were proposed for this area. Under a 63-member council size, the number of electors per councillor in the modified Bishop's and Prince's wards would initially vary by

31 per cent and 8 per below the borough average respectively. However, this level of electoral equality would be substantially improved by 2003, when the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below and equal to the borough average respectively.

54 The main issue throughout the review in this part of the borough has been the extent of the projected increase in electorate. As discussed above in the paragraphs on electorate projections, we have decided that we should endorse the Council's electorate projections, although we acknowledge that it is particularly difficult to forecast electorate growth in Bishop's ward. As described in our *Draft Recommendations*, given the projected increase in electorate, the transfer of polling district VAE appeared to be the best way of resolving the high level of over-representation in the present Prince's ward and the projected level of under-representation in Bishop's ward.

55 During Stage Three both the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group supported our draft proposals for this area. However, Councillors Boodram and Bourne, together with the Bishop's ward branch of the Vauxhall Constituency Labour Party, opposed the transfer of polling district VAE. These respondents argued that the proposed boundary between the revised Bishop's and Prince's wards would divide the community of the Ethelred Estate between wards.

56 In view of these comments, we examined this area further and sought additional information from the Council. The Ethelred Estate, according to mapping supplied by the Council, consists of two geographically separate parts. The majority of the Estate is situated between Black Prince Road and Lollard Street. The other part of the Estate lies further north, to the north of Fitzalan Street. Our draft recommendations would retain the latter part of the Estate in Bishop's ward and transfer the majority of the remaining part to a revised Prince's ward.

57 Given the fact that the Estate is already split into two separate parts and that our proposed ward boundary in this area would result in a good level of electoral equality (having regard to the five year forecast of electorate) we do not propose to substantially modify our draft recommendations. However, in order to include the whole of the

larger part of the Estate within one ward, we propose modifying the draft recommendation such that Saperton Walk (containing 37 electors) be transferred to a revised Prince's ward. The proposed ward boundary along Fitzalan Street would be retained.

58 Other than this relatively minor modification, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for revised Bishop's and Prince's wards as final. Although we received some comments on ward names, both the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group were content for the present names to be retained. We concur with this view. Both proposed wards are projected to have electoral variances of 3 per cent or less in five years time and a clearly identifiable ward boundary would be secured. Our final recommendations for revised Bishop's and Prince's wards are illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

Oval, Stockwell and Vassall wards

59 The three-member Oval ward has an electorate of 8,735, the number of electors per councillor presently varying from the borough average by 1 per cent (4 per cent in 2003). The three-member Stockwell ward is over-represented: it has an electorate of 7,856 and the number of electors per councillor presently varies by 9 per cent from the borough average. A small projected increase in electorate for the ward is expected to result in an electoral variance of 12 per cent in 2003. The three-member Vassall ward is under-represented: it has an electorate of 9,503 and the number of electors per councillor presently varies from the borough average by 10 per cent (7 per cent in 2003).

60 The Liberal Democrat Group's Stage One submission noted that the area of Oval ward which lies to the east of Clapham Road is somewhat cut-off from the rest of the ward. However, it argued that to include all this area with Vassall ward could result in disruption to neighbouring wards, with main roads needing to be crossed to produce wards with good electoral equality. The Group therefore proposed only a minor modification to the boundary between Oval and Vassall wards, in order to unite the whole of the Caldwell Estate (which is presently divided between the two wards) within a single ward.

61 The Liberal Democrat Group also proposed transferring the whole of the VEA polling district from the south-western part of Vassall ward into Stockwell ward in order to improve the levels of electoral equality. The Group contended that this area shares links with Stockwell, not only with regard to road and estate names but also in its shared proximity to Stockwell London Underground Station. While acknowledging that their proposed Vassall ward would be 'a slightly under-sized' ward, the Liberal Democrats believed their scheme to be the best solution for the area and argued that any further adjustments would be at the expense of electoral equality in neighbouring wards. Under the Liberal Democrats' scheme the revised wards of Oval, Stockwell and Vassall would vary from the average number of electors per councillor by 2 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively (equal to the borough average, 1 per cent and 5 per cent by 2003).

62 In view of our proposals for the north of the borough, and that the Council's proposals for this area were not compatible with our scheme, we put forward the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals with a minor boundary modification. The modification would further improve electoral equality in Vassall ward, resulting in an electoral variance of 1 per cent initially and 2 per cent by 2003. Oval ward would vary by 5 per cent (3 per cent by 2003). We were content to propose this amendment because ward boundaries would be improved upon and the highest degree of electoral inequality by 2003 would be 3 per cent, rather than 5 per cent.

63 During Stage Three, the Liberal Democrat Group accepted our modification to its scheme for these three wards, which it acknowledged would lead to an improvement to their original proposals in terms of electoral equality. Furthermore it felt that our proposal would not disrupt community identities. The Vauxhall Constituency Liberal Democrat Party also supported our proposals within that constituency.

64 The Council, in its Stage Three submission, did not propose any boundary modification to our draft recommendations for these three wards, other than arguing that the Vassall ward was an inappropriate name for the ward since only a small part of Vassall Road runs through the proposed ward. It argued that the proposed ward is made

from a series of localities and accordingly it reiterated its preference for naming the proposed ward North Brixton, a proposal which also had the support of the Vauxhall Constituency Labour Party. The Liberal Democrat Group remarked in its Stage Three submission that Vassall Road is one of the major routes through the ward, although it proposed Myatts Fields as a possible alternative ward name.

65 We have carefully considered the representations received during the consultation period. We remain of the view that our draft recommendations would provide for the best level of electoral equality, having regard to well-defined boundaries and communities. On balance, we continue to feel that it would be most appropriate for the modified Vassall ward to retain the current ward name. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for the three wards as final, as illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Clapham Town, Ferndale and Larkhall wards

66 The three-member Clapham Town ward has an electorate of 8,870. The number of electors per councillor varies from the borough average by 3 per cent. Electoral equality is expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor projected to equal the borough average by 2003. The three-member Larkhall ward has an electorate of 8,665. The number of electors per councillor varies from the borough average by 1 per cent (projected to be 3 per cent in 2003). The three-member Ferndale ward, with an electorate of 9,443, is presently under-represented and varies from the average number of electors per councillor by 10 per cent (9 per cent in 2003).

67 At Stage One, the Liberal Democrat Group proposed no change to the electoral arrangements of all three of these wards. Based on a 63-member council size, the Clapham Town ward would remain well represented, varying from the average number of electors per councillor by 1 per cent both initially and in 2003. However, the Ferndale ward would remain under-represented (8 per cent initially, 7 per cent by 2003) while the Larkhall ward would become somewhat over-represented, varying by 1 per cent initially but 5 per cent by 2003.

68 The Council put forward alternative boundaries for its proposed Clapham Town and Ferndale wards and proposed that the latter should be renamed West Brixton ward. The Council also proposed at Stage One that Larkhall ward should be extended to incorporate the central and southern parts of the present Stockwell ward and that the resultant ward be renamed Stockwell. The Council's revised Clapham Town ward and new West Brixton ward would initially vary from the average number of electors per councillor by 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively, improving to being equal to the average and varying by 1 per cent by 2003. However, its proposed Stockwell ward would be considerably under-represented: the number of electors per councillor in the ward would initially vary by 22 per cent from the borough average, with only a marginal improvement (to 18 per cent) by 2003.

69 The Council's proposed Stockwell ward would be considerably under-represented, with a level of electoral inequality, having regard to the five-year forecast of electorate, higher than we are prepared to accept for an urban area such as Lambeth. As explained earlier, we are proposing a council size of 63 as put forward by the Liberal Democrats and therefore used their proposals as the basis of our draft recommendations in this area. However, we were of the view that further improvements to electoral equality were achievable by a relatively straightforward modification to the boundary between Ferndale and Larkhall wards.

70 In order to improve electoral equality between these wards, we proposed in our draft recommendations transferring 601 electors (from an area to the north-east of South Western Hospital) from Ferndale ward to Larkhall ward. The number of electors per councillor in the modified Ferndale and Larkhall wards would vary respectively from the borough average by 1 per cent and 2 per cent by 2003. This modification would secure an identifiable boundary in addition to improving electoral equality in the two wards. We supported the proposal for an unchanged Clapham Town ward, given the good level of electoral equality that would result.

71 At Stage Three, the Liberal Democrats supported our proposal to transfer an additional 601 electors from Ferndale ward to Larkhall ward which, they commented, would provide for better levels of long-term electoral equality within both

wards, as well as supporting our proposal for an unchanged Clapham Town ward. The Council were also content to accept our proposals for these wards.

72 Given the general endorsement of our draft recommendations in this area by the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group, we remain of the view that our draft recommendations would achieve the best electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Clapham Town, Ferndale and Larkhall wards, which are illustrated on the large map inserted at the back of the report, as final.

Angell, Herne Hill, St Martin's and Tulse Hill wards

73 Currently, the three-member wards of Angell, Herne Hill, St Martin's and Tulse Hill are all over-represented by varying degrees. The number of electors per councillor varies from the borough average by 12 per cent, 2 per cent, 9 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. Although the Tulse Hill ward is forecast to improve to just 1 per cent from the average by 2003, the other three wards in this part of the borough would remain over-represented; Angell by 15 per cent, Herne Hill by 6 per cent and St Martin's by 7 per cent.

74 At Stage One, the Council proposed creating a new 'East Brixton' ward by adding electors from the south-eastern part of Vassall ward to the whole of the present Angell ward. It also proposed adding a part of the north-eastern corner of Tulse Hill ward to an enlarged Herne Hill ward, and creating a revised Tulse Hill ward through the addition of the north-eastern part of Town Hall ward, with the ward being renamed 'South Brixton'. The Council also proposed at Stage One that the St Martin's ward be abolished and its eastern part added to a revised three-member Thurlow Park ward.

75 Like the Council, the Liberal Democrats' Stage One scheme also proposed abolishing St Martin's ward. They suggested splitting it between four revised wards, those of Tulse Hill, Brixton Hill (Town Hall), Streatham Hill and Thurlow Park, as well as revising Angell and Herne Hill wards to improve electoral equality. The Group argued that these two wards had different focuses within them. They stated that, for example, the northern and eastern parts of Herne Hill ward together with the

eastern part of Angell ward look towards Camberwell and Dulwich, in the neighbouring borough of Southwark, whereas western parts of Angell ward and the Moorlands Estate in the western part of Herne Hill ward may look more towards Brixton town centre.

76 The Liberal Democrats' Stage One submission attempted to reflect these perceived community identities in this area, in a manner which would fit in with their overall electoral scheme for Lambeth and secure good levels of electoral equality. They proposed creating a new Coldharbour ward, by placing electors from the western part of Herne Hill ward with those from the western part of Angell ward and from the north-eastern part of Tulse Hill ward. The Moorlands Estate, which is effectively isolated from the rest of the present Herne Hill ward by the two sets of railway lines that meet at Herne Hill Station, would be included in the new ward. The ward name of Coldharbour was suggested because of the name of the main road running broadly east to west through the middle of the proposed ward.

77 As a consequence of their proposals for a new Coldharbour ward, the Liberal Democrat Group proposed that the remainder of the present Angell ward should be included in a revised Herne Hill ward. In order to account for the loss of the north-eastern part of Tulse Hill ward to the proposed Coldharbour ward, the Liberal Democrats also proposed that the north-eastern part of Town Hall ward, together with the central part of St Martin's ward, should be placed within a modified Tulse Hill ward. These proposals would result in the proposed wards of Coldharbour, Herne Hill and Tulse Hill varying from the average number of electors per councillor by 9 per cent, 5 per cent and 1 per cent respectively (7 per cent, 1 per cent and 3 per cent by 2003).

78 The Stage One submission from the Council, while it was broadly acceptable with regard to this specific part of the borough, did not fit with the overall warding pattern for the borough as a whole. Consequently, we broadly accepted the Liberal Democrats' proposals for this area as our draft recommendations, including its proposal for a revised Tulse Hill ward without modification. However, we proposed a modification to the boundary between the proposed Coldharbour and Herne Hill wards, transferring the Barnwell Road

and Morval Road areas from the southern part of the proposed Coldharbour ward to Herne Hill ward, which would further improve electoral equality overall.

79 Our modifications resulted in the number of electors per councillor in both the modified Coldharbour and Herne Hill wards varying from the borough average by 4 per cent by 2003 without, in our view, having a detrimental impact on local community identities. In our *Draft Recommendations* we asked for comments relating to our proposals for this area, in particular regarding the proposed ward name of 'Coldharbour'.

80 At Stage Three we received a submission from the Angell Ward Labour Party. It argued that our proposals for Angell ward would result in a large movement of electors between parliamentary constituencies and borough wards. We acknowledge that our draft recommendations do not take into account parliamentary boundaries and the difficulties which, in the short term, may result. Our Guidance states that "we are not required to have regard to parliamentary constituency boundaries in developing our recommendations for new wards or changes to existing wards. Indeed, in order to address levels of electoral imbalance within a local authority area, it may be necessary to recommend a pattern of ward boundaries which does not coincide with constituency boundaries. These new ward boundaries will then be taken into account by the Boundary Commission in its review of parliamentary constituencies."

81 During Stage Three, the Camberwell Society, the Vauxhall Constituency Labour Party (VCLP) and a resident commented on the proposed name of Coldharbour ward. The resident stated that the ward could be named either Angell or Loughborough, which both have local connotations, since a sizeable part of Coldharbour Lane falls outside the boundaries of the proposed ward. The Camberwell Society suggested that the revised ward could alternatively be named Brixton Station or Brixton East (the name of a former rail station), while the VCLP also proposed the name of Brixton East for the ward. The Liberal Democrat Group commented that, if there were strong objections raised to the name of Herne Hill ward, a suitable alternative could be Ruskin ward, named after a park located in the centre of the proposed ward.

82 We have given careful consideration to the views expressed to us during the consultation stage, including the alternatives suggested for ward names. In the case of Coldharbour ward, the fact that a number of alternatives have been proposed for the ward suggests to us that there is no single name that can appropriately be applied to this area and for this reason we are reticent to alter our draft recommendations. Similarly, we are content with our draft recommendation for the name of Herne Hill ward, although we acknowledge that Ruskin may also be appropriate.

83 While we acknowledge the points raised by the Angell Ward Labour Party regarding parliamentary constituencies, we are of the view that our draft recommendations in this area are appropriate. The alternative ward boundaries put forward in the submission are not entirely compatible with our proposals elsewhere in the borough, nor would optimum electoral equality be attained. Given the general support of the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group, we have concluded that our draft proposals in this part of the borough should be confirmed as final. See the large map inserted at the back of this report for further details.

Clapham Park, Thornton and Town Hall wards

84 These three wards are situated on the western edge of the borough and are all under-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 12 per cent, 6 per cent and 5 per cent (equal to the borough average, 3 per cent and 3 per cent by 2003).

85 The Liberal Democrat Group argued that, as most of the two-member Thornton ward lies between Thornton Road and the borough boundary, the creation of a three-member Thornton ward, which both reflected natural communities and secured an optimum degree of electoral equality, would be difficult. Although it stated that its ideal preference would be to retain the two-member ward, the Liberal Democrat Group proposed a three-member Thornton ward, created by placing parts of Clapham Park, Streatham Hill and Town Hall wards in a revised ward with the majority of the current Thornton ward.

86 A revised Clapham Park ward was also proposed, comprising of the majority of the

present ward of that name, plus a small part of the present Thornton ward. A new Brixton Hill ward was also put forward. This ward would comprise much of the present Town Hall ward, together with parts of St Martin's ward and Tulse Hill ward. We put forward the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals for this part of the borough. The new or revised three-member wards of Brixton Hill, Clapham Park and Thornton would respectively equal the borough average, vary by 1 per cent and vary by 4 per cent (2 per cent, 2 per cent and equal to the average in 2003).

87 During Stage Three the Liberal Democrat Group stated its general support for our proposals for this area, but suggested a minor boundary modification. It proposed that a small area on the eastern side of Kings Avenue which is currently located in Clapham Park ward should be included within the proposed Brixton Hill ward. The Group argued that the small number of residents living in this area look towards Brixton for community facilities and shopping, and that they would therefore be more appropriately placed within Brixton Hill ward. The Council concurred with this view, arguing that Kings Avenue provides a clearly identifiable boundary and that the current boundary is anomalous.

88 A large part of the area in question is occupied by a Territorial Army building and therefore only a relatively small number of electors would be transferred between the two wards. The proposal would result in the transfer of some 70 electors from Clapham Park ward to the proposed Brixton Hill ward. Officers of the Commission have visited the area in question and concur with the comments put forward in respect of this area.

89 During Stage Three we also received a number of proposals relating to the proposed ward names within this area. The Liberal Democrat Group reiterated part of its Stage One submission, that the ward name of Clapham Park ward did not adequately reflect the revised ward for that area. However, it acknowledged the general lack of support for its initial proposal to rename the ward Abbeville, and suggested as an alternative Clapham Common ward. We received other representations in support of this proposal including from Councillor Doven, currently one of the borough councillors for Clapham Park ward, who stated that the Common is one of the area's largest and most recognisable landmarks.

90 We acknowledge that there are grounds to rename Clapham Park ward, given that our proposals result in the Clapham Park Estate no longer being within that ward and that this could cause some confusion. Given that Clapham Common ward appears to be a reasonably well accepted alternative, we therefore propose to rename the revised Clapham Park ward as Clapham Common. Otherwise, our draft recommendations for this part of the borough are confirmed as final, with the boundary modification along Kings Avenue as described above. See the large map inserted at the back of the report for further details.

Gipsy Hill, Knight's Hill and Thurlow Park wards

91 The three-member ward of Gipsy Hill is presently under-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 2 per cent. A projected (marginal) increase in electorate would result in the ward equalling the borough average by 2003. The neighbouring three-member Knight's Hill ward is presently under-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 7 per cent (improving to 4 per cent by 2003). Thurlow Park ward is one of only two two-member wards in Lambeth and is presently over-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 3 per cent. However, the five-year projection of electorate would result in an electoral variance of 6 per cent for the ward by 2003.

92 During Stage One the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrat Group submitted similar proposals for the wards of Gipsy Hill and Knight's Hill but, as described earlier in the report, we adopted the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals. Similarly, we also put forward the Liberal Democrat Group's proposed Thurlow Park ward as best fitting in with our overall scheme for Lambeth. The three revised wards of Gipsy Hill, Knight's Hill and Thurlow Park would vary from the borough average by 3 per cent, 3 per cent and 1 per cent (1 per cent, 1 per cent and 3 per cent by 2003).

93 At Stage Three we received a number of representations relating to our draft recommendations. The Council commented that it believed our draft recommendations had not resolved a boundary

anomaly between the proposed wards of Thurlow Park and Tulse Hill at the southern end of Brockwell Park. The Council proposed that the boundary be revised in order to take in the few houses which would, according to the draft recommendations, be in Tulse Hill ward and include them instead within Thurlow Park ward. The Liberal Democrat Group supported this proposal in its Stage Three representation. This amendment would have a negligible effect on the levels of electoral equality for these two wards.

94 The Liberal Democrat Group also proposed an amendment to the boundary between Thurlow Park and Knight's Hill wards, where the two wards meet at the Knollys Road Railway Triangle. It stated in its Stage Three submission that although the area concerned is presently semi-industrial, small residential in-fill sites have been built on similar plots of land. The main entrance to this land is from Knollys Road and in view of this, the Group suggested that it would be prudent to include this land in the Knight's Hill ward.

95 The Council suggested that the revised Thurlow Park ward could be re-named West Dulwich ward. However, the Liberal Democrat Group commented that this suggestion could be confusing locally since the main area of Dulwich lies within Southwark borough. It suggested Rossendale as a possible alternative ward name, although it contended that the retention of the name Thurlow Park would reflect the main road running through the middle of the ward.

96 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we remain of the view that, in general, our draft proposals produce the best overall scheme for this area. However, the modifications to ward boundaries which were proposed at Stage Three by the Council and the Liberal Democrat Group would enhance convenient local government in this area through the provision of more clearly identifiable boundaries. We are content that the ward names put forward in the *Draft Recommendations* remain the most appropriate for this area and are not of the view that any preferable suggestions were made during Stage Three. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for these three wards, subject to the two minor boundary modifications described above, as final.

St Leonard's, Streatham Hill, Streatham South and Streatham Wells wards

97 These four wards currently suffer varying degrees of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 3 per cent, 7 per cent, 1 per cent and 15 per cent respectively (5 per cent 4 per cent, 5 per cent and 14 per cent by 2003).

98 At Stage One the Liberal Democrat Group proposed that the Streatham Hill ward be modified by adding 816 electors from the southern part of St Martin's ward, and transferring a net total of 940 electors to the modified Thornton ward. Under these proposals, the number of electors per councillor in the modified Streatham Hill ward would vary from the borough average by 4 per cent initially, 1 per cent by 2003.

99 The Liberal Democrat Group also proposed changes to the other wards in the Streatham area. Its submission contended that the boundary between Streatham South and Streatham Wells wards is clearly defined by Streatham Common and that alterations should be made to the less well-defined boundary between Streatham South and St Leonard's wards, proposing that the boundary should follow Greyhound Lane. It was proposed that, in order to address the relatively high level of electoral inequality in Streatham Wells ward, part of polling district SUB (975 electors) should be transferred from Streatham Wells ward to St Leonard's ward. It was argued that this proposal would unite the centre of the old Streatham Village, around St Leonard's Church, in one ward. The modified wards of St Leonard's, Streatham South and Streatham Wells would vary from the borough average by 3 per cent, 1 per cent and 2 per cent (equalling the average, 3 per cent and 2 per cent by 2003).

100 During Stage Three we received a number of representations proposing that the ward names in this area should be revised. An individual submission commented that Streatham South should be renamed Streatham Common or Streatham Vale, given that no other Streatham ward employed compass points as a suffix to its name. However, these proposals would reflect distinct areas of the proposed ward, rather than the

ward as a whole. The existing ward name of Streatham South reflects the geographical location of the ward, and does not appear to favour one area of the ward above another. We also received support from a local resident for our proposed boundaries for Streatham Hill ward, and general endorsement of our draft recommendations.

101 The Liberal Democrat Group and the Streatham Liberal Democrats noted that our proposed boundary between St Leonard's and Streatham Wells ward followed the centre of the Sunnyhill and Wellfield roads. This boundary, we were informed, was not the intended boundary originally proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group, which, it was stated, should follow the rear garden boundaries of properties on the north side of Gleneldon and Shrubbery Roads. The Liberal Democrat Group contended that the boundary as mapped in the *Draft Recommendations* could split established communities, and did not reflect its Stage One submission.

102 Given that the original scheme proposed for this area is based on the submission by the Liberal Democrat Group, we therefore propose to revise the large map inserted at the back of the report to reflect the original submission as intended by the Group. The electorate figures are unaltered by this mapping change.

103 Having considered the representations received, and given the good levels of electoral equality which our draft recommendations produce, we are content to endorse our draft recommendations for St Leonard's ward and the three Streatham wards of Hill, South and Wells as final, subject to a minor (mapping) modification to the boundary between St Leonard's and Streatham Wells wards.

Conclusions

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

- (a) the boundary between Clapham Park and Brixton Hill wards should be modified and the revised Clapham Park ward should be named Clapham Common ward;

- (b) the boundary between Bishop's and Prince's wards should be slightly modified;
- (c) the boundary between Thurlow Park and Knight's Hill wards should be slightly modified;
- (d) the large map at the back of the report details a minor modification to the boundary between Thurlow Park and Tulse Hill wards to reflect the originally intended boundary;
- (e) the large map at the back of the report details a minor modification to the boundary between St Leonard's and Streatham Wells wards to reflect the originally intended boundary.

105 We conclude that, in Lambeth:

- (a) there should be a council size of 63, a decrease of one;
- (b) there should be 21 wards rather than 22 as at present;
- (c) the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards should be modified.

106 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures. As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Lambeth Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from four to one. This balance of representation is expected to improve further with all wards expected to vary by less than 10 per cent in 2003, in fact no ward is expected to vary by more than 4 per cent. Our final recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report.

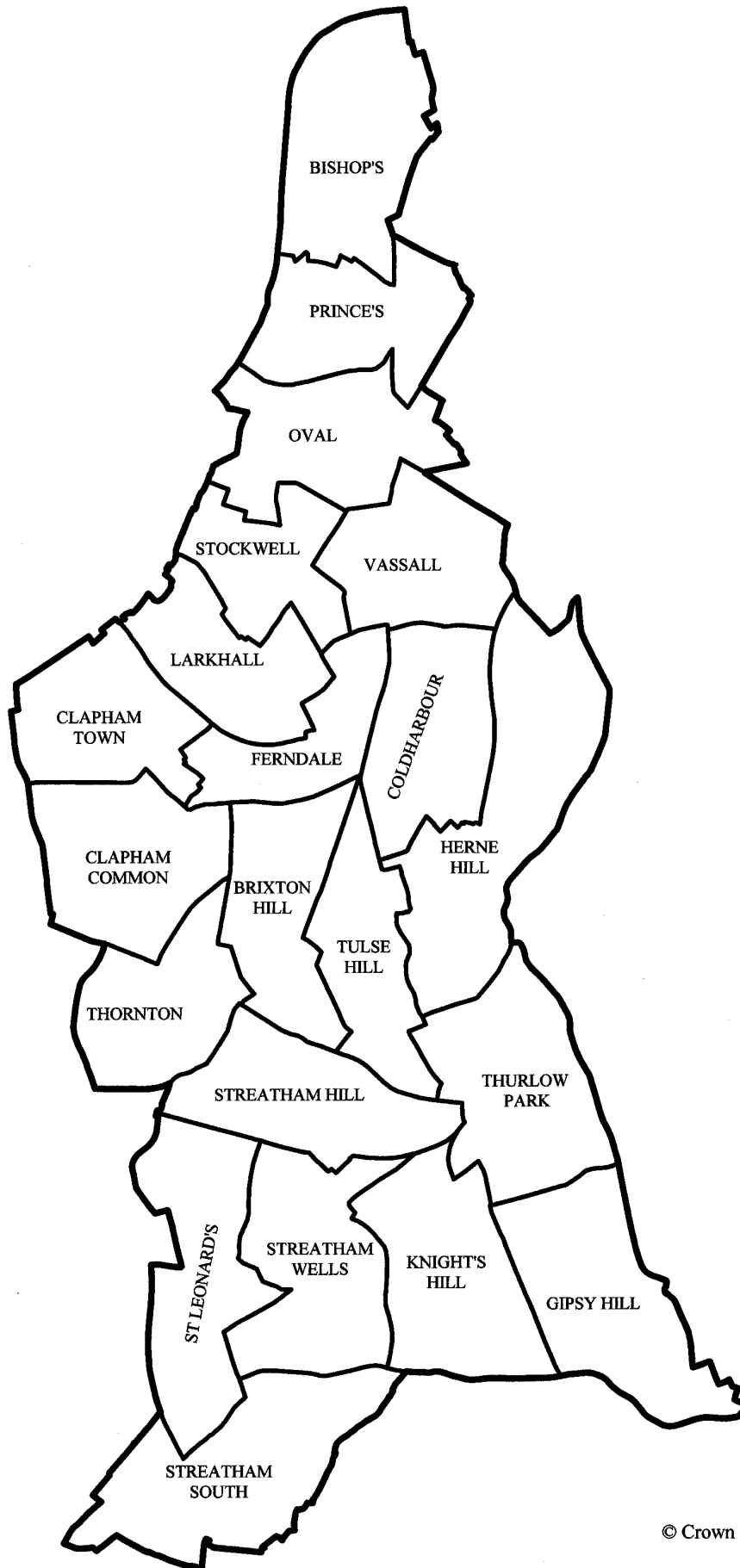
Final Recommendation

Lambeth Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map in the back of the report.

Figure 4 :
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	64	63	64	63
Number of wards	22	21	22	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,870	2,916	3,002	3,049
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	4	1	5	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	1	2	0

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lambeth



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6. NEXT STEPS

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for Lambeth

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ marginally from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of a number of wards; our draft recommendations are outlined below.

Figure A1:

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Bishop's	3	6,076	2,025	-31	8,872	2,957	-3
Brixton Hill	3	8,708	2,903	0	9,314	3,105	2
Clapham Park	3	8,654	2,885	-1	8,949	2,983	-2
Clapham Town	3	8,870	2,957	1	9,022	3,007	-1
Coldharbour	3	9,288	3,096	6	9,517	3,172	4
Ferndale	3	8,842	2,947	1	9,226	3,075	1
Gipsy Hill	3	9,031	3,010	3	9,215	3,072	1
Herne Hill	3	9,460	3,153	8	9,495	3,165	4
Knight's Hill	3	8,980	2,993	3	9,100	3,033	-1
Larkhall	3	9,266	3,089	6	9,325	3,108	2
Oval	3	8,298	2,766	-5	8,884	2,961	-3
Prince's	3	8,082	2,694	-8	9,138	3,046	0
St Leonard's	3	8,967	2,989	3	9,192	3,064	0
Stockwell	3	8,981	2,994	3	9,053	3,018	-1

continued overleaf

Figure A1 continued:

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Streatham Hill	3	9,095	3,032	4	9,230	3,077	1
Streatham South	3	8,837	2,946	1	8,919	2,973	-3
Streatham Wells	3	8,899	2,966	2	9,298	3,099	2
Thornton	3	9,055	3,018	4	9,125	3,042	0
Thurlow Park	3	8,688	2,896	-1	8,859	2,953	-3
Tulse Hill	3	8,803	2,934	1	9,439	3,146	3
Vassall	3	8,815	2,938	1	8,931	2,977	-2
Totals	63	183,695	—	—	192,103	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,916	—	—	3,049	—

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

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